External Examiner’s Report on the Dissertation of MARTINA BARDONOVA “GRAIN STORAGE IN ANCIENT EGYPT (2600-1650 BC. TYPENLOGY AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS”

Submitted in 2019 at the CZECH INSTITUTE OF EGYPTOLOGY (FACULTY OF ARTS)

I. Brief summary of the dissertation

The present thesis deals with one of the basic products of the human diet and its storage in ancient Egypt since mid third to mid second millennia BC. This topic is analyzed since different perspectives (archaeological, iconographic and textual), which permits later to construct a political, economic and social interpretation during this millennium.

II. Brief overall evaluation of the dissertation

The present dissertation is a complex topic, but it has been dealt with excellence from the methodological and scientific points of view.

III. Detailed evaluation of the dissertation and its individual aspects

The thesis submitted by Mrs. Martina Bardonova, supervised by Dr. Hana Vymazalová, and entitled Grain Storage in Ancient Egypt (26000-1650 BC). Typology and socio-economic implications, present a clear structure. It has been written in a clear and academic English. It is divided into six different chapters, which discuss diverse topics, followed by a long and heterogeneous bibliography. The text is accompanied with a second volume with a database with all the material discussed. It is presented with different fields, which offers a complete summary of the element.

The present thesis is a study about the grain storage, which covers since mid third to the mid second millennia BC. The chosen period permitted to the candidate to study the changes of the Egyptian State since different perspectives, not only the economic, but also architectonic, ecologic and social. All these aspects make any approach extremely complex, but Mrs. Bardonova shows her scientific capacity to interrelate all of them.

As an historical thesis, the PhD candidate follows the methodology of the discipline dealing with all the sources available related with this new approach. In fact, three of the main sources (archaeological, iconographic and textual) are grouped in their respective chapters, which permitted a deep critical analysis of several aspects, in which the candidate shows her capacity for interrelating different type of sources, as well as all type of bibliographical references, which for those published in the late 19th and early 20th centuries represent a scientific challenge. In this sense, the work with the sources clearly shows a deep knowledge of them, which include a hard work of the most recent publications. This fact represents an intellectual effort carried out by the candidate; because she shows her ability to understand no only the previous theoretical approaches but also the latest ones.
The theoretical lines include different disciplines: Economy, History, Philology, Sociology and Social Anthropology. The combination of all of them in the critic analysis of all the pieces of evidence permits to the present candidate to present her own historical discourse which is exposed in the last chapter of the thesis, entitled ‘Conclusions’.

The complexity of the topic and her approach to some specific topics, in which she presents a large amount of data, which might be summarized or developed in footnotes, makes some passages very dense.

Unfortunately, the quality of many figures, which illustrates the text does not appear in the electronic copy received by the present member of this committee with the expected quality as it deserves a PhD thesis.

Apart from Mrs. Bardonova’s new contributions to the discussion of the topic, her work adds new data on the study of the cereals, extending earlier –but recent studies as J. Flores (2016), Les céréales: analyse d’une gestion au Protodynastique et sous l’Ancien Empire (Hamburg). In addition, she works in a couple of cases with most recent (unpublished) archaeological data from Qubbet el-Hawa, which doubtless adds an extra valor to her research.

IV. Questions for the author

I prefer to discuss my questions and interpretations with the candidate during the defence

V. Conclusion

From all these comments, I confirm that Mrs. Martina Bardonova’s PhD thesis passes with excellence the requirements and standards for the Doctoral degree

I recommend the submitted dissertation with the tentative grade of pass

07/05/2019

Dr. Alejandro Jiménez-Serrano