

FIRST READER THESIS REVIEW FORM

Name of the Student	Beatrice Giovannoni
Date of Submission	21-6-2023
Title of the Thesis	Speaking for the 'right' women: radical-right populism and women's representation in the European Parliament
Reviewer Name / Affiliation	Maria Gabriela Palacio Ludena / Leiden University

PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

Is the thesis in your assessment free of plagiarism?

The thesis is free of plagiarism

KNOWLEDGE AND CONNECTION TO THE FIELD

(relevance of the research question, research objective, literature review)

The thesis provides a detailed analysis of the impact that right-wing populist parties' use of feminist arguments has on existing struggles, shedding light on power dynamics, gender norms, and social inequalities in European politics. It is a timely examination of the complex relationship between feminism, right-wing populism, and women's representation in the current political climate. The introduction would have benefited from a more precise definition of feminism, primarily since the thesis explores its connection to right-wing ideologies. While the focus is on right-wing feminism, it is essential to acknowledge the historical context of feminism's association with left-wing progressive movements to understand the origins of feminist theory and activism and why it has traditionally aligned with progressive ideologies.

The literature review presents a well-organized and thorough analysis of the connection between feminism, radical-right populism, and the representation of women. The study exhibits a sophisticated comprehension of the topic by evaluating multiple viewpoints and theoretical frameworks. The incorporation of research on the intersection of feminism, conservatism, and neoliberalism offers valuable insights into how conservative political parties contextualise women's concerns within broader ideological constructs. The discussion on whether conservative politicians can genuinely represent women's interests augments the depth of the investigation. Focusing on the European Parliament as a case study provides a relevant and distinctive context for the research, enhancing its specificity and depth.

The definition provided for feminist arguments encompasses a liberal interpretation covering a wide range of topics related to gender equality, discrimination, and traditional gender roles. This definition is also inclusive of those who may not explicitly identify as feminists, which allows for a broader interpretation of feminism. Yet, the student should be cautious of an oversimplification of feminism by linking it to women's struggles in achieving a common goal despite the emphasis on intersectionality.

ANALYSIS

(methodology, argument, theoretical backing, appropriate work with sources)

The methods used in the thesis are clearly explained and deemed appropriate for this type of study. A positive aspect of the study is the inclusion of limitations in the research design, method selection, and researcher's background. This approach demonstrates a commitment to maintaining study quality and transparency about potential constraints. By acknowledging these limitations, readers can gain a clear understanding of the study's scope and constraints. Additionally, the study's focus on women and gender issues is insightful. Recognising potential nuances and feminist arguments in debates that do not explicitly focus on these topics demonstrates a critical awareness of the broader context. While a larger sample could have captured further nuances, narrowing the focus allowed for a more in-depth analysis. Finally, the researcher's acknowledgement of their subjectivity and active role in interpreting the data is commendable. It displays an honest approach to address limitations and maintaining study integrity.

However, the findings chapter reads convoluted, with too many layers of analysis, including substantive representation claims, feminist arguments, and thematic analysis. These layers obscure the thesis's key argument, making it challenging to discern whether populist radical-right parties effectively adopt feminist arguments in their representative claims for women.

Regarding theoretical backing, the thesis analyses the relationship between feminism and radical-right populism. The author acknowledges existing literature on neoliberal feminism, choice feminism, and the limited presence of cohesive PRR feminism. The findings on the adoption of feminist arguments by PRR representatives and the potential roles of PRR feminism are insightful. However, critically examining the potential limitations and consequences of PRR feminism and tensions within it would enrich the discussion.

CONCLUSIONS

(persuasiveness, link between data and conclusions, achievement of research objectives)

The analysis of PRR feminism presented in the thesis is informative and clearly explains its main characteristics and objectives. The identification of liberal feminist arguments as the primary form of PRR feminism, and the exploration of its focus on gender equality in the labour market and violence against women, demonstrates a solid grasp of the subject matter. Additionally, the discussion on how PRR feminism contributes to the portrayal of immigrants reinforces heteronormativity and supports a Eurosceptic narrative, adding depth to the analysis.

FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE

(appropriate language, adherence to academic standards, citation style, layout)

The author has done a commendable job crafting a well-written, comprehensive thesis with proper references.

SUMMARY ASSESSMENT

(strong and weak points of the thesis, other issues)

An insightful thesis delves into the influence of right-wing populist parties on European politics, analysing the use of feminist arguments. It explores the intricate relationship between feminism, conservatism, and women's representation in current political circumstances. This analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the complex interplay between these.

FORMAL REQUIREMENTS

(for example, word count)

The required formal requirements have been met.

(See below for grading scheme and grading descriptor)

Grade (1 – 10)	8.6
Date	Reviewer Signature
11-7-2023	M.G. Palacio

2 – 3 SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR THESIS DEFENCE

1.	Can you explain what qualifies as a feminist argument?
2.	Is it necessary to depict and address women in order to make a feminist argument?
3.	

AGREED FINAL GRADE

(To be completed *after* both readers have read and marked the thesis independently)

Grade (1 – 10 <i>and</i> A-F)	8.5 and A	
Date	Reviewer 1 Signature	Reviewer 2 Signature
11-7-2023	M. G. Palacio	