



FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA  
Univerzita Karlova

## Zápis o obhajobě disertační práce

Akademický rok: 2023/2024

**Jméno a příjmení studenta:** Mgr. Věra Nováková  
**Identifikační číslo studenta:** 85932045

**Typ studijního programu:** doktorský  
**Studijní program:** Egyptologie  
**ID studia:** 381234

**Název práce:** Complexity of Ancient Egyptian Society during the First to Sixth Dynasty Based on Written Sources – The case of Egyptian households

**Pracoviště práce:** Český egyptologický ústav (21-CEGU)  
**Jazyk práce:** angličtina  
**Jazyk obhajoby:** čeština  
**Školitel:** prof. Miroslav Bárta, Dr.  
**Oponent(i):** Susan Anne Kelly, Ph.D.  
Andrzej Ćwiek, Dr.

**Datum obhajoby:** 09.09.2024    **Místo obhajoby:** Praha  
**Termín:** řádný

**Průběh zkoušky:** Obhajoba proběhla hybridně, v anglickém jazyce a s online účastí Mohameda Megaheda a Andrzeje Ćwieka

Představení kandidátky školitelem M. Bártou:

The candidate Věra Nováková started her PhD studies in 2013. She has been an active student, delivered all exams on time. She had the opportunity to participate in a GAČR grant project dedicated to patronage, and she also has experience with museum work. She has participated in international conferences where she presented partial results of her study, and co-organised international a workshop. Since 2016 she also gained experience in field work in Egypt as a member of the Czech Mission in Abusir. Currently she is a member of a GAČR grant project focused on burial containers.

Věra's submitted dissertation is an excellent study focusing on social complexity of Egyptian household based on written sources and iconography, socioeconomic dynamics of the society in the Old Kingdom period. She not only collected the sources but also presented an analysis and interpretation of the data.

Suggested conclusion: passed

Věra Nováková představila svou disertační práci, včetně struktury a pramenů, kde zdůraznila zásadní rozdíl v dostupných pramenech mezi Archaickou dobou a Starou říší, zároveň vysvětlila limitace pramenů a představila výsledky svého výzkumu.

Oponentský posudek Dr. A. Ćwieka:

The reviewer A. Ćwiek was impressed by the extent of the study; acknowledged some minor issues in the section on the Early

Dynastic Period, and stressed out the contribution in the Old Kingdom section, where the quality rather than quantity of the available evidence has been preferred. The conclusions reflects the development of the Egyptian household and constitute a concise continuation of the long term research interest of prof. Barta and his landmark studies of the socioeconomic dynamics of the Old Kingdom society and material culture. This study has also a impact on studies in other periods of Egyptian history, such as for instance the case of Senenmut. The thesis meets all the standards of a PhD dissertation, excellent piece of scientific work, focusing on a particularly important aspect of Egyptian culture. I strongly recommend to publish after slight review.  
Suggested conclusion: passed

Oponentský posudek Dr. S. A. Kelly:

The reviewer S. Kelly highlights the interdisciplinary approach and work with the primary sources in a relatively new innovative framework. The structure is consistent and well executed. The analysis demonstrates that the thesis had importance and impact for interdisciplinary research and other fields. She stresses out the candidate's personal contribution within innovated framework, and her focus not on the main owners of the tombs but on the less well-known people who were depicted in those tombs. The discussion and conclusion offer insights on social complexity and development within the given period.

Suggested conclusion: passed

Reakce kandidátky na oponentské posudky:

The candidate thanked the reviewers for their detailed comments and suggestions.

She acknowledged minor issues in the section of the Early Dynastic Period as suggested by the reviewer SAK, and suggested more study in this respect in the future. She however highlights that these issues had not impacted her overall analysis and conclusions.

She offered a short discussion on Middle Kingdom examples that seem relevant to the discussion and questions raised by the reviewer SAK, and stressed out the limitations of the iconographic material that limit our understanding of the households.

As for the secondary inscriptions, the candidate refers to the works of G. Pieke, J. Hamilton and J. Auenmuller.

In reaction to the reviewer's AC's comments and suggestions, the candidate explained that she used the programs available at the Charles University for the bibliographical references and language check, which sometime give preference to Czech arrangement instead of an English one.

Diskuse:

Prof. Bárta highlights the candidate's major contribution to the study of ancient Egyptian society, which is a continuation of her previous study of sarcophagi of the Old Kingdom. The supervisor highly appreciates her input and dedication to the topic.

Prof. Macháček appreciation that the dissertation focuses on the "ordinary" people, however, he would like to see an archaeological aspect in the study as well. He asks if we can recognise social hierarchy in other sources as well, people's subsistence, can we reflect for instance people's diet – is there a possibility of analysis of bones and isotopes?

VN acknowledges the limitations of the available archaeological material in the studied period.

Prof. Macháček also asked whether we can trace any details about different levels of administration – can there be a comparison between the same type official in different households?

VN provided examples and explained the difficulties and limitations

of the sources that make such interpretations difficult. Assoc. Prof. Vymazalová asked whether we can find any overlap or connection between archaeological material and skeletal material from the Old Kingdom and the written and iconographic sources that form the basis of the dissertation.

VN answers that even though there is a high number of burials associated with tombs of high officials, but it is not possible to connect this material with the sources discussed in the dissertation.

Assoc. prof. J. Krejčí was amazed by the size of the material that the candidate included and appreciates the final concluding remarks. He considers it an excellent piece of scientific work and expresses his hope that the thesis will be published. He suggests that a chapter can be added reflecting settlement materials, e.g. the material from Giza where house units can be studied in archaeological material.

VN mentions some examples of similar studies from other fields (Ugarit) but we face the difficulties to combine the sources available from Egypt during the given period.

Dr. M. Megahed asks about the criteria for the selection of the tombs selected for the dissertation, and to what extent it may have impacted the conclusions.

VN marks the total number of tombs that she went through and the number that was selected for this study. The selection was to have a balanced group of material for each studied period. The selection was however influenced by state of preservation – the tombs with well preserved decorative programs and presence of non-kin associates were preferred in each of the social categories.

Prof. Bareš mentions the case of Wehemka whom VN highlighted as a special case and asks if there are any other similar cases?

VN supposes that yes, but the preservation of sources is not sufficient to connect the sources.

Dr. K. Arias congratulates on the large scope of the thesis and comes back to the question of the archaeological sources from Abusir and the interpretation of the family tombs and material culture. She asks if the candidate could somehow connect her previous study of the sarcophagi to the current subject.

VN explains that she attempted to follow the material side of the tombs as well but it was beyond the scope of this study and no obvious connections could be done at this moment.

Dr. S. Kelly comments of the possibilities of construction of a household from this material and also in the earlier period of the Egyptian history.

VN agrees that this may be done in the future as an addition and elaboration of her research.

Closed part of the discussion:

Věra Nováková was able to answer all the questions and comments in an appropriate manner and with ease, showing that she has mastered the subject of her research.

Conclusion:

The submitted dissertation complies to all requirements of the Faculty of Arts, Charles University.

Pass 6-0

<b>Klasifikace obhajoby:</b>	prospěl/a (P)	
<b>Předseda komise:</b>	Janák Jiří, doc., Th.D.	.....
<b>Členové komise:</b>	Bareš Ladislav, prof. PhDr., CSc.	.....
	Bárta Miroslav, prof., Dr.	.....
	Krejčí Jaromír, doc. Mgr., Ph.D.	.....
	Macháček Jiří, prof. Mgr., Ph.D.	.....
	Megahed Mohamed, Mgr., Ph.D.	.....

**Byl/a jsem seznámen/a s protokolem:**.....