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**The opponent's review of the habilitation thesis by Mgr. Petra Mutlová, M. A., Ph.D:
*The Case of the Other Hussites: Revisiting A Historiographical Construct of the Czech
Reformation.***

The historiographical construct mentioned in the title of Dr Petra Mutlová 's habilitation is the so called "Dresden School", to which scholars of the older (e.g. Bartoš, Sedlák) and the more recent (e.g. Kaminsky, Šmahel, Machilek and many others) generations frequently refer to as to a significant and influential phenomenon in the history of the Hussite movement. Thus a new and well substantiated study of this construct (especially if such a study discusses the very fact of the School's existence and adds a new perspective to the evaluation of the intellectual output of its alleged members) undoubtedly forms an important topic within the frame of historico-philological research concerning the Czech Reformation, which traditionally has been the domain not only of historians but also of classical philologists, as can be seen, e.g. from Jana Nechutová's and Helena Krmičková's brilliant works on the subject.

The topic of the habilitation thesis is formulated very clearly. Scholars refer to the Dresden School as if its existence was a given fact. The aim of the thesis is to reassess the existence of the Dresden School and to rethink the concept of it that prevails in modern scholarship. Dr Petra Mutlová realizes the fact that, first of all, the concept of a "school" requires clarification. She puts forward a couple of possible definitions of a school in the context of late medieval period and undertakes to examine them. In the course of her work, she looks for the reasons why the alleged members of the School could have been later perceived as a group. She tries to find out what could be the bonds keeping the group together and, more broadly, what are the parameters that define the late medieval group. She is interested to know to what extent they influenced the radical Hussites and, more specifically, whether this supposed influence is a sufficient argument to treat their activity as a group one. All these questions are very clearly posited and systematically answered in the course of the habilitation thesis.

Dr Petra Mutlová presents in her work a meticulous analysis of the narrative and biographical sources. The results of the analysis of the direct sources do not confirm the supposition that the School existed, either on institutional ground or that it operated as a group. In the course of her analyses Dr Mutlová manages to change a lot of paradigmatic views concerning Peter of Dresden, Nicholas of Dresden, Peter of Payne, Friedrich Eppinge, John Drändorf and a couple of other persons who, in one way or another, could have been linked to the Dresden School. Dr Mutlová points out not only the mistakes of the pioneering

scholars like Melzer, Uhriz, Boehmer (mainly caused by the lack of previous scholarship and critical editions) but also the errors of recent scholars, like Hoyer and Dumała, who were uncritically committed to the antiquated ideas. Those views needed rectification, which Dr Mutlová's was able to provide.

The indirect sources examination is undertaken by Dr Mutlová in the next steps of her endeavour. First the literary output of the "Dresden School" is examined. In case of unedited works, the revealing information concerning the actual contents of the manuscript sources is given by Dr Mutlová, who also signals the existence of some pieces of writing previously unknown to scholars (see. e.g. p. 73, n. 228). The survey of works attributed to Peter of Dresden is of special value here. Dr Mutlová brings to light his tract on grammatical congruity and shows its traits that might have contributed to the popularity of Peter as a teacher in Prague. Despite one minor misunderstanding concerning the theory of speculative grammar that can be easily corrected, the whole chapter concerning this work of Peter forms a very sound and innovative contribution not only to the reconstruction of the teaching activity of Peter and his links to the Black Rose House in Prague but also to the study of medieval theoretical grammar. The chapter on *Parvulus philosophiae naturalis (PPN)*, attributed to Peter, is equally ground-breaking. It contains a fascinating discussion on the dating of its manuscripts and another discussion of the most recent scholarship on the *PPN* (e.g. P. Kärkkäinen (2009) A. Verboon (2014, 2017)). The subject of this kind of analysis is not only Nicholas's and Peter's of Dresden output. Dr Mutlová provides also information about the works by Friedrich Eppinge, Peter Turnau, Peter Payne, John Drändorf, Peter Turnau and Conradus Stoecklin and examines the characteristics of their texts that could possibly connect the authors with the supposed Dresden School.

Other kinds of indirect evidence found and meticulously studied by Dr Mutlová were analysed with the aim of finding out whether the Dresden scholars were linked together by common teaching, shared doctrine, or whether the name was given *ex post* because of the activities of the possible disciples or followers. On the basis of the teaching evidence, she proves that the Dresdeners must have contributed to the proliferation of many attractive ideas. Still, she claims that the connection between the two phases of the School: the first one in Dresden and the second one in Prague, which was assumed in earlier scholarship, cannot be proved on the basis of the available evidence. She also finds it impossible to answer positively the question about doctrinal unity of the alleged members of the School (which is exemplified, among others, by the striking lack of connection between Eppinge's treatise and the manifesto by Drändorf and Turnau). Her discussion of the problem results in sorting out the most recent scholarship concerning the doctrine of Nicholas of Dresden as well as in opening up a new perspective for the future research in the field. In fact, it is mainly Nicholas's views that are taken into consideration in the discussion of the activity of the alleged group of disciples and then in the discussion of possible later influence of the School, which can be traced in the activities of the followers. These two kinds of possible activities are very systematically studied by Dr Mutlová. The manuscripts of the *Tabule veteris et novi coloris* by Nicholas of Dresden are successfully examined by her. Her analysis

of the content of the texts includes the scrutiny of the incomplete manuscripts (especially the crucial testimony of the Herrnhut manuscript) neglected by previous scholars. Consequently she offers a new reconstruction of the intriguing content of the *Tabule* and discovers the links connecting them with the students of Prague University taking part in the street riots of 1412 and 1414. The tracing of the School's influence is achieved through painstaking codicological and philological work. As a result, Nicholas's *Tabule* is shown in an entirely new light.

Dr Mutlová has carefully examined the 15th century attempts at copying Nicholas's works (in a form of *sui generis* collected works), going through all extant manuscripts of them. She has also explained the importance of the medieval index to Nicholas's *Apologia* for his followers. As a result, she provided new evidence for the existence of the followers of the School or, at least, of the followers of Nicholas. Last but not least, a very persuasive analysis of two texts, which Dr Mutlová proves to be parts of one longer work aimed at the refutation of a cluster of ideas specific to Nicholas's *Tabule*, corroborates Kaminsky's hypothesis that those works served as an answer to the promotional activities of the Nicholas's followers. Thus, in terms of "hard" evidence, only the dissemination of Nicholas of Dresden's ideas can be confirmed. In Dr Mutlová's own words: "in some sense the School definitely existed (and exists today): as an historiographical construct and fiction" (p. 174).

Thanks to Dr Mutlová's habilitation thesis, we have a much clearer picture of the links that connected (or - in some cases – did not connect) the Dresdeners. Owing to the new analysis of previously known sources and of recently discovered manuscripts (a part of them was found by Dr Mutlová herself) we have received an updated survey of scholarly and doctrinal positions of the individual members of the alleged school and of their involvement in the process of the Czech Reformation. Dr Mutlová's research without doubt is an attempt at studying the phenomenon of the group of the "other" Hussites in a wider transregional context – and not only as non-Czech, or German phenomenon. Her attitude may be compared to the one presented in the books written and co-edited by Michael Van Dussen, especially to *Religious Controversy in Europe, 1378–1536. Textual Transmission and Networks of Readership* (ed. by Michael Van Dussen and Pavel Soukup, Turnhout: Brepols, 2013) combining the manuscript studies with the study of the formation of group identities. Parallely the habilitation thesis by Dr Petra Mutlová can be located in the mainstream of the current research concerning the late-medieval religious controversies alongside the other volume of recent studies edited by M. Van Dussen and J. P. Hornbeck II - *Europe after Wyclif* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2017). Thanks to the beneficial combination of philological and historical approach, Dr Mutlová's habilitation thesis contributes vastly to the field of Classical Philology.

I have already assessed Dr Mutlová's methodological approach above. So let me sum it up shortly. Thanks to the historico-philological method, Dr Mutlová supplements historical evidence with textual interpretation based on manuscript evidence, which is the most appropriate attitude to the topic in question.

Dr Mutlová shows the highest analytical skills. Her scrutiny of texts is performed with logical precision and clarity. Her codicological and manuscript research is of best quality. The bibliography is updated and complete; footnotes, citations, text arrangement meet the formal standard of research works.

In the light of the above, I state that without any doubt Dr Petra Mutlová 's habilitation thesis meets (and indeed surpasses) all standard requirements placed on habilitation theses in the field of Classical Philology.

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