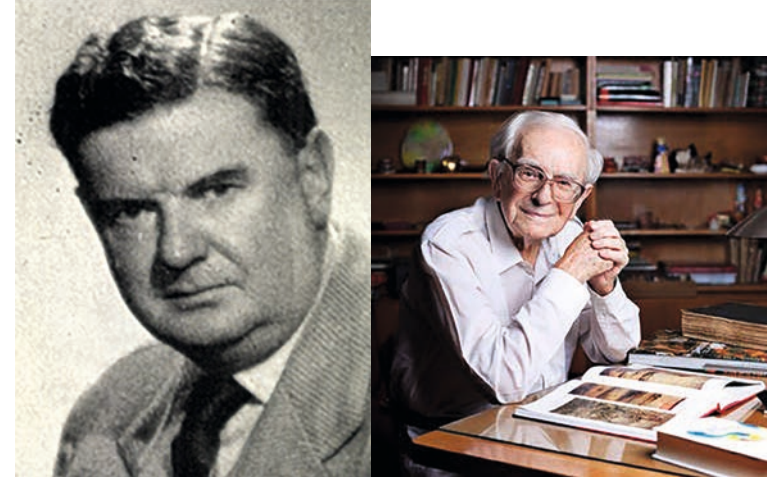


**Jaroslav Průšek** (普實克, 1906–1980) was a sinologist. He graduated from Charles University in Classic history. He learned Chinese in private before continuing his studies under Bernard Karlgren (1889–1978) and Gustav Haloun (1908–1951) first in Göteborg and later in Halle, where he finished his doctoral degree in 1930. Průšek was employed by the Oriental Institute and in 1932 sent to China and Japan. He returned to Czechoslovakia in 1937 and taught Chinese and Japanese. In 1945 Průšek started the Department of East Asian Studies at Charles University and was one of the founders of the journal *Nový Orient* [New Orient]. Průšek was a close friend of Fischer and between 1946–1948 taught in Olomouc. He developed the Olomouc sinology program and trained Augustin Palát, who replaced Průšek in 1948. In 1952 Průšek became the director of the Oriental Institute in Prague. He was forced out in 1971 during the Normalisation that followed the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia of 1968. He is known for his work on mediaeval and modern Chinese literature, oral tradition and history of Chinese civilisation.

**Augustin Palát** (1923–2016) was a student of Průšek and replaced him in Olomouc in 1948, when Průšek could no longer fulfil his commitments in both Prague and Olomouc. Palát taught in Olomouc until 1951, when the Oriental Studies were closed. After several years in the diplomatic services he returned to the Oriental Institute until his forced retirement in 1973, under similar circumstances as Průšek. He produced a number of language textbooks and works on Chinese medieval history. He is known for his translations of Tang poetry.

**Karel Werner** (1925–2019) was an indologist and religious studies scholar. He belonged to the circle around Josef Ludvík Fischer who attracted him to Olomouc. He studied philosophy and classical Chinese with Jaroslav Průšek. Privately he learned Sanskrit and modern Chinese. Later he pursued the studies of Chinese under Vincenc Lesný and became an assistant in the Indology section. He defended his PhD in comparative linguistics and appointed to teach Sanskrit and Indian history. After the Oriental Studies



Far left: Jaroslav Průšek (普實克, 1906–1980) Source: Czech Academy of Sciences.

Near left: Augustin Palát (1923–2016). Source: Lu Xun Library, Oriental Institute Prague.

in Olomouc were closed down in the autumn of 1951, Werner became one of the early victims of Communist prosecution. He lost his academic position, despite the appeals by Lesný and Fischer. During the 1950s he worked as a clerk. Privately he continued his studies and published in academic journals in the UK, Germany, India and Sri Lanka, which led the Secret Police to bring spying charges against him. He was sent to work in coal mines, worked as a plumber and a tram driver during the 1960s.

During the same period Werner turned his attention to hatha yoga and led a secret circle of practitioners and published about it in samizdat. His appeal for rehabilitation in 1968 was turned down and he left to exile two days after the Soviet occupation in August 1968. He became a Cambridge University librarian and was appointed as a supervisor of Sanskrit in Churchill College. In 1969 Werner was appointed Lecturer in Indian Philosophy and Religion in the University of Durham where he remained for the rest of his career.

### 1991: Asian studies starts for the third time

In 1991 the rector of UP Josef Jařab initiated the reopening of Chinese philology. The task was entrusted to Jiří Černý, Head of Department of Romance languages. The Far East Section was established and scholars were recruited to prepare the Chinese and Japanese programmes. In the pre-Bologna system, these were five-year double-degree programmes initially in combination with English philology. Both programmes admitted their first students in September 1993. The Chinese programme was developed by Lucie Olivová (\*1956, presently at Masaryk University in Brno) and Oldřich Švarný (1920–2011). The Japanese programme was developed by Alice Kraemerová (\*1950) and Pavel Flanderka (\*1962).

In 2002 the Far East Section became the Department of Asian Studies. The department was led between 2002–2014 by David Uher (\*1970), between 2014–2016 by Ivona Barešová (\*1974) and since 2017 by František Kratochvíl (\*1976). The department gradually expanded in both student numbers and its programme offer. It started language courses for Korean and Malay, which were developed into full-fledged programmes. Korean for Business (BA) was opened in 2015. It was followed in 2016 by Indonesian for Tourism (BA) and Vietnamese (BA) in 2019. All five language specialisations are included within a single MA programme in Asian studies from 2019. Finally, the department offers two doctoral programmes (Languages and Cultures of China and Japan & Asian studies). Over the last three decades the student enrolment has grown steadily in both BA and MA programmes. In 2019, over 200 students were admitted to the five undergraduate programmes and about 40 to the MA programme.

An important figure for the department was Oldřich Švarný (1920–2011), a phonologist and orientalist. Švarný studied European languages and later also Chinese and phonetics at the Charles University in Prague. In 1951 he joined the Oriental Institute in Prague, where Jaroslav Průšek assigned him to study Spoken Chinese and to develop a Czech romanisation system for Chinese. He lost his position at the Oriental Institute

under similar circumstances as Průšek and Palát in 1976. He returned to the academic life in 1990s and taught in Olomouc from 1994. His life-work is a prosodic description of spoken Chinese, based on a large transcribed corpus of recordings accompanied by a grammatical description. A research cluster led by David Uher continues Švarný's work on Chinese prosody.

The department publishes its own journal *Dálný východ* [Far East]; its editor-in-chief is David Uher (<https://kas.upol.cz/en/academics-research/journals/dalny-vychod-far-east/>) Its most recent issue is dedicated to Švarný's work on the prosody of Spoken Chinese that appeared in English or German and summarises his work published in Czech.

Research interests of the department members cover a wide range of topics from linguistics to international relations and history. Recent titles published in English are:

- *On 'doing friendship' in and through talk: Exploring conversational interactions of Japanese young people* (H. Zawiszová, 2018),
- *Koreans in Central Europe: To Yu-ho, Han Hüng-su, and Others* (A. Schirmer, 2018),
- *Japanese Given Names: A Window Into Contemporary Japanese Society* (I. Barešová, 2016),
- *The exotic other and negotiation of Tibetan self: representation of Tibet in Chinese and Tibetan fiction of the 1980s* (K. Hladíková, 2013).

The Department also organises an Annual Conference of Asian Studies (<http://acas.upol.cz>) and a Summer School for graduate students.

While we still face various challenges, we believe that we are becoming a mature member of the European Alliance of Asian Studies that can educate the next generation of Czech Asia scholars and offer a distinct view on Asian cultures and peoples worthy of our predecessors.

Contributors to article:

František Kratochvíl, Sylva Martinásková, Iveta Nakládalová, Joanna Ut-Seong Sio, Richard Tursanyi.

Notes

- 1 *Litterae indipetae* (short for *litterae ad Indiam petentes*) are petitionary letters by Jesuits sent to their generals asking for foreign missions. Only a fraction were granted their wish; for example, out of 114 such petitions in Poland, only 4 were granted. See Miazek-Męczyńska, M. 2018. 'Polish Jesuits and Their Dreams about Missions in China, According to the *Litterae indipetae*', *Journal of Jesuit Studies* 5(3):404–420. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/22141332-00503004>
- 2 Camenietzki, C.Z. 2003. 'The Celestial Pilgrimages of Valentin Stansel (1621–1705), Jesuit Astronomer and Missionary in Brazil', in Feingold M. (ed.) *The New Science and Jesuit Science: Seventeenth Century Perspectives*. Springer.
- 3 Boye, E. de. 1691. *Vita et Obitus venerabilis patris Augustini Strobach è Societate Iesu ex Provincia Bohemiae pro insulis Marianis electi Missionarii, et à Rebellibus Sanctae Fidei in iisdem insulis barbarè trucidati Anno 1684. Mense Augusto*. Olomucii: Typis Joannis Josephi Kylvian. E-book: <http://eod.vkol.cz/34415>
- 4 Liščák, V. 2014. 'Franciscan Missions to China and the Czech Crown Lands (from the 16th to the 18th Century)', *Archiv Orientální* 82:829–841.



## Central European Institute of Asian Studies

The Central European Institute of Asian Studies (CEIAS) <https://ceias.eu> is an independent think tank with branches in the cities of Bratislava (Slovakia), Olomouc (Czech Republic), and Vienna (Austria). Building upon the activities of the Institute of Asian Studies in Bratislava, CEIAS is a joint venture of the Institute of Asian Studies, Palacký University's project 'Sinophone Borderlands – Interaction at the edges', the Austrian Institute for European and Security Policy, and the Department of East Asian Studies at Comenius University.

The main purpose of CEIAS is to spread knowledge about Asia among scholars, experts and professionals in Central Europe and beyond, while at the same time to inform the wider world about Central European engagements with Asia.

To meet our aims, we conduct and publish our own research, organize public seminars and conferences, support education about relevant Asian topics, and communicate with the media. Our activities focus mainly on international relations and security studies in the geographical regions of East, Southeast, South, and Central Asia. CEIAS cooperates with similar organizations and like-minded individuals in the region and beyond to help achieve our goals. CEIAS researchers are regularly quoted and contacted by media in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and beyond on a wide range of issues, especially related to China and international relations.

Some of the notable CEIAS publications include:

- Monthly briefing about most important policy-related news from Asia (in Slovak/Czech language): <https://ceias.eu/sk/asia-briefing-2>
- Bi-monthly briefing about Central and Eastern Europe's relations with Asia (in English, starting from January 2020).
- Chinese Media Watch: overview of Chinese media discourse of various policy-related issues with the connection to (Central) Europe: <https://ceias.eu/chinese-media-watch-2>
- CEIAS Insights: our op-ed section covering broad range of topics: <https://ceias.eu/sk/ias-insights>
- Research papers: Some recent ones discussed issues related to (Central) Europe's relations with China and East Asia, domestic issues in China, or other aspects of Chinese international relations including soft power or Belt and Road Initiative: <https://ceias.eu/policy-papers-2>

CEIAS participates in international projects and initiatives. Most recently these have included:

- ChinfluencE: Research and public awareness project mapping Chinese influence in Central Europe: [www.chinfluence.eu](http://www.chinfluence.eu)
- CHOICE: An initiative grouping researchers and 'China watchers' from Central and Eastern Europe: [www.chinaobservers.eu](http://www.chinaobservers.eu)
- ETNC: European Think Tank Network on China as of 2019 and participates in all the activities of the network, including workshops, publications, and presentations of the findings to the public.



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