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Ceske Budejovice, October 21st, 2022

Supervisor's assessment:

I have known Ms. Houda Ouns Maaroufi for seven years, since she participated in our joint project with Prof. Ulrich Theopold (Univ. Stockholm). Later she started to work in my laboratory in Ceske Budejovice (Czech Republic) on her Ph.D. programme. We have already published four articles on *Drosophila* genetics (she is first author on one of them) and are currently writing another one.

During this time, Houda has greatly contributed to the genetic analysis of genes involved in adenosine metabolism in the fruit fly *Drosophila melanogaster*. Work included classical fly genetics (GAL4-UAS system), molecular genetics (PCR, qPCR and relevant methods), RNAseq data analysis, immunohistochemistry, microscopic imaging (fluorescence, confocal and electron microscopy), flow cytometry, cell culture and bioinformatics analysis (R-Studio, STATISTICA and Excel). In addition, Houda has been involved in projects focusing on the cytotoxic effect of Huntington's mutation (mHTT) on the immune system and neurodegeneration in *Drosophila*. In this project, she also gained more experience with molecular and cellular biology techniques such as immune cell quantification, fly brain dissection and microscopic imaging.

At the beginning, Houda had a good theoretical background but no practical experience with *Drosophila*. However, she learned quickly and was soon able to work completely independently. During her PhD, she visited Prof. Yueh-Lung Wu's lab (Department of Entomology, National University of Taiwan) for two months. During her Ph.D., she became an experienced young scientist who was able to plan her experiments, know the literature, and help me supervise undergraduate students and their projects. She got along well with the other people.

*Houda is a hardworking, honest, and diligent collaborator, and I could trust her data. Her thesis is the result of an honest effort and I recommend it for defense.

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