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Supervisor's review of Olga Flegonotova's Ph.D.

I saw Olga for the first time at 2010 Christmas party. I do not remember the color of her hair, just recollect the fairy-like creature with strong Russian accent. Next time, it was over the lunch in 2011, Jula Lukeš presented me a package-deal. The lab, Tara Oceans topic and graduate student – Ola, what do you think? Hard to say “No” to such an offer, right? And that's how it all started both for me and Ola. She was my first PhD student and also a first student for me after quite a long time. So, I was not sure how to approach it first. I was a lousy PhD student myself, but I really appreciated the freedom my supervisor gave me and I tried similar approach with Ola.

I have to admit she did not seem to be the most driven/motivated student at the very beginning. Or better, I probably wasn't doing the best job to motivate her. But she's grown. She is still far from confident I-know-everything style of PhD student you sometimes meet at conference. On the other hand, during the past four and half years, she worked hard in many aspects and she is definitely much better a scientist than she was at the beginning. Which I hope you'll be able to see from the presentation she is about to give today. And also from her PhD thesis, which is excellent, in my opinion. Well, this is probably not surprising. But on the top of that steady improvement and growth, she showed initiative, persistence and sturdiness and for example organized herself, survived and brought samples from weeks-lasting sampling trip on rough northern sea. I know I would die there within few days. I hope the five manuscripts/drafts presented in her thesis (and some of them are really nice and impacting) will not be the final score from her stay in my lab and she will not regret it at least CV-wise. I definitely do not regret having her here, wholeheartedly recommend her thesis to be defended as a last step on her way to PhD diploma and wish Ola all the best in her future career and personal life.

Aleš Horák, thesis supervisor

