

## **Review for Kadriye Melis Kaymak Aypulat's Diploma Thesis**

Title of the thesis: **Feminist Identity Development of Feminist Women living in Turkey, Ankara**

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The focus of the thesis is topical and very well chosen. As the author herself mentions, the need of research of feminist identity development in specific cultural context is urgent, if we try to get a more comprehensive picture which would not be focused preliminarily on the Euro-American context. This research is original and will help to filling up the gap in feminist identity studies from the comparative global perspective.

The text is successfully organized and well structured. Its structure covers all the necessary parts – i.e. theoretical outlets, methodology, reflection of the author's location and positionality, an overview of the historical, political and cultural context of Turkey relevant for the topic and analysis of the collected empirical data. The scope of these parts is appropriate, with the analysis being the longest one. References in the end are more than sufficient in number, they reflect author's good orientation in the topic and bespeak of her expertise in psychology.

The aim of this research was to examine how the Downing and Roush model of feminist identity development corresponds with the situation in Turkey. The author conducted a qualitative research of semi-structured interviews and is well aware that the obtained data cannot be generalized but represent a deep insight within the selected sample of participants. The proces of selecting the narrators is described and explained very carefully, with some practical limitations included. It is true that the sample of the narrators is relatively homogeneous – ten single young educated middle class Turkish women from the capital coming mostly from liberal background who accounted themselves as feminists. The author draws perspectives for further research where the participants would be more diverse from the intersectional view, i.e. coming from ethnic minorities, villages, lower classes, conservative family background, of various ages, married and being mothers, being uneducated, identifying themselves as non-heterosexual and not feeling themselves to be feminists – perhaps not yet, perhaps not at all for various reasons. The importance of the intersectional perspective is in the text repeatedly emphasized.

The theoretical part introduces the Downing and Roush model and adds a rather detailed overview of further studies inspired by it and researches based on it. In the end of this sequence, I would welcome a summarizing conclusion in the sense of what might be regarded as perhaps exceeded (the model is from 1985) or if it should be regarded as still generally topical. The author brings some suggestions on this regard with reference to Fischer and others (p. 68), arguing again with the necessity of encompassing different cutural backgrounds. However, it seems that for the author the attractiveness of the chosen model also stems from her professional praxis, as she says: "I utilized the five-stage feminist identity

development model developed by Downing and Roush for use in feminist therapy, evaluating my findings in the context of both this model and the factor of living in Turkey.“ (p. 69)

One remark on what I found missing: The whole text circles about the notion of feminist identity but it is nowhere explicitly explained what it is, or rather, how Downing and Roush work with it and how the author does, what is her interpretation of that notion. Does it mean just a subjective self-reflection of one's position, or is there – can there be – anything “objective“? That question is especially relevant in the context of the narratives of the participants when they spoke about feminism as misunderstood, being used as a peiorative label, etc. Could the author comment on this issue during her defence?

The text ends with a discussion and conclusion where it resumes which stages of the Downing and Roush model differ from the findings of the research and which correspond with it. The research also casts an interesting view on the experiences of the participants, their self-reflections and hopes for future.

The presented text fulfills requirements put on diploma theses, I suggest the evaluation excelent. The final grade will be dependent on the defence.