

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

Thesis title:	Caste Reparations in India. Through the Lens of Affirmative Action
Student's name:	Mahika Malik
Referee's name:	Janusz Salamon

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Contribution and argument (quality of research and analysis, originality)	33	
	Research question (definition of objectives, plausibility of hypotheses)	13	
	Theoretical framework (methods relevant to the research question)	12	
Total		58	
Minor Criteria			
	Sources, literature	6	
	Presentation (language, style, cohesion)	4	
	Manuscript form (structure, logical coherence, layout, tables, figures)	3	
Total		13	
TOTAL		71	

Reviewer's commentary according to the above criteria:

Mahika Malik chose to devote her Bachelor's thesis to an important but methodologically challenging topic, not least due to limited sources she had to rely to, both in the quantitative (data analysis) and qualitative (literature review) aspects of her work. The mixed-methods approach, inclusive of both qualitative and quantitative research that has been adopted by the Author appears to be sensible in principle, given the subject matter of the thesis. However, when it comes to the execution of the research project designed in this way, much is to be desired. Regarding her focus group analysis, based on interviews with 10 persons, I am somewhat at loss regarding the assessment of validity and importance of the contribution of this element of her thesis to Mahika Malik's overall discussion of the limitations of the reparatory impact of the

affirmative policies of the Indian authorities. The method of selection of the interviewees does not dispel one's doubt about the degree to which the group is representative of the social phenomena under consideration. When it comes to the qualitative aspect of the thesis, by which the Author means the engagement with the secondary sources addressing the issues of affirmative action and the injustice of the caste system, two shortcomings that limit the quality of this otherwise engaging work are worth mentioning. Firstly, given the relative shortness of the thesis, it might have been profitable to devote more space to the discussion of the limitations of the affirmative action in the Indian context, instead of reporting on the Western debates and Western examples of affirmative policies (and the reasons for dragging John Rawls into the discussion are also not entirely clear to me). The unfortunate result is the brevity of the treatment of the Indian problems in the Indian context.

Secondly, Mahika Malik seems to justify heavy reliance on mostly non-Indian secondary literature on the scarcity of the Indian domestic production of scholarly work on these issues. I find this explanation unconvincing, given the importance of the topic and the size of the Indian academia.

The bibliography (References) is less than transparent and does not seem to follow any recognisable pattern (if I'm not mistaken).

Other than that, the thesis fulfils the requirements for a decent Bachelor's thesis.

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

Suggested questions for the defence are:

I was surprised that references to *hindutva* are absent from the text and no clear references to the ideological constraints on the anti-caste restorative and affirmative policies are being made. Is this due to "an abundance of caution" or because you do not consider these ideological considerations relevant to the analysis of your thesis topic?

I 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.