

PRELIMINARY REMARKS ON PRAGUE SCHOOL OF SINOLOGY I*

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The aim of this study is to analyse the lives and works of 22 Czech and Slovak Sinologists around Professor Jaroslav Průšek, the members of the Prague School of Sinology from the 1950s to the occupation of Czechoslovakia by the armies of the Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact in 1968, and partly also later. The Prague School of Sinology became admired by many in the West owing to its achievements in the realms mainly of modern and traditional Chinese literature, linguistics and partly of history and philosophy, but up to now these were not satisfactorily analysed in the scholarly literature. It shows the "reality and myth" around this extraordinary phenomenon in the history of European Sinology.

Key words: Prague School of Sinology, Jaroslav Průšek, history and philosophy, linguistics, literature, translation

The Prague School of Sinology was often mentioned in the Sinological literature, but never analysed, except for relatively many essays of a "cataloguing" character, mostly devoted to simply enumerating the biographical data of the authors, enumerating their works, sometimes with simple remarks about their contents. Most of them probably never had in their hands the works they were presenting to the readers, or never read them more carefully.¹ This

* The second part of the essay follows in the next issue Asian and African Studies, Vol. 20, No.1, 2011.

¹ These essays were written mostly in Chinese: Xu Zongcai 徐宗才: "Jieke hanxuejia" 捷克汉学家 Czech Sinologists. *Zhonghua wenhua yanjiu* 中华文化研究 *Studies in Chinese Culture*, 1995–1997 and *Hanxue yanjiu* 汉学研究 *Sinological Studies*, Vol. 2, 1997, pp. 332–355, "Siluofake hanxuejia" 斯洛伐克汉学家 Slovak Sinologists, *ibid.*, 3,

short essay is not meant to be a history of the Prague School of Sinology. That will remain probably to be written later by somebody better prepared for the job. It is a topic for a long monograph or a whole book.

The Prague School of Sinology has its own relatively long prehistory. Long before it took its shape in the 1950s, its roots and sources, already existed in the 1880s. Although not a Sinologist, Julius Zeyer, could be regarded as one of the first precursors.²

The second precursor was Rudolf Dvořák, the founder of Czech Oriental Studies. He was one year younger than Zeyer, but he died 19 years later. He was not only a Sinologist, but studied Egyptology, Assyriology, Arabian, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew, Japanese and Manchu languages. I mentioned already his books on Confucius and translation of one third of the *Shijing* 诗经 (*Book of Songs*) into Czech.³ His *Laotsiova kanonická kniha o Tau a ctnosti* (Tao-tek-king) (*Laozi's Classic Book Daode jing*) published in the year of his death became well known in the Czech Lands.⁴ Before that the English

4, 1997. Zhu Weihua 朱伟华, Wang Longde 王龙德: *Chali daxue* 查理大学 *Charles University*. Changsha, Hunan jiaoyu chubanshe 1996, pp. 172–186, Yao Ning 姚宁: “Jieke hanxue jianshi yu xianzhuang” 捷克汉学简史 A Short History of Czech Sinology and its Present State. *Guoji hanxue* 国际汉学 *International Sinology*, Vol. 6, 2000, pp. 425–448 and “Jieke Dongfang yanjiusuo” 捷克东方研究所 Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, *ibid.*, pp. 449–455, Li Mei 李梅 “Jieke hanxuejia, Zangxuejia Gao Mashi fangtanlu 捷克汉学家, 藏学家高马士 An Interview with Czech Sinologist Josef Kolmaš, *International Sinology*, Vol. 10, 2004, pp. 18–25, and Ye Rong 叶蓉: “Hanxue yu hanyu jiaoxue zai Siluofake 汉学与汉语学在斯洛伐克 Sinology and Chinese Teaching in Slovakia, *Shijie hanyu jiaoxue* 世界汉语教学 *Chinese Teaching in the World*, 1, 2003, pp. 105–110. The essays written in English and short bio-bibliographical sketches are as follows: Palát, A.: “On the History of Czech Sinology from the End of the 19th Century to the Present”, in *Europe Studies China. Papers from an International Conference on the History of European Sinology*. London: Han-shan Tang 1995, pp. 26–44, Doleželová-Velingerová Milena: “European Studies of Modern Chinese Literature”, *ibid.*, pp. 368–401, Čarnogurská, M. “Forty Years of Sinology in Slovakia”, in *European Association of Chinese Studies, Survey no. 5*, n.p., 1996, pp. 40–47, and Filipský, J. (ed.): *Čeští a slovenští orientalisté, afrikanisté a iberoamerikanisté (Czech and Slovak Orientalists, Africanists and Iberoamericanists)*, Prague 1999, 620 p.

² Cf. my studies in my book *Jieke he Siluofake hanxue yanjiu* 捷克和斯洛伐克汉学研究 *Studies in Czech and Slovak Sinology*. Peking: Xueyuan chubanshe 2009, 250 p. Henceforth only *JSHY*.

³ Cf. my study on the translation of the Chinese works into Czech in *JSHY*.

⁴ Kladno: Jar. Šnajdr 1920, 128 p.

Sinologist Edward H. Parker highlighted Dvořák's book *Lao-tsi und seine Lehre* from the year 1903 as "admirable" and characterized it as the "supreme effort" of Taoist exegesis.⁵

Probably for many it would sound strange, but I regard Bohumil Mathesius as the third precursor of the Prague School of Sinology. In comparison with the two just mentioned, he was not a "universal" writer of Oriental themes like the first or a "universal" Orientalist like the second, but in the 1930s and 1940s with his translations-adaptations of traditional Chinese poetry into Czech, he well prepared the Czech literary structure for the reception of Chinese literature and, maybe, to some extent even for the Czech Sinology. He was also widely read among the Slovak intellectuals.⁶

Prague was relatively well prepared for Chinese studies during the second half of the 19th and first half of the 20th centuries. There were no Sinologists apart from Dvořák and the young Jaroslav Průšek 普实克, but there were the Western books and translations, mostly in the Library of Vojta Náprstek's Museum and in the National Library.⁷ It seems to me that they were not widely used by Průšek or by his students, but they probably helped, together with Mathesius' translations to prepare the Czech soil for the reception of Chinese culture. What the future Czech Sinologists needed most were the Chinese books and the journals which came to Prague on Průšek's initiative in 1950.⁸

Jaroslav Průšek, the founder of Prague School of Sinology 布拉格汉学派, is well-known in China, although more in a mythical attire, and not as the real personality, one of the most outstanding in the world of Sinology in the second half of the 20th century. In the PRC he is known on the basis of his book from his young years *Sestra moje Čína* 中国我的姐妹 (*My Sister China*), published in a Chinese version in 2005⁹ and 普实克中国现代文学论文集, from the year 1989,¹⁰ translated into Chinese on the basis of 李欧梵 (*1939) English version of Průšek's essays entitled *The Lyrical and the Epic. Studies of Modern Chinese Literature*, published in 1980.¹¹ His other scholarly works, even probably more valuable, have not been translated into Chinese.

⁵ Ibid., p. 7.

⁶ Cf. my study on Mathesius' and Průšek's translations in *JSHY*.

⁷ Cf. my studies on Zeyer in *JSHY*.

⁸ See my remarks at the end of this essay.

⁹ Peking: Waiyu jiaoxue yu yanjiu chubanshe, 429 p. Its English version appeared under the title: *My Sister China*. Prague: The Carolinum Press 2002, 477 p.

¹⁰ Changsha: Hunan wei yi chubanshe, 253 p.

¹¹ Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 268 p.

In the selection by 李欧梵 we find Průšek's most influential and probably best scholarly work "Subjectivism and Individualism in Modern Chinese Literature" (中国现代文学中的主观主义和个人主义), a paper read at the IXth Conference of Junior Sinologists in Paris, 1956. It was quoted many times, not only by Sinologists, and contributed to better understanding of modern Chinese and Japanese literature.¹²

It is a pity that according to my, maybe, not complete information, not one of Průšek's studies devoted to traditional Chinese literature, mostly to *huaben* 话本 novellas, or prompt-books, has been translated into Chinese. I have in mind his booklet entitled *The Origins and the Authors of the Hua-pen* from the year 1967¹³ and his most important, but also last collection of scholarly essays *Chinese History and Literature: Collection of Studies* from the year 1970.¹⁴ Certainly some of them would be very interesting for the students of Chinese medieval popular literature and also for those who would like to know more about Sino-Western literary confrontation in this field, from the 1930s to the 1950s, or even 1960, hardly studied in the West. Průšek's very close collaboration with Zheng Zhenduo 郑振铎 (1898–1958) and with Ma Lian 马廉 (1893–1935), with the Japanese scholars Shionoya On 鹽谷温 (1878–1962) and Nagasawa Kikuya 长泽规矩也 (1902–1980) was something extraordinary among the Western and Chinese or Japanese scholars.

The books by Průšek's and the studies by him published earlier, were read by the Western scholars. I have in mind especially John Lyman Bishop's book *The Colloquial Short Story in China, A Study of the San-yen Collections*,¹⁵ and two studies by Cyril Birch: "Some Formal Characteristics of the Hua-pen Story" and "Feng Meng-lung and Ku Chin Hsiao Shuo", the first from the year 1955 and the second from the year 1956, both published in the journal *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*.¹⁶ When I read Průšek's extensive review article entitled: "New Studies of the Chinese Colloquial Short Story" published originally in 1957, I was astonished by its critical attitude to the works of both authors. In 1992 when I had the opportunity to meet Cyril Birch at the Hong Kong Chinese University, where we were studying and working at the Institute of Chinese Culture, I asked Cyril Birch about his opinion. He told me, that during their meeting Průšek apologized himself, saying that he did not know that Birch was so young at the time he wrote both studies.

¹² Cf. my essay on Průšek as myth and reality in *JSHY*.

¹³ Prague: Academia 1967, 158 p.

¹⁴ Prague and Dordrecht: Academia and D. Reidel Publishing House 1970, 588 p.

¹⁵ Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press 1956, XI, 145 p.

¹⁶ Vol. XVII, P.II, pp. 346–364 and Vol. XVIII, P.I., pp. 64–83.

One year after publication of *Chinese History and Literature*, just as Průšek has done after Bishop and Birch, Professor Liu Ts'un-Yan 柳存仁 (1917–2009) wrote a long review: “Jaroslav Průšek’s *Chinese History and Literature: Collection of Studies*, that appeared at first in the *Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia*, VII, 1971, 1-2, and was later reprinted in Professor Liu’s *Selected Papers from the Hall of Harmonious Wind* in the year 1976.¹⁷ I do not know whether or not Průšek read this review. After reading it, I probably understood what was behind Liu’s intention: pointing to Průšek’s critique mostly of Birch, which seemed to him “to be unnecessarily acidulous and harsh”.¹⁸ According to Liu, Průšek “has expressed strong criticism” of Professors Fang Chao-ying 房兆楹 (1908–1985), T’an Cheng-pi 譚正璧 (1901–1991) and several others.¹⁹ Liu’s review is a long enumeration of the errors and inaccuracies in Průšek’s book under review. I am not able to be judge in this case. But I suppose that Professor Liu was often, if not always right. Whether he did it “dispassionately”, or not, I also cannot decide, but he also highlighted Průšek’s book rightly as “indispensable for scholars who are doing research in this particular field, and also for general readers interested in gaining some knowledge of the most significant aspects of Chinese popular literature”.²⁰ This kind of “strong criticism” in the Sinological field, Průšek used once more when reviewing C.T. Hsia’s 夏志清 book in 1962.²¹ This did not occur again in the changed ideological atmosphere.

Ten years ago, one of Průšek’s best students, belonging to the Prague School of Sinology said at one festive occasion: “Průšek knew much, but his knowledge was not always exact.” And not only he among his students in Prague were of the same opinion. Průšek was a man of ideas and of creative fancy. He was a very good organizer and was able, due to his political allegiance and friendly ties to those in power up to about 1962, to receive enough financial and other means to build up a solid basis for his many projects in different fields of Sinology and outside of it.

Without Průšek there would be no Prague School of Sinology and without him very probably the development of Oriental studies in Czechoslovakia would not have been so prosperous up to 1968, or would have gone in a different direction. The invasion of the armies of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries on 21 August 1968, to crush the Prague Spring, caused the

¹⁷ Leiden: E.J. Brill 1976, pp. 376–391.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 390.

¹⁹ Loc. cit.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 391.

²¹ Leo Ou-fan Lee, op. cit., pp. 195–230.

end of the promising development in the Czech Lands of the former Czechoslovakia.

Průšek's most devoted *aide-de-camp* from beginning to the end was Professor **Augustín Palát** 白利德 (*1923). If Průšek's were the ideas and creative fancy, political and friendly connections, Palát always knew how to put them into practice. As the Vice-Director of the Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, he was everyday sitting in small room beside Průšek's more comfortable room with the chair and sofa made of leather and big table, prepared to help the more than one hundred employees of the Institute, among them about twenty Sinologists. Before he took this post in the Academy, Palát was a teacher of Chinese language at the Palacký University in Olomouc and later at the Charles University in Prague. He was my first teacher of Chinese in the years 1953–1954. After his stay in the PRC in 1954–1959, but also before, he devoted much time to the translation of Chinese literature into Czech and to popularizing works, mostly of a historical character. The best of this kind is his book *Čínská lidová republika (The People's Republic of China)*.²² His *magnum opus* is *Il medioevo cinese (China in the Middle Ages)* from the year 1983,²³ written together with Jaroslav Průšek, appeared in 2001 in its Czech version entitled: *Středověká Čína*.²⁴ Because of this work was Palát chosen a Corresponding Member of the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente in Rome.

From 1973, when Palát was thrown out of the Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, until 1989, he had to live as a clandestine translator of Sinological literature (Robert van Gulik and Walter Böttger), published under the names of his colleagues, or as an interpreter for the Prague Information Service.

Timoteus Pokora (1928–1985), another outstanding member of the Prague School of Sinology, was also a historian, but more interested in the history of philosophy, mostly of the Han Dynasty (207 B.C. –220 A.D.) His main and most influential work was the book *Hsin-lun 新论 (New Treatise) and Other Writings by Huan T'an 桓譚 (43 B.C. –28 A.D.)*,²⁵ which was positively received by the well-known scholars. I personally suppose that his most favourite ancient Chinese philosopher was Wang Chong 王充 (27–97). He wrote his M.A. thesis about Wang Chong's philosophy in 1954 and in 1971 he

²² Prague: Svoboda 1970.

²³ Torino: UTET 1983, 662 p.

²⁴ Prague: DharmaGaia 2001, 380 p.

²⁵ An Arbor: Michigan papers in Chinese Studies, No. 20, 1975, 50, 414 p.

published his extensive Czech translation: *Wang Čchung: Kritická pojednání (Lun-cheng). Výbor z díla čínského filosofa 1. stol. n.l. (Wang Chong: Critical Essays (Lunheng). A Selection from the Work of a Chinese Philosopher of the 1st cent. A.D.)*²⁶ In his nearly 70 pages long “Úvod” (Introduction) to this translation he asserts in the year 1967 that the “chief task now is the translation of the whole preserved work of Huan Tan together with systematic comparison with Wang Chong’s *Critical Essays*. The aim of this endeavour is the same as of this introduction: to find out the proportion of the materialist and unorthodox mind in the development of Chinese philosophy.”²⁷

Pokora was able to read in English, German, French, Russian, Italian and Chinese. He was an enthusiastic reviewer of international Sinological works, he corresponded with many colleagues mostly working in philosophy and history. As a good friend of the Hungarian Sinologist Ferenc Tökei (1930–2000), Pokora shared with him interest in the study of the Marxist Asian mode of production and with Guo Moruo 郭沫若 (1892–1979) and other Chinese historians the problem of slave-holding society in ancient China. During his stay in China in 1956–1957 he had the possibility to discuss the questions of common interest with Professor Zhu Qianzhi 朱谦之 (1899–1972), and later to read the lectures at the University of Heidelberg (1965–1966) and to study at the Michigan University, Ann Arbor (1969–1970). In the years preceding the Prague Spring he joined actively the democratization process led by Alexander Dubček and was later compelled to leave the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, like some other colleagues among the Sinologists in the Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. In 1973, like all others thrown out of the Party he had to earn for his livelihood as an interpreter up to the end of his life. He did not interrupt his scholarly work even in his most difficult times and published his essays or reviews under pseudonyms, or under the names of his colleagues who had better fates during the years of “normalization” in the 1970s.

Pokora died prematurely in his 57th year. He was the most prolific among Průšek’s students. All his publications amount to around 1,000 items. *Timoteus Pokora: Bibliografie (1952–1987)*²⁸ from the year 1994 contains 650. About one third of them not concerned with the Orient, or less important, are omitted.

A volume *O čínské filosofii, literatuře a umění (On Chinese Philosophy, Literature and Art)* has been published commemorating the 10th anniversary of his death.²⁹

²⁶ Prague: Academia 1971, 467 p.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 75.

²⁸ Prague: Oriental Institute 1994, 60 p.

²⁹ Prague: Czech-Chinese Society 1995.

Josef Kolmaš 高马士 (*1933) was the last among Průšek's students to occupy the post of Director of the Oriental Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (new name after 1993) in the years 1994–2002.

Kolmaš is a Tibetologist and Sinologist, specializing in history and religion, and a translator from Tibetan, Chinese, English, Russian, and what is now something unusual: also from mediaeval Latin. Kolmaš studied Latin for six years at the classical gymnasium in Velehrad led by the Fathers of the Society of Jesus. He was my school-fellow at the Philological Faculty of Charles University where we studied Sinology and the History of the Far East. We both selected Tibetan as the second Oriental language for a year with Professor Pavel Poucha with the difference that for him Tibetan studies became the main object of interest. After coming to Prague after reaching the M.A. degree, he has chosen Zhongyang minzu xueyuan (The Central Institute of Minority Nationalities) (1957–1959) and me Peking University (1958–1960). He was like my older brother (although he is some months younger) introducing me to the methods of study at the university (although I never followed his advice), and in Peking to its peculiarities. He remained my devoted friend to whom I was much closer than to others school-fellows at the University whether from Czechoslovakia or other countries. Kolmaš had very good teachers in Peking: Professor Yu Daoquan 于道泉 (1901–1902) and Wang Yao 王尧 (*1928), both well-known Tibetologists, who helped him a lot in his scholarly development. With me it was similar, at least for a short time: I heard the lectures of Professor Wang Yao 王瑶 (1914–1989), at that time the best Chinese expert for modern Chinese literature, who could not continue teaching due to his allegedly rightist tendencies. Another of my teachers was Wang Li 王力 (1900–1986), one of the most famous Chinese linguists.

After coming back to Prague and bringing with him the complete Tibetan Buddhist canon *Kangyur* (*bka'gyur*) and *Tangyur* (*bstan'gyur*), the most valuable collection of the Tibetan library of the Oriental Institute, Kolmaš spent many months cataloguing this canon, and later another more than five thousand texts, published under the title: *Prague Collection of Tibetan Prints from Derge* in 1971 in Prague and in Wiesbaden. With Derge is connected probably his best, and certainly most original historical work: *A Genealogy of the kings of Derge*,³⁰ and worthy of attention is also *The Ambans of Tibet and Assistant Ambans of Tibet: A Chronological Study*.³¹

As a historian Kolmaš devotes his attention to every detail, to absolute exact data, and to the highest possible objectivity. Its history of Eastern Tibetan Derge

³⁰ Prague: Oriental Institute 1968.

³¹ Archiv orientální-Supplementa, 1994, 86 p.

is only one example. Another of his often quoted works: *Tibet and Imperial China. A Survey of Sino-Tibetan Relations up to the End of the Manchu Dynasty in 1912*³² and his studies concerned with the Sino-Tibetan relations later up to the mid 20th century can be regarded as examples of an objective approach to this very complicated process often distorted from both sides when analysed by the domestic historians.

As a Sinologist Kolmaš wrote about Bai Juyi's 白居易 (772–846) correspondence with Tibetan authorities in *Archiv orientální*, 34, 1966, pp. 375–410, and he published two volumes of translations of his poetry into Czech together with the woman poet Jana Štroblová.³³ His translation of Faxian's 法顯 (fl. 339) *Fo guo ji* 佛国记 (*Buddhist Records of the Western World*) (in Czech: *Zápisky o buddhistických zemích*),³⁴ and Xuanzang's 玄奘 (ca. 596–664) *Ta Tang Xiyu ji* 大唐西域记 (*Records of Western Regions*) (in Czech: *Zápisky o západních krajinách za Velkých Tchangů*) appeared twice.³⁵

The translations from Tibetan *Treasury of Aphoristic Sayings* (*Pokladnice moudrých rčení*) by Sa-skya Pandita (1182–1251) appeared two times in 1984 and 1988,³⁶ and *The Tibetan Book of Dead* (*Tibetská kniha mrtvých*) even five times in Czech (1991, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2004)³⁷ and once in Slovak.³⁸

Two volumes of essays and translations represent Kolmaš' scholarly and popular works in Czech: *Tibet: Dějiny a duchovní kultura* (*History and Spiritual Culture*), with an excellent introduction by Jan Filipický, his colleague from the Oriental Institute and *Suma tibetského písemnictví* (*Sum of Tibetan Writings*), where also some translations by his students of contemporary Tibetan literature are included. Both collections appeared in Prague (2004).

A *Festschrift* dedicated to Kolmaš was published in Prague: *Archiv orientální*, 71, 2003, 3 and one in Bratislava: *Studia orientalia slovacae*, 2, 2003, dedicated both to him and Marián Gálik.

Josef Fass (1930–2004) studied in the PRC, at first at Qinghua and later Peking University between 1951 and 1955 as one of the first foreign students after 1949. In Peking he studied Chinese history, and after coming back to

³² Canberra 1967, 81 p.

³³ *Drak z černé tůně* (*Blackpool Dragon*), Prague: Mladá fronta 1964, 109 pp. and *Datlovník v meruňkovém sadu* (*Date-Palm in Apricot Garden*), Prague: Vyšehrad 1966, 250 pp.

³⁴ Prague: Odeon 1972, 208 p.

³⁵ Prague: Academia 2002, 441 p.

³⁶ Prague: Odeon 1984, 220 p.

³⁷ Prague: Odeon 1991, 165 p.

³⁸ Prague: Práh 1998, 183 p.

Czechoslovakia at first he worked at the newly founded Lu Xun Library and later, after his PhD 1965, as an expert on the Qing and early Republican era. His main work: *Sunjatsen, jeho život a činnost (Sun Yat-sen: his Life and Work)*³⁹ was published at the occasion of 100th anniversary of Sun Yat-sen birth in 1966 and was very well received by the Sinologists and the readers. After his very important and for historians extremely interesting study "Sun Yat-sen and Germany in 1921–1924", *Archív orientální*, 36, 1968, pp. 145–148, he had the courage to show the history of Chinese revolution in relation to Sun Yat-sen in a different light, than we were accustomed to finding in the histories written in the Soviet Union or in the socialist countries. This study and his other essays on Sun Yat-sen and the "Cultural Revolution" attracted the attention of Western Sinologists and Fass was invited as a Visiting Professor to read lectures at the universities in Gent and West Berlin.

Maybe these stays and also his lectures at other universities (Brussels, London, Hamburg, Zurich) caused the impression after 1968, that Fass was *persona non grata*, and in 1972, he was forced to leave the Oriental Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences and to work for the next 20 years in the Czech Telegraphic Agency as an interpreter in its International Section. As a Sinologist he lost two decades of his possibly most productive life.

He returned to the Oriental Institute in 1991, but only for a short time. In 1993 he was sent as Ambassador of the Czech Republic to the PRC.

Artur Zempliner (*1921) studied at first politics and social sciences and worked in Czechoslovak Radio in Prague. He later shifted to philosophy and in the 1960s he started to study Chinese philosophy in relation mostly to German classical philosophy. From the Chinese students of philosophy he was very much indebted to Zhu Qianzhi, like Timoteus Pokora. His most important work *Čínská filosofie v novověké evropské filosofii (Chinese Philosophy in European Modern Philosophy)*⁴⁰ was well received by the Sinologists and students of philosophy, and Jaroslav Průšek regarded it as "very important".⁴¹ It seems that after 1971 he did not publish any other scholarly works, at least not belonging to Sinology.

Jarmila Kalousková (1908–1989), two years younger than Jaroslav Průšek, was his oldest pupil. Before the Second World War she studied Slavic literature and only in 1945 started to study Chinese at first in the Oriental Institute and later at the Philological faculty of Charles University. Her first important

³⁹ Prague: Svoboda 1966.

⁴⁰ Prague: Academia 1966, 211 p.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 5.

Sinological work was *Vybrané kapitoly z gramatiky moderní čínštiny* (*Selected Chapters from the Grammar of Modern Chinese*), lecture notes the young colleagues from the Prague School of Sinology used during their University studies. Kalousková regarded these notes as an “imitation” of earlier work by the Russian Sinologist Alexander A. Dragunov entitled: *Issledovanie po grammatike sovremennogo kitaiskogo yazyka* (*Researches into the Grammar of the Contemporary Chinese Language*), Moscow 1952, which was probably a very humble assertion, but typical for her personality. Her most useful work, but written with Oldřich Švarný, Ching-yü Rotterová and Josef Bartůšek was *Úvod do hovorové čínštiny I. and II.* (*An Introduction to Spoken Chinese I and II*).⁴² Two books are her best scholarly works: *Études sur les aspects des verbes dans la langue chinoise moderne*⁴³ and *La phrase et les constructions des phrases dans le chinois moderne*.⁴⁴

Jarmila Kalousková was probably the most “human” among Průšek’s students. Her Prague colleagues often asked her for advice or consolation during times of troubles. Průšek did this at least once in 1964 when he led the greatest number of his students at the XVIth International Congress of Junior Sinologists at Bordeaux in 1964.⁴⁵

For some reason Kalousková preferred to write her works in collaboration with other colleagues. One such study was written together with Zbigniew Slupski: “Some Problems of Typological Analysis in Modern Chinese Fiction”, published in *Études d’histoire et de littérature chinoises offertes à Professeur Jaroslav Průšek*.⁴⁶ It was probably connected with her humble appreciation of her own abilities, or it was the residuum of her serious mental illness during the Second World War.

The bibliography of Jarmila Kalousková comprises only 52 items,⁴⁷ but she was one of the most influential members of the Prague School of Sinology, at least within the Czechoslovak context.

Oldřich Švarný (*1920) is the best and most diligent linguist among the Czech Sinologists. As a son of a poor peasant, one of seven children, whose mother died when he was seven years old, with the help of good people, he was able to begin to study Latin and Greek at Masaryk University. After three

⁴² Prague 1967, Vol. 1, 458 pp. and Vol. 2, 606 p.

⁴³ Prague: Academy 1964, 155 p.

⁴⁴ Prague: Nakladatelství ČSAV 1966, 160 p.

⁴⁵ See my essay on Průšek in *JSHY*.

⁴⁶ Paris: Presses universitaires de France 1976, p. 143–153.

⁴⁷ *Bibliographical series of the Oriental Institute, Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic*, Vol. 9/1, Prague 1995, p. 17–27.

months of study the Czech Universities were closed by the Nazi invaders and Švarný became a displaced person in the *Third Reich* building roads and doing other land works. As a young man who was able to read and partly also speak Italian, French, Spanish, English, Greek and Russian, he could work before the end of the Second World War as an interpreter in Vienna. After finishing his University studies in Brno in 1947 (English and Russian), he started to study Chinese in Prague in the last years of the 1940s. Průšek “discovered” his linguistic ability and Švarný became one of his collaborators in the Oriental Institute in 1951. In 1955 Švarný had the possibility to study with the famous Chinese linguists Lü Shuxiang 吕叔湘 (1904–1998) and Xu Shirong 许世荣 (1912–1998). Up to the beginning of the 1960s he taught phonetics at the Philological Faculty of Charles University. He was also my teacher. He devoted more attention to me than to my school-fellows, but he was never able to teach me how to pronounce the 4th *qusheng* 去声 falling tone in Chinese. He was more successful with my colleagues.

In his best years (1965–1970) Švarný had the opportunity to read lectures at the *École des langues orientales vivantes* in Paris (1965), the same year he did research at the School of Oriental and African Studies (also 1966), and he spent a whole year as a Visiting Professor at the Universities of Princeton and Berkeley (1969–1970).

In 1976, later than other colleagues, Švarný had to leave the Oriental Institute. He did not participate in the parliamentary elections. It was regarded as an act of disloyalty against the government. Although it was not against the valid law of the republic, he could not work in its highest institution of science and scholarship. Up to the year of his retirement in 1980 he lived partly from the contract of 50% service in the Institute and from some hours of teaching Chinese in his district. In the school year 1989–1990 I invited him to come to teach the Chinese phonetics in the newly founded Chair of Languages and Cultures of the Far East, where he remained up to 1991. In the years 1994–2007 he lectured at the Palacký University in Olomouc.

The list of Švarný's publications is even shorter than that of Dr. Kalousková,⁴⁸ but especially his books or dictionaries are much more extensive and I suppose also of greater relevance for teaching and study. His main field is the prosody of spoken Chinese, a very rare topic among Sinologists, *terra incognita* according to Hana Třísková.⁴⁹ David Uher, Švarný's young colleague from Palacký University, supposes that he was the main author of the prosodic transcription and of the analysis of syllabosememe in the above mentioned *An*

⁴⁸ Ibid., pp. 41–44.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 40.

*Introduction to Spoken Chinese I and II*⁵⁰ During his stay in Bratislava Švarný partly prepared (in collaboration with Tang Yunling Rusková and Olga Lomová) and published *Gramatika hovorové čínštiny v příkladech* (*Grammar of Spoken Chinese in Examples*),⁵¹ where more attention is devoted to the problems of prosodic transcription. *Učební slovník jazyka čínského I-IV* (*Instructional Dictionary of the Chinese Language, I-IV*)⁵² presents the apogee of Švarný's work "not only in the field of linguistics, phonetics and Sinology, but especially in teaching".⁵³

Danuška Heroldová-Šťovičková 史丹妮 (1929–1976) was the first Lecturer of Czech language at Peking University and at the Peking Foreign Language University. She was the author of the first Czech lexical work: *Česko-čínský tematický slovník* 捷汉分类辞典 (*Czech-Chinese Thematic Dictionary*).⁵⁴ As a scholar she devoted herself mostly to lexicographical problems theoretically and practically. Together with L. Zgusta and others she participated in the *Manual of Lexicography*⁵⁵ and for the first 10 years she was the Head of the Lexicographical Unit of the Sinological Group that later published the great *Česko-čínský slovník* (*Czech-Chinese Dictionary*), 9 vols.⁵⁶

Šťovičková is better known as a translator from Chinese into Czech. Her most spread translation is a book *Čínské lidové pohádky* (*Chinese Folktales*),⁵⁷ which was later published in English, French, German, Dutch, Italian, Norwegian and Finnish versions. From the Sinological point of view the most valuable is the volume entitled: *Stříbrný kůň. Výbor moderní čínské poezie dvacátých až čtyřicátých let* (*Silver Horse. A Selection of Chinese Poetry of the 1920s and 1940s*).⁵⁸ Ai Qing 艾青 (1910–1996), Šťovičková's good friend, is most translated among the Chinese poets in this book. After her tragic death, he dedicated her memory a poem "To the Soul of Danuska, My Friend" 致亡友丹娜之灵. It is full of sadness and grief:

⁵⁰ UHER, D. "Prof. PhDr. Oldřich Švarný, CSc. – pedagog" (Professor Oldřich Švarný – Teacher), *Studia Orientalia Slovaca*, IV, 2005, p. 277.

⁵¹ Bratislava, I, 1991, 307 pp. and II, 1993, 567 p.

⁵² Olomouc: Univerzita Palackého 1998–2000.

⁵³ UHER, D. op. cit., pp. 278–279.

⁵⁴ Peking: Shangwu yinshuguan 1961, 1218 p.

⁵⁵ Prague: Academia 1971, 360 p.

⁵⁶ Prague: Academia 1974–1984.

⁵⁷ Prague: SNKLU 1962, 231 p.

⁵⁸ Prague: SNKLU 1964, 145 p.

In these confused, unsettled times,
Friendship is like a reed on a darkling day,
Trembling in the wind,
Sighing imperceptible sighs...

The first time you got off the plane,
You looked in the crowd
For a man known to write poems,
But he wasn't there to receive you.

In the autumn of 1957,
Your contract fulfilled, you left Beijing;
Again, among those who saw you off,
Missing was the man who wrote poems...

A friendship like ours, in these times,
It is so precious, so hard to come by!⁵⁹

Danuška and Ai Qing never met each other after Ai Qing was criticized as a Rightist and removed from the literary scene. He had to suffer 21 years in the prisons and labour camps in the PRC, and she her fate after the "earthquake" (Ai Qing's metaphor for 21 August, 1968) up to her death in Prague.

During her Peking stay Štřovíčková started to study the traditional Chinese medicine and her book *Acupuncture and Moxibustion* in two vols.⁶⁰ was published in 1968 and 1990.

Zdenka Heřmanová-Novotná 傅思端 (*1930) started to study Chinese with Průšek in Prague (1950–1953) and later in Peking University (1953–1958). As a student of the Chinese language and literature, she was well prepared for her work in the Oriental Institute. Her main duty was the work and also editing of the *Czech-Chinese Dictionary* in 9 vols. mentioned above.

Her most outstanding scholarly work is probably: *Affix-like Word-Formation Patterns in Modern Chinese*, originally her PhD thesis.⁶¹ I personally most appreciate her monograph: "Contributions to the Study of Loan-Words and Hybrid Words in Modern Chinese", published in three instalments in the journal *Archiv orientální* in the years 1967–1969.

⁵⁹ CHEN EOYANG, E. *et alii* (eds. and trans.): *Ai Qing Selected Poems*. Peking: Foreign Languages Press 1982, pp. 145–147 and 383–386.

⁶⁰ Prague: Oriental Institute 1968, 234+84 pp. and 1990, 234+84+190 p.

⁶¹ Prague: Academia 1969, 225 + 3 p.

Heřmanová-Novotná's most popular work is probably her rendition of *Opičí král* (*Monkey King*),⁶² stories around Sun Wukong 孙悟空 from the novel *Pilgrimage to the West* 西游记 by Wu Chengen 吴成恩 (ca. 1500–1582). She followed Průšek's steps when translating the *huaben Skříňka s poklady. Milostné povídky staré Číny* (*Treasure Box. Love Stories from Old China*).⁶³

Pavel (Paul) Kratochvíl (*1933) was the school-fellow of Josef Kolmaš. After finishing his studies in 1957, he joined the Oriental Institute and soon afterwards he was sent to study linguistics in Peking. After returning to Prague he worked in the Lexicographical Unit. In the middle of the 1960s through the help of Professor Piet van der Loon he received the opportunity to teach Chinese language at Cambridge University and remained there.

His most representative work is his book: *The Chinese Language Today. Features of an Emerging Standard*.⁶⁴ It was used and cited by many, including such well-known linguists as John DeFrancis or Christoph Harbsmeier. Other studies like "Stress Shift Mechanism and its Role in Peking Dialect", *Modern Asian Studies*, 8, 4, 1974, pp. 433–458, or "Tone 4 and Tone 3 Discrimination in Modern Standard Chinese", *Language and Speech*, 29, 3, 1986, pp. 281–294, written in collaboration with others, are also typical for him. It seems to me that they have something common with his Prague colleagues, especially with Oldřich Švarný.

It is not necessary to stress here that the literary field, especially the popular Chinese literature, beginning with the Song Dynasty period and ending with the literature of the 1920s and 1930s, was the main and most successful domain of the Prague School of Sinology. All those who contributed to it in measure were Průšek's students or his collaborators.

Věnceslava (Věna) Hrdličková 何德佳 (*1924) and her husband **Zdeněk Hrdlička** 何德理 (1919–1999) were very close collaborators of Jaroslav Průšek, although they were for many years far away from him. Both they were his students at the Charles University, and both studied at the Harvard University Graduate School in the years 1946–1948. Hrdlička spent many years as the cultural attaché in Peking (1951–1954), then in Japan (1957–1961), and at the end of his diplomatic career he spent the year 1964–1969 as the Ambassador of the Czechoslovak Republic in China. He had to leave this job because of his protest against the invasion of Czechoslovakia by the armies of the Warsaw

⁶² Prague: SNDK 1961, 349 pp. 2nd printing 1949, 240 p.

⁶³ Prague: Mladá fronta 1961, 250 p.

⁶⁴ London: Hutchinson University Library 1968, reprint 1970.

Pact. Later he was labelled a “rightist opportunist”, but he could work in the Oriental Institute. His wife accompanied him abroad and worked there as his “helping hand”. Because of his “crime” just mentioned, “most of their works, jointly written during the seventies and the eighties, could only be signed by the name of Věna Hrdličková”, if they were to be published.⁶⁵

They were both Sinologists and Japanologists. Hrdličková was for many years a teacher at the Charles University. They devoted part of their time to scholarly work. Here they followed Průšek’s example quite closely. Just like him in the 1930s, they often visited the *Tianqiao* 天桥 Heavenly Bridge in the 1950s and heard there, for instance, *Shandong dagu* 山东大鼓 Shandong ballads to big drums or *Henan zhuizi* 河南坠子 Folksongs from Henan. Hrdlička studied the great drum ballads: “Old Chinese Ballads to the Accompaniment of the Big Drum”, *Archiv orientální*, 25, 1, 1957, pp. 83–145. Hrdličková, who had much more time for study and writing, upon Zheng Zhenduo’s initiative, *Donhuang bianwen* 敦煌变文 and their relation to the narrative methods, for instance, “Some Questions Connected with Tun-huang Pian-wen”, in the same journal, 30, 1962, pp. 211–230. She published a number of essays concerning this topic. For the students of Sinology she prepared two books of lecture notes: *Dějiny čínské klasické literatury I. (A History of Chinese Classical Literature I.)*,⁶⁶ (up to Tao Yuanming 陶渊明, pp. 365–427) and *Úvod do studia sinologie. Část filologická (An Introduction to the Study of Sinology. Philological Part)*.⁶⁷ She wrote the second one together with Jaromír Vochala 吴和 (*1927).

Hrdlička and Hrdličková (like nearly all Prague Sinologists) were industrious translators of contemporary and modern Chinese literature in the 1950s and at the beginning of 1960s. They translated Mao Zedong’s “Talks at Yan’an Conference on Literature and Art”,⁶⁸ Zhou Yang’s 周扬 (1908–1989), Guo Moruo’s and Mao Dun’s 茅盾 (1896–1981) literary and critical articles,⁶⁹ Cao Ming’s 草明 (*1913) *Pramen síly* 原动力 *The Source of Strength*,⁷⁰ Mao Dun’s “village trilogy” under the title of the first short story: *Jarní hedvábnici* 春蚕 *Silk Springworms*.⁷¹ In 1989 Hrdličková translated a volume of post 1976

⁶⁵ OLIVOVÁ, L. “Foreword”, *Věna Hrdličková, Zdeněk Hrdlička. Bibliography 1945/6–2002*. Prague: Oriental Institute, p. XIV.

⁶⁶ Prague: Státní pedagogické nakladatelství 1980.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 1985.

⁶⁸ Prague: Československý spisovatel 1950.

⁶⁹ On New Chinese literature (O nově čínské literatuře). Prague: Československý spisovatel 1950.

⁷⁰ Prague: Práce 1952.

⁷¹ Prague: SNKL 1963.

short stories: *Jarní hlasy* (*Spring Voices*), the name of which was taken over from the well-known story by Wang Meng 王蒙 (*1934).⁷² Hrdlička's and Hrdličková's comprehensive historical book: *Čína císaře Šen-cunga* 神宗 (*China of Emperor Shenzong*) was published in 1992.⁷³

Probably a half of their common work was related to Japan's history, literature, translated literature, art and *bonsai*. Hrdličková's essays on Japanese storytelling are most valuable for Sino-Japanese comparative purposes. *The Art of Japanese Gardens*, published in its German version in 1981 and in its Czech version in 1989, is the outcome of "the years of study and practice".⁷⁴

Berta Krebsová (1909–1973) was even closer to Průšek as his second wife during the Second World War. She studied under him in that time and in the years 1946–1947 she had the opportunity to hear or to read the texts in Paris with René Grousset (1885–1952) and Paul Demieville (1894–1979). Already during her Sinological studies she was active in the Society for Cultural and Economic Relations with the Orient, and later in the 1960s in the Czechoslovak Oriental Society as its Vice-President. In the years 1952–1959 she worked as the head of the Far East Department of the Oriental Institute and was for some years responsible for the building up the Lu Xun Library. At the same time she read ancient Chinese texts with the students of Sinology at the Charles University.

As a translator she joined Průšek's other students in translating contemporary and modern Chinese literature. She started with Zhou Lipo's 周立波 (1908–1979) *Bouře* 暴风骤雨 *The Hurricane, I*⁷⁵ and with Lu Xun's *Vřava. Polní tráva* 呐喊. 野草 *Call to Arms. Wild Grass*, in collaboration with Průšek.⁷⁶ She alone translated Lu Xun's *Tápání* 彷徨 *Wanderings*⁷⁷ and *Ranní květy sebrané v podvečer. Staré příběhy v novém rouše* 朝花夕拾, 古事新编 *Morning Flowers Plucked in the Evening. Old Tales Retold*.⁷⁸ Lu Xun's *Eseje I* 杂文 *Essays I*⁷⁹ remained unfinished. Her rendition of Guo Moruo's *Návrat starého Mistra a jiné povídky* (*The Return of the Old Master and Other Short*

⁷² Prague: Svoboda 1989.

⁷³ Prague: Mladá fronta 1992, 261 p.

⁷⁴ OLIVOVÁ, L. op., cit. p. XV.

⁷⁵ Prague: Česoslovenský spisovatel 1951, 283 p.

⁷⁶ Prague: Svoboda 1951, 285 p.

⁷⁷ Prague: SNKLU 1954, 173 p.

⁷⁸ Prague; *ibid.*, 1956, 253 p.

⁷⁹ Prague; *ibid.*, 1964, 401+5 p.

Stories)⁸⁰ was also published in a Slovak version.⁸¹ Her best and most successful translation was Laozi's *Tao te t'ing – O tao a ctnosti* (*Dao de jing. On Dao and Virtue*).⁸² The second edition together with the Chinese text edited by Olga Lomová 罗然 (*1957) appeared in 1989.⁸³

Krebsová was not such good as the scholar. Her book *Lu Xun, sa vie et sa oeuvre* from the year 1953 was criticized by Professor Wolfgang Franke 傅吾康(*1912–2007).⁸⁴ He was at least partly right. The second monograph *Lu Xun and His Collection 'Old Tales Retold'* published in three instalments in *Archiv orientální* (1960–1961),⁸⁵ is an excellent piece of research in relation to Chinese mythology. On the other hand, it is also problematic since Krebsová made only insufficient use of the Chinese works written on the subjects before, with the exception of Wang Shijing 王士菁 whose work *Lu Xun zhuan* 鲁迅传 *Lu Xun. A Biography*, she only mentions at the beginning of the monograph, and (Liu) Xuewei (刘)学葦, whose book *Lu Xun sanlun* 鲁迅散论 *Miscellaneous Discussions on Lu Xun*, Peking 1953, she read and cited.⁸⁶ No other are even mentioned, although quite a few Chinese writers and critics wrote about these Lu Xun stories before 1956, for instance, Xu Qinwen 许钦文 (1897–1984), He Jiahui 何家槐 (1911–1969),⁸⁷ and even Wang Shijing.⁸⁸ In a private conversation with me at Peking University in 1960, Viktor Petrov, certainly the best Russian expert on Lu Xun, mentioned this shortcoming in the scholarly works of Berta Krebsová.

Dana Kalvodová 丹娜 (1928–2003) studied Sinology together with painting (Karl Svolinský) and scenography (František Tröster). In the years 1954–1960 she taught modern Chinese literature at Charles University, but she also prepared herself for the traditional theatre. In 1957–1958 she had the opportunity to study in the PRC mostly doing research concerning the Sichuan theatre. Two of her studies concerning this theatre, published in 1965 and 1966,

⁸⁰ Prague, *ibid.*, 1961, 157 p. (partly with Průšek).

⁸¹ Bratislava: Slovenský spisovateľ 1962, 261 pp.

⁸² Prague: Odeon 1971, 299 p.

⁸³ Prague: DharmaGaia 1989, 249 p.

⁸⁴ Prague: Nakladatelství Československé akademie věd 1953, 111 p.

⁸⁵ *Archiv orientální*, 28, 1960, pp. 225–281, 640–656 and 29, 1961, pp. 268–310.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 1960, pp. 240, 242–243, 258, 265 and 649.

⁸⁷ Xu Qinwen's and He Jiahui's books on Lu Xun's were at that time in Lu Xun's Library. See *List of Books Concerning Modern Chinese Literature Held in Lu Xun's Library of the Oriental Institute*. Prague, Oriental Institute 1974, pp. 80 and 198.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

are her most cited works among the foreign experts. Although she wrote some of her essays in English, her works appeared mostly in Czech and Slovak. It was very useful for the Slovak and Czech literary world, but it also meant that she is less known in the world of Sinology. Her life was similar to some of her colleagues from Průšek's group. Her habilitation work required in Czechoslovakia for becoming an Associate Professor has been successfully defended in 1969, but she needed to wait 21 years for the letter of appointment! It reminds Sinologists of the fate of the Chinese "Rightists" before and during the "Cultural Revolution". They also had to wait 21 years for their political rehabilitation.

After Kalvodová was dismissed from the Department of the Countries of Asia and Africa at the Charles University in 1960, she got a job at the Department of Theatre and Film of the same university, where she worked up to 1969. Here she had the opportunity to teach Asian theatre, mainly Chinese, Japanese and Indian. Here she step by step prepared the materials for her books on this topic, to be published later in Czech and Slovak. In 1980 she also had to leave this department, and came back to the Department of the Countries of Asia and Africa, but she, as a politically unreliable element, could not teach the students.

Already earlier, but mainly in these years through the help of the prominent Slovak poet Lubomír Feldek (*1936) she found for her and her collaborators a publisher in Slovakia. The comprehensive book *Divadelné kultúry Východu* (*Theatre Cultures of the East*), Bratislava 1987, 431 pp. was edited by her, and she was the authoress of the chapters on the regional theatres of India, on the theatre in Sri Lanka, China and Japan, the last in collaboration with Miroslav Novák (1924–1982). Two of her studies on the dramatist Kong Shangren 孔尚任 (1648–1718) were published through my mediation as a member of the Editorial Board in the yearbook *Asian and African Studies*, Bratislava, in the years 1986 and 1988. Both are connected with Kong Shanren's drama 桃花扇 *The Peach-blossom Fan*, published with the title *Vějíř s broskvovými květy* (Prague 1960), in its first full translation into a European language.

Apart from the just mentioned at least two of her books are to be mentioned here: *Čínské divadlo* (*Chinese Theatre*),⁸⁹ which was qualified as the best work published in 1992 among those produced in the field of social sciences in the Charles University. Here one may see that Kalvodová was much better in the traditional theatre than in the modern. Modern and contemporary theatre is treated there briefly in Appendix 2 as the chronology of some important events in the Chinese theatre of the 20th century. The book is complemented with the impressive illustrations of the authoress.

⁸⁹ Prague: Panorama 1992, 315 p.

*Asijské divadlo (Asian Theatre)*⁹⁰ is Kalvodová's last book. It is a selection of 20 essays written or published in the years 1961–2001. The book is divided into three sections. The first: "Will the Ritual Theatre Survive?" comprises four essays of which the first one analyses *Mulian xi* 日连戏 (*Play about Mulian*), where Kalvodová mentions Lu Xun's *She xi* 社戏 *Village Theatre*, we read with her during our student days, and devotes much place to one figure of this play Wuchang 无常 Messenger of Death. Krebsová also felt sympathy towards this hilarious, sprightly, but very human devil, and mentioned him in her conversation with me. She liked him, although at his first appearance on the stage he should: sneeze one hundred and eight times and fart one hundred and eight times 打一百零八个嚏, 同时也放一百零八个屁.⁹¹ (Zhao hua xi she, p. 379). He must be an extraordinary creature. The second section called: "Permanent challenges" contains the essays most typical for Kalvodová's researches. They analyse the works of Guan Hanqing 关汉卿 (13th century), the greatest among the Chinese playwrights. She rendered his works into Czech (1960).⁹² Later they were translated into Slovak (1990).⁹³ There is also an essay on Kong Shangren and his contribution to the development of *kunqu* 昆曲, where Kalvodová was also best in her Sinological studies. Two essays analyse the Japanese theatre: one short: Zeami's (1368–1444) legacy concerned with *Nō* plays and other longer with their "theatricalness" as the "plays of silence" (Siegfried Melchinger) and "possibly the most wonderful art of the world" (Eugène Ionesco). She wrote a study concerned with Peter Sellars' (*1957) postmodern staging of Tan Xianzu's 汤显祖 (1550–1661) and his *kunqu* opera *Mudan ting* 牡丹亭 *The Peony Pavilion* in the translation by Cyril Birch (1980). Together with the last study written during her life and published in this book: "Průvodce mladým divadlem ostrova Taiwanu" (A Guide through the young Theatre of Taiwan) depicting the situation of the post-modern theatre of this island, these two studies are witnesses of the permanent challenge that started in the 1920s to 1940s with Mei Lanfang 梅兰芳 (1894–1961), the mostly cited in Kalvodová's book, Ichikawa Sadanichi, then Sergei M. Eisenstein (1898–1948), Vsevolod E. Meyerhold (1874–1940), Bertolt Brecht (1898–1956) and continued after the Second World War by Peter Brook (*1925), Ariane Mnouchkine (*1939), Jerzy Grotowski (1933–1999), Robert Wilson (*1942)

⁹⁰ Prague: Academia 2003, 318 p.

⁹¹ *Lu Xun quanji* 鲁迅全集 *The Complete Works of Lu Xun*. Vol. 2. Peking: People's Literature Publishing House 1973, p. 379.

⁹² Prague: SNLKHU 1960, 307 p.

⁹³ Bratislava: Tatran 1990, 136 p.

and others. The third section: "Living Tradition of the Asian Dramatic Art" comprises Kalvodová's essays from different periods. For me the most interesting and touching was the story of the great Chinese actor of Peking opera Zhou Xinfang 周信芳 (1895–1975), his son Zhou Shaolin and his daughter Cai Qin 采芹 (better known in the West as Tsai Chin (*1936), also well-known actor, during the Cultural Revolution. Her study on the semiotic essays by Czech authors is also interesting. It informs the readers that also in this country there were tendencies to come in contact with the sign nature of East Asian art.

Oldřich Král (*1930) was Průšek's successor in the post of Professor of Sinology at the Charles University. Král started in 1949 to study English and Sinology. Already as a student he taught Chinese literature at the Department of Philology and History of the Charles University. In the years 1956–1957 he studied at Peking University. His mentor was Professor Wu Zuxiang 吴组缃 (1908–1994). The object of his study in Peking was the novel *Rulin waishi* 儒林外史 *The Scholars*, and its outcome the monograph *Umění čínského románu* (*The Art of the Chinese Novel*)⁹⁴ and two English studies.⁹⁵ About Ba Jin 巴金 (1904–2005), his first literary love, he wrote an article for the well-known collection *Studies in Modern Chinese Literature*, edited by Průšek.⁹⁶ Together with Marta Ryšavá, he translated Ba Jin's *Jia* 家 *The Family* into Czech (1959). His Czech translation of Wu Jingzi's 吴敬梓 (1701–1754) *Rulin waishi* 儒林外史 *The Scholars* appeared in 1962.⁹⁷ His other voluminous translation: Liu Xie's 刘勰 (ca. 465–520) *Wen xin diao long* 文心雕龙 *The Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons* was translated into Czech already in 1969, but for obvious reason due to the situation after 21 August 1968, and his political "unreliability", this translation with rich commentaries could be published only 30 years later in 2000.⁹⁸

In 1969 Král was forced to leave the University and for some time he worked manually at a goods station, and later in the National Gallery in Prague. There he had the possibility to devote himself to translation of literary works

⁹⁴ Prague: Universita Karlova 1965, 88 p.

⁹⁵ "Several Artistic Methods in the Classic Chinese Novel Ju-lin wai-shih", *Archiv orientální*, 32, 1964, pp. 16–43 and "Some artistic Methods in the Classic Chinese Novel Ju-lin wai-shih", *AUC Philologica*, (Prague) 3, 1964, pp. 79–102.

⁹⁶ "Pa Chin's Novel 'The Family'". In Průšek, J. (ed.): *Studies in Modern Chinese Literature*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag 1964, pp. 97–112.

⁹⁷ Prague: SNKLHU 1962, 786 p.

⁹⁸ Prague: Brody 2000, 406 p.

published later in the 1980s and 1990s. His Czech translation of Cao Xueqin's 曹雪芹 *Honglou meng* 红楼梦 *The Dream of the Red Chamber* (1986–1988)⁹⁹ is his greatest feat in translated literature. The works that preceded or followed were mostly connected with Daoism or Buddhism, as *Tao, texty staré Číny. Antologie překladů, esejů, obrazů* (*Dao, Texts from Old China. An Anthology of Translations, Essays and Paintings*) (1971).¹⁰⁰ In 1994 it appeared under another title: *Kniha mlčení. Texty staré Číny* (*The Book of Silence. Texts from Old China*).¹⁰¹ Hui Neng's 慧能 (638–713) *Liu zu tan jing* 六祖坛经 *The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch* was published in 1988.¹⁰² His translation of *Yijing* 易经 *The Book of Changes* appeared in three editions (1995, 1996, 1998).¹⁰³ In 2006 his translation of *Zhuangzi* 莊子 appeared.¹⁰⁴ I do not mention here his other translation of less extensive works.

In 1990 Král returned back to Charles University at first as an Associate Professor, and from 1993 as Professor of Chinese and Comparative Literature. In the same year he founded the Centre of Comparative Studies, and in 1997 the Chiang Ching-kuo International Sinological Centre, both at the same University.

Král's activity as a teacher, translator and scholar is connected with his effort to bring the Chinese literary, philosophical and aesthetic mind into dialogue with Czech and European structure. In his published PhD thesis from the year 1965 he wrote that it seems to him that much of what is done concerning Czech Oriental studies is "nearly in full measure designed for foreign consumption, for export".¹⁰⁵ Probably because of this firm conviction he started to devote much more attention to the translation of the great works of Chinese literature and philosophy into Czech. Here he also emphasizes the need for the study and application of Czech Structuralism, for instance, Jan Mukařovský (1891–1975) and Mojmir Grygar (*1928), or Russian Formalism, for instance, Viktor Šklovskij, (1893–1984) of the works of traditional and modern Asian literatures. Probably the implementation of the ideas of these two schools in the project and book entitled *Contributions to the Study of the Rise and Development of Modern Literatures in Asia*,¹⁰⁶ was one of the causes of his fall into disgrace in later years. This book was written in collaboration with the Japanologist Miroslav Novák (1924–1982) and the Indologist Odolen Smékal (1928–1998).

⁹⁹ Prague: Odeon 1986, 651 p, 1988, 771 p. and 655 p.

¹⁰⁰ Prague: Klub přátel poezie 1971, 142 p.

¹⁰¹ Prague: Mladá fronta 1994, 237 p.

¹⁰² Prague: Odeon 1988, 108 p.

¹⁰³ Prague: Maxima, 227 p.

¹⁰⁴ Prague: Maxima 2006, 439 p.

¹⁰⁵ KRÁL, O. *The Art of Chinese Novel*, p. 5.

¹⁰⁶ Prague: Academia 1965, 104 p.

Král's scholarly essays are usually rather short. Timoteus Pokora in a discussion with me asserted that Král is a "*connoisseur* that means a person who is especially competent to pass critical judgments in an art, especially one of the fine arts, or in matters of taste".¹⁰⁷ Probably he was right. Therefore after 1965 he took as the objects of study and translations the works, from literature or fine arts, always of great aesthetic value.

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¹⁰⁷ *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*. New York: Portland House 1989, p. 311.