

BACHELOR'S THESIS EXAMINER REPORT
PPE – Bachelor's in Politics, Philosophy and Economics
Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Thesis title:	Morally Defensible Violent Political Action in Liberal Democracies: Left-Wing Inspired Riots, Protests, and Civil Disobedience
Student's name:	Elise Brady
Referee's name:	Jakub Franěk

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality)	50	47
	Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses)	15	14
	Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question)	15	13
<i>Total</i>		80	74
Minor Criteria			
	Sources, literature	10	10
	Presentation (language, style, cohesion)	5	4
	Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures)	5	4
<i>Total</i>		20	18
TOTAL		100	92

Plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score: 7%

[NB:] If the plagiarism-check (URKUND) match score is above 15%, the reviewer has to include his/her assessment of the originality of the reviewed thesis in his/her review.

Reviewer's commentary according to the above criteria (min. 1800 characters including spaces when recommending a passing grade, min. 2500 characters including spaces when recommending a failing grade):

This is in many ways a very impressive thesis on an important topic – possible justification of political violence in contemporary liberal democracies. The thesis is clearly very well researched and clearly argued. The author must be commended for a very well structured and systematically organised argument, which relies on the so called “cumulative argument” strategy that effectively combines three distinct argumentative strategies to legitimise political violence: Marxism, Liberation Theology and Radical Democracy,

While the author of the present review appreciates the use of the innovative “cumulative argument strategy”, he is not fully convinced about its virtues. To put it differently, the author of the reviewed thesis could have done a better job defending her methodological approach and considering its potential limitations. The present reviewer suspects that while the chosen argumentative strategy

may be effective politically, its use in a strictly theoretical debate might be more limited. After all, both Marxism and Liberation Theology are ultimately based on certain fundamental assumptions that appear to be mutually incompatible. Radical democracy, on the other hand, attempts to avoid any such fundamental assumptions, which in turn makes it in many ways incompatible with the fundamental assumptions of both Marxism and Liberation theology.

To make her argument even more compelling, the author could have considered possible responses to various moral, legal as well as political objections to the use of political violence. Her evaluation of the political effectivity of various protest movements discussed throughout the thesis – in particular the Occupy Wall Street and Black Lives Matter movements – could also have been more balanced. After all, both of these movements have been widely criticised for their lack of effectivity that may be explained by their obsessive focus on the symbolic level of politics including symbolic or performative acts of violence.

In spite of the critical points made above, this is a very well researched and written BA Thesis, which clearly deserves to be admitted to defence.

Proposed grade (A-B-C-D-E-F): A

Suggested questions for the defence are:

I (do not) recommend the thesis for final defence.

Referee Signature

Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Quality standard
91 – 100	A	= outstanding (high honor)
81 – 90	B	= superior (honor)
71 – 80	C	= good
61 – 70	D	= satisfactory
51 – 60	E	= low pass at a margin of failure
0 – 50	F	= failing. The thesis is not recommended for defence.