



Universiteit  
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# Thesis evaluation Emilie Brandt

## Student details:

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## Programme details

**Programme:** European Politics and Society

**Specialisation:**

**EC:** 30

## Evaluators:

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## Thesis details:

**Title:** Framing Democratic Backsliding in Hungary: Conservative Media Portrayals of Democratic Transgressions under Viktor Orbán

Is the thesis in your assessment free of plagiarism?

Yes to my knowledge the thesis is free of plagiarism

Turnitin

Can the thesis be made publicly available in the Leiden University Repository?

by M. Broad: it can be made public through the repository.

# Summary assessment/comments

Overall a very good thesis, well contextualised and impressively operationalised.

## Criteria

### Knowledge and insight

This was a most appropriate and pertinent thesis on external right-wing perceptions of democratic transgressions, examining in particular how Hungary's democratic backsliding is viewed within US conservative circles. The introduction neatly contextualised the research question(s) and explained how the thesis intended to build on Ahmed's work through a study of media framing. For its part, the review was intriguing. It might have done more in explaining why the lack of differentiation of democratic transgressions was problematic – it sometimes assumed this was the case without concretely unpacking why. This might similarly have tied the variation in transgressions to what we know about democratic backsliding in Hungary - the literature review was certainly sensibly structured but some of the optics felt a tad isolated without much segue between them. The gap that emerged was nevertheless obvious and defended with flair, all premised on wide reading.

**Assessment:** good

**Weighing:** n/a

### Application of knowledge and insight

The methodology was likewise considered and detailed. This could well have gone further in explaining what we'd expect from conservative forces in other countries, helping with the argument about how (a)typical the US is. Potential differences between the four news organisations, given their varied audiences, might similarly have been discussed in greater detail. But this was otherwise very good, especially when operationalising Ahmed - where the student chose to set out their stall, they did so with a great deal of authority.

**Assessment:** good

**Weighing:** n/a

### Reaching conclusions

The argument was convincing and based on an impressive array of evidence. Admittedly, it was a bit of a shame that this didn't go so far as to analyse changes in framing across time, although the limitation was acknowledged and defended on p. 25. If hypothesis 2 was the least noteworthy, not all the findings were especially surprising, and the main argument a tad flat, it was nonetheless well-substantiated. The suggestions for future research, and the implications of the findings, were a welcome addition.

**Assessment:** good

**Weighing:** n/a

## Communication

The thesis was very well put together. Writing was excellent bar one or two typos. Referencing was a little messier, with a citation style seemingly of the student's own choosing.

**Assessment:** good

**Weighing:** n/a

## Learning skills

Met

**Assessment:** very good

**Weighing:** n/a

## Formal requirements

Met

## Final assessment

On 14-06-2024 this thesis is graded with a 7.8

## Signatures

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Broad', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

M. Broad