

## **External Examiner's Report on the Dissertation of *Miloš Roháček***

### **"Metal Finds in Western Anatolia in Second Millennium B.C."**

**Submitted in 2023 at the Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Archaeology**

#### **I. Brief summary of the dissertation**

The dissertation of Miloš Roháček focuses on the metal finds coming from Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age contexts in western Anatolia. Strictly speaking the thesis includes not only the study of objects coming from western Anatolia but also east Aegean islands. It comprises the discussion of the finds from the settlements, burials as well as various loose finds that can be dated to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium based on typological analysis. The dissertation consists of two parts. The first part begins with the summary of prehistoric metallurgy in western Anatolia, with the main focus on the Early Bronze Age. Following chapters present the overview of archaeological evidence. As next follows the main part of the study – the evaluation of metal objects according to different categories such as weapons, tools, jewellery. This chapters include the illustrations of the objects. The second part of the thesis consists of the catalogue and distribution maps. Nearly 1300 objects are presented with basic information and bibliography.

#### **II. Brief overall evaluation of the dissertation**

The dissertation is a detailed study of metal finds, that closes one of the gaps in the research on western Anatolia in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium B.C. The structure of the thesis and subject-specific descriptions are correct, way of arguing clear. Some of the conclusions are illuminating. There are also weak points, like the quality of illustrations and some unfortunate formulations. One of the most significant points of criticism is the length of the final conclusions. These chapters should be more comprehensive.

#### **III. Detailed evaluation of the dissertation and its individual aspects**

Western Anatolia is an understudied region und the dissertation of Roháček is very welcome contribution to the current state of research. It fills an important gap in the studies on prehistoric Anatolia, since it is the first comprehensive work on Middle and Late Bronze Age metal finds. The author collected and evaluated all available data, this is very strong side of the thesis and speaks for considerable work effort.

##### *1. Structure of the argument and formal aspects of the dissertation*

Generally speaking, the structure of the thesis is correct and the way of arguing clear. All subject-specific descriptions are professional and show comprehensive knowledge of the subject matter. The thesis is composed in a foreign language, what surely built an additional difficulty. Nevertheless, subject-specific English vocabulary is correct, with only few exceptions (such as "foot muff" (anklet), page 146). In linguistic terms the text is adequate and one has no problems to follow and understand the argumentation. However, there are some grammatical mistakes and other shortcomings, so that the dissertation needs editing by a native speaker before the text is published. Regarding the linguistic side of the thesis there

are also other shortcomings. There are also some repetitions and unfortunate formulations (e.g. page 21: "Troy appears to be (...) influenced by western influences..."). Illustrations are mostly clear and fulfill their aim but they would need more graphical processing. The distribution maps are good, but also here improvements would be wellcome: the first map shows all relevant sites numbered, however, other maps have no numbers. For the reader it would be better if the author added the numbers to all maps. Such inadequacies lower the value of the study and should be corrected before the publication.

Regarding the structure of the dissertation there is only one problematic case. The order of typological chapters seems to be random. Why daggers follow spearheads and not the swords? Why are arrowheads not after (or before) the spearheads? The order is also not alphabetic.

Other formal aspects of the study (footnotes, bibliography etc.) seem to be properly complemented and formatted.

## *2. Use of sources and/or material*

The sources are used in transparent way, there are no doubts regarding this aspect of the thesis. Bibliography is quite comprehensive (20 pages) but before the publication the most recent works (2000 and later) should be incorporated (also in the catalogue). Some older sources are missing as well (e.g. Nessel 2014, *Werkzeuge zur Produktion von Metallobjekten...*, in chapter devoted EBA metallurgy at Troy).

## *3. Personal contribution to the subject*

Roháček defined the aim of his study as providing the comprehensive overview of archaeological finds and other kinds of evidence of secondary metallurgy in Western Anatolia during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Millennium B.C. On the basis of this work he also wanted to accomplish new perspectives in the research and contribute to the better understanding of the region during the Middle Bronze Age and Late Bronze Age.

The first aim is largely fulfilled, the second partly. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 present useful review of the most important information on the study area, such as the history of research in the Early Bronze Age, main contextual evidence (settlements and cemeteries) and outstanding finds. This is good introduction for the main part of the thesis.

Chapter 6 is comprehensive discussion of various types of metal objects. This is partly the summary of the evidence (e.g. in case of awls) but in some cases Roháček goes further. Very illuminating is for example the discussion of Siana and Interface swords, or Siana knives, which is based on previous work (e.g. of N. Sandars) but contextualised in the western Anatolian-east Aegean cultural sphere ("Interface") from the perspective of the new research.

Some topics would profit from a bit more attention, for example the "spikes". Their presence is intriguing – what was their function? The same is true in case of exceptional finds, like a projectile point nr. 1224 from Troy. "The author of this paper would also suggest the possibility that this piece could rather be considered as a special sort of arrowhead or some

other kind of a “missile”.“ (page 82). The author should make his point more clear. In case of the chapter „pendants“ it is not clear why some of the objects were classified as such (e.g. 962 is rather an appliqué, the function of no. 953 is not clear but it is rather not a pendant). Generally speaking most of typological chapters are informative with necessary discussion of technological features but without exaggerated descriptions of technical details.

The final discussion is too short (ten pages!). It contains important observations and conclusions but for the publication it should be expanded, in terms of chronology, regional distributions and contextualisation in Aegean-Anatolian and entire eastern Mediterranean world.

#### **IV. Questions for the author**

1. The appearance of Siana knives and swords is very significant phenomenon since they are indeed very special. They were influenced by both Levantine and Aegean weapons but how could they develop? Who could be responsible for the manufacture and where would it take place?

2. Most of the objects studied belong to Anatolian and/or Aegean tradition. But there are some exceptions (Levantine) – could the author elaborate more on this topic? Under what kind of circumstances could these objects arrive to the area of study? Can we recognise “Hittite” objects? Finds that might have arrived from the Balkans are mentioned as well. When would they arrive?

3. The author mentioned that some Siana knives were found outside the study area – what is the possible explanation for this distribution?

4. Could the author tell us more about the origin of Aegean swords? How do the oldest swords date and how could they develop? It is mentioned in the dissertation but I would like to ask the author to elaborate more on this topic

5. The author mentioned metallurgical production in Bronze Age Troy. But could he be more specific? What kind of tools and other evidence do we have, for example, from the EBA contexts?

#### **V. Conclusion**

Considering all strengths and weaknesses of the thesis I provisionally classify the submitted dissertation as **passed**.

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