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## Testimony on the thesis (habilitacni prace) of Mgr. Ladislav Koren, PhD

with the title:

### Practices of Reason

Koren's monograph belongs to the subject areas philosophy of language, social ontology, philosophy of action and practice. It offers an important scientific contribution to the subject, standing in a kind of debate with Dan Sperber, *Explaining Culture*. Cambridge Univ. Pr. 1996 and Mercier/Sperber, *The Enigma of Reason*, Cambridge Univ. Pr. 2017. Koren shows that a modern approach urgently has to introduce and evaluate the results of M. Tomasello on one side, R. Brandom on the other.

Koren's book defends a kind of relaxed naturalism in its theoretical analysis of the emergence of human sapience. Even though some readers might be sceptical with respect to the methodological order in any explanation that rests on a historical (re-) construction of an evolutionary story, the book presents such an approach in its most developed way, using two main ideas of methodological individualism, namely Bratman's and Tomasello's shared intentions and Brandom's scorekeeping inferentialism.

The work's academic quality is, without question, very high. It presents new material in the debate of grounding linguistic understanding on joint attention and practices (in the tradition of Michael Tomasello) and the normativity of reason (in the 'inferentialist' tradition of Robert Brandom and Jaroslav Peregrin). There is a growing interest in the area as the publications of John

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Searle, Michael Tomasello, Robert Brandom, Hans Bernhard Schmid, but also Heikki Ikaheimo, Aarto Laatinen and many others show.

The book will have quite some international appeal. It fits very well into an ongoing and developing international debate about the social foundations of language and reason, in philosophy, social anthropology, pedagogical psychology and social ontology. It is not a handbook or overview for graduate or even undergraduate students, but a high-score contribution to an ongoing scientific debate (hence it is a book for academic researchers). It is indeed a high-level research work by a single author. It covers all the topics that should be included. The book is well-structured and, as I have said it is a pleasure to read it. It will have its international audience under academic researches and graduate or doctoral students.

All in all, the scholarship of the book is, to my judgment, outstanding. It is well-written; I did not encounter any factual errors or academic mistakes. It is even a very readable book in very good English without any language error or misprint – as far as I could see. There are virtually no typographical or other minor grammatical/stylistic errors. The overall quality of the writing is astoundingly high.

Ladislav Koren has proven not least by this book that he is a leading researcher in our field, i.e. in philosophy, but especially in the subfields of philosophy of language, social philosophy and philosophical anthropology. He is top in the Czech Republic with quite some international visibility. He is highly qualified for being a full professor resp. receiving Dr.sc. (old denomination) or habilitace.

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(Prof. Dr. Pirmin Stekeler-Weithofer)