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**Review of doctoral dissertation by Mariano Martín Pérez:
“ One Path, Many Activities, One Pattern:
Rhetorical Internationalization Towards Understanding the
Internationalization of Argentine Public Universities”**

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**This work was carried out under the supervision
of Radosław Rybkowski (UJ)**

General remarks

According to Article 187(3) of the Act of 20 July 2018. Law on Higher Education and Science, the doctoral dissertation is to present the candidate's general theoretical knowledge in the discipline or disciplines, the ability to conduct scientific or artistic work independently and to present an original solution to a scientific problem, an original solution to the application of the results of one's scientific research in the economic or social sphere or an original artistic achievement¹.

With regard to the first requirement, there is some difficulty in assessing the dissertation by a representative of another discipline. The problematic of the dissertation definitely deserves attention if only because of the increasing globalisation processes in the sphere of higher education. It belongs to the field of higher education research, which I represent as a Reviewer. From the perspective of the sociology of higher education that I represent, the issue of the internationalisation of public universities in Argentina is an interesting and relevant research issue and the author's knowledge of the subject is satisfactory.

¹ *Recenzje w postępowaniach o awans naukowy. Poradnik*, Rada Doskonałości Naukowej 2022,
<https://www.rdn.gov.pl/dl/262/attachment/c37685/Recenzje%20w%20post%C4%99powaniach%20o%20awans%20naukowy-skompresowany.pdf>

However, I find it difficult to make a clear statement about the Candidate's knowledge of Cultural Studies contained in the dissertation. I can only concede the Author's point that research on the internationalisation of higher education has always been multidisciplinary and, based on this assumption, point to the presentation of an institutional approach as an asset of the dissertation. In the case of the second requirement, which is the ability to conduct academic work independently, the Candidate demonstrated it satisfactorily. His analyses covered both the theoretical basis of the internationalisation issue as well as the practice dimension related to higher education policies aimed at internationalisation of higher education institutions. In the empirical layer, the author chose to present the issue at the institutional level using the concept of "rhetorical internationalisation", which can be considered an original solution to a scientific problem with the potential for an original solution in terms of using the results of his own research. The method of consideration and research presented in the dissertation can generally be considered valid and interesting; nevertheless, the author has not fully exploited the potential of the topic or the scientific and research material. The dissertation submitted for review is characterised both by innovativeness and holism in the approach to the issue of internationalisation, as well as by certain shortcomings in the research strategy adopted by the author in the theoretical and empirical dimensions.

Notes on the structure and formal side of the dissertation

The paper is very short, as it covers over 240 pages, of which the main text is approximately 150 pages (the rest is taken up by an appendix and bibliography). Of course, the length of the study does not prejudice its quality, but for a doctoral dissertation in the humanities and social sciences, the length of the main text corresponds rather to that of a master's thesis. The bibliography is also modest in terms of the number of publications used - approximately 100 items.

The structure of the work based on the distinction of five chapters is clear. I have no doubts about the structure of Chapter I of Theoretical Assumption, in which the Author describes the conceptualisation of internationalisation, rhetorical internationalisation and

methodological issues. Also, the Author's idea of Chapters II and III as dealing with the dimension of practice and Chapter IV as dealing with the adopted rhetorical framework of internationalisation is formally understandable to me. However, Chapter V named as Conclusions and Recommendations/Summary/Future Discussions covers only 6.5 pages and therefore provides modest evidence of the author's analytical work treated as a separate chapter.

The author's narrative in many places shows a lack of attention to coherence and ordering of threads (it resembles a not fully thought-out "cluster" of posts and quotations), the subsections lack introductory and concluding sentences. The text of the whole work is rather chaotic.

From a purely formal point of view - the dissertation only satisfactorily meets the requirements related to the length of the text, its structure and proportions between the parts (the main part of the text and the part with appendices), and the volume of the bibliography. The text (with many graphs and tables) as a whole requires more careful editing.

Notes on the conceptual framework and methodology

A strength of the paper is the overview given of the concept of internationalisation of higher education over the last 25 years. In doing so, the author points to the multidisciplinary of research on the internationalisation of higher education. Quoting the names of a number of researchers (Altbach P, Knight J., Teichler U., Davies J, de Wit H.) he shows different understandings of the concept, points out different features of the internationalisation process and models of internationalisation. In addition, it refers to the process of internationalisation as seen through the prism of the European Union (EU) (mainly through the history of Erasmus Mundus), myths and misconceptions about internationalisation. In this context, he describes the construction of the concept of internationalisation among Argentine public universities and the conceptual underpinnings of Erasmus Mundus Action 2 (EMA2), in the broader context of internationalisation policy.

The author's review of the definitions of internationalisation is a necessary exercise, but it was conducted in a rather haphazard manner and the summary of subsection 1.1 lacks a structured, authorial conclusion on this review.

In subsection 1.2 Rhetorical internationalisation, the author included an introduction to the study of the discourse of higher education in general, and the discourse of internationalisation in particular. I positively evaluate such a presentation of the background to the discussion of the concept of rhetoric.

Subsection 1.3 Methodological issues refers to the Grounded Theory chosen by the Author, which provides an opportunity to discover theories, concepts and claims starting directly from the data rather than from the apriori assumptions of other research or existing theoretical frameworks. This research strategy, in my opinion, deserves recognition; nevertheless, the Author has vaguely characterised its application in the social sciences.

Notes on the description of the research area

The chapters on the practice of internationalisation in higher education (Chapters II and III) lack a broader background describing the issue under study. In subsection 2.1, the author starts with quotes from documents, writing little about the origins and specificities of the global or European internationalisation policies. Similarly, in subsection 2.2, there is a direct reference to internationalisation programmes in Argentina, but little emphasis is given to the higher education internationalisation policy in that country (apart from the text in the appendices).

The author forgets that the programmes he describes are a tool of state and individual university policy, which should have been clearly emphasised in the paper. However, I am aware that a cultural perspective and a particular analysis of the rhetoric of internationalization does not necessarily translate into the language of policy facts and their practical evaluation.

Notes on the empirical sections

Assuming that Chapter IV Rhetorical internationalisation constitutes the empirical part concerning the Candidate's own research, the originality of this approach should be emphasised. The model adopted is described exhaustively. It undoubtedly exemplifies the exploratory and analytical competence of the Author of the work.

Final notes and conclusion

In my opinion the doctoral dissertation by Mariano Martín Pérez: " One Path, Many Activities, One Pattern: Rhetorical Internationalization Towards Understanding the Internationalization of Argentine Public Universities" sufficiently meets the criteria for candidates laid down in the Act of 20 July 2018 – the Law on Higher Education and Science.

In spite of some doubts arising from my sociological perspective, I consider that the work presents an interesting and valid theoretical approach of the Author, focusing on the cultural basis of higher education internationalisation processes. The work also presents Author's ability to carry out independent research relating to a multi-faceted socio-economic phenomenon. The dissertation is also characterised by the application of an original (interdisciplinary) solution to a scientific problem. Further, the results of the Author's analyses presented in the dissertation can serve as practical policy solutions in higher education with regard to its internationalisation.

Łódź, czerwiec 2024

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Andrzej Foltyn".