ASSESSMENT REPORT

Final Thesis for the Master of Arts in European Studies of Science, Society and Technology (ESST)

Name of student: Marie Hebrok

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Agreed decision: Distinction

Examiners comments:

This is an ambitious thesis, both theoretically and empirically. Theoretically the thesis takes at its point of departure a key concept in STS, namely the concept of “domestication” and seeks to further develop this concept into a concept of dis-domestication. In doing this the ambition is to be able to include not only the process of making objects and technologies “one’s own”, but also the process of distancing oneself from and getting rid of objects. The further rationale behind this take is to better equip STS with resources to handle environmental issues such as, in this case, the environmental issue of waste. In doing this the author succeeds in developing a consistent theoretical argument and to do this while contributing to STS as a field of research.

The thesis is also empirically ambitious both in the sense that it builds from a rich and extensive collection of data and in the sense that the author has made use of a set of different strategies for data-collection. The data collection is original both in the sense that the author has done an impressive work in gathering data as well as in the sense that the thesis builds from a original and innovative use of methods: It includes field work at the very site were waste is being deposed of, an extensive questionnaire and interviews. When using such a mixed set of methods and research strategies there is always a danger that the thesis can end up fragmented, but the author manages to hold these different strategies together and make them fit into the larger framework of the thesis. Hence, they enable the author to better answer the question of how a process of dis-domestication take place, in practice, as seen from a range of different perspectives.

However, the originality of the thesis does not only lay in the ways in which it uses STS resources in an excellent way and the large extend to which this is integrated with the empirical material. A major strength of the thesis is its interdisciplinarity. In order to develop what she calls a framework for dis-domestication the author draws on a series of theoretical resources, most notably from the field of consumer studies, but also from anthropology as well as historical research on consumption and design. In doing this the author demonstrates both the ways in which STS as a field of research are close to other fields of research as well as how STS can be further developed by delving into resources from other, and related, fields of research. Taken together this is an excellent thesis that gives an original as well as a timely and important contribution to the field and it is a thesis that can inspire further research.

Name and signature of 1st marker:

Name and signature of 2nd marker:

Finn Olesen, Associate professor

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