

RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The History of Chinese Studies in Austria Revisited

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## Abstract

This article traces the origins and developments of Chinese studies in Austria. In addition to factors and institutions that were instrumental in the development of these studies, the lives and works of individuals important to this development are revisited, starting with brief remarks on the scholarly interest in China in eighteenth century Austria and on early efforts to obtain Chinese books and Chinese printing types in the nineteenth century. The achievements of individual scholars are examined against the backdrop of their institutional affiliations and their experiences, if any, in China. In addition, the reasons for the delayed institutionalization of Sinological studies at university level are highlighted.

**Keywords:** Chinese Studies; Sinology; Austria; history

## Introduction

This article offers a reconsideration of the history of Chinese studies in Austria. Due to the ethnic and linguistic diversity of the former Habsburg empire and divergent Orientalist traditions, developments in the Bohemian (Czech), Hungarian and Italian regions of the former Habsburg monarchy are deliberately excluded.

Since the seventeenth century, the Habsburg Emperors and thus the Imperial Library at Vienna had received Chinese books and maps sent by Jesuit missionaries. These materials found their way into the library's catalogs of manuscripts and rare prints.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to Berlin and Paris, the existence of Chinese books in Vienna did not prepare the ground for an early philological interest in the Chinese language during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nevertheless, examples for the reception of Jesuit translations of Confucian texts can also be found in Austria even if they hitherto

<sup>1</sup>On the history of the collection of Chinese books in the then Imperial Library at Vienna, see Georg Lehner, "Zur Geschichte der Sinica-Sammlung der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek," *Codices manuscripti & impressi* 89/90 (2013), 55–72. On Chinese books in other collections of the Habsburg monarchy, see Georg Lehner, "Chinesische Bücher in der Habsburgermonarchie (1750–1850)—eine Spurensuche," *Mitteilungen der Österreichischen Gesellschaft für Buchforschung* 2013.2, 49–57.

have not been mentioned so far in connection with the history of Chinese studies.<sup>2</sup> Unsurprisingly, these examples come from the pens of Austrian Jesuits or Jesuits working in Austria. In 1707, Albert Count Purgstall SJ (1671–1744) published a short account of the life and teachings of Confucius, based on *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus*.<sup>3</sup> The purpose of Purgstall's publication was to congratulate the highest-ranking of the newly graduated doctors, as was customary in the early modern period. This brief account suggests that *Confucius Sinarum Philosophus* was used at the University of Vienna to study Chinese philosophy.<sup>4</sup>

While teaching at the Jesuit College in Innsbruck, Ignaz Weitenauer SJ (1709–1783), who was born in Bavaria, did further research in Oriental languages. During this time, he published a panegyric on the Habsburg rulers (1765) in which he equated the achievements of these rulers with famous mountains.<sup>5</sup> The booklet also documented Weitenauer's work with European and Asian languages. Some of the hundred aphorisms were given in Chinese (rendered in Latin script) taken from Jesuit translations of Chinese texts. The hundred mountains selected by Weitenauer include some from China.

### The Beginnings of Chinese Studies in Vienna

The actual beginnings of Chinese studies in Austria date back to the 1830s and 1840s and are linked to the names of the botanist Stephan Endlicher (1804–1849)<sup>6</sup> and the orientalist August Pfizmaier (1808–1887).<sup>7</sup> Since Austria—apart from an unsuccessful attempt in the early 1820s—played no role in the China trade, the motives for this first serious interest in the study of the Chinese language were of a purely scholarly nature. The suggestion for this came from Moriz, Prince of Dietrichstein (1775–1864), the head of the Imperial Library, who wanted to expand the holdings to include books from all over the world. In connection with this, Endlicher was given the task of

<sup>2</sup>On the history of Sinology in Austria, see Bernhard Führer, *Vergessen und verloren: Die Geschichte der österreichischen Chinastudien* (Bochum: Projektverlag, 2001). For an earlier, often biased and sometimes inaccurate account, see Gerd Kaminski and Else Unterrieder, *Von Österreichern und Chinesen* (Vienna: Europaverlag, 1980), 98–119, 260–95, and 329–63.

<sup>3</sup>*Confucius Sinarum Philosophus, sive scientia sinensis latine exposita*, trans. Prospero Intorcetta, Christian Herdrich, François Rougemont, and Philippe Couplet (Paris: Horthemels, 1687).

<sup>4</sup>Albertus Purgstall, *Synopsis vitae et doctrinae Confucii philosophi Sinensis XXX. gnomis ethicis comprehensae* (Vienna: Cosmerovius, [1707]). For a contextualization of Purgstall's publication against the background of academic practices in early eighteenth-century Europe, see Elisabeth Klecker, "Chinesische Werte? Eine Promotionsschrift der Wiener Jesuitenuniversität (Synopsis vitae et doctrinae Confucii philosophi Sinensis, Wien 1707)," *Noctes Sinenses: Festschrift für Fritz-Heiner Mutschler zum 65. Geburtstag*, edited by Andreas Heil, Matthias Korn, and Jochen Sauer (Heidelberg: Winter, 2011), 251–57.

<sup>5</sup>Ignaz Weitenauer, *Hundert Berge in hundert Sinnbildern des allerhöchsten und durchleuchtigsten Erzhauses Oesterreich, mit zwanzig Sprachen ausgezieret* (Freyburg im Breisgau: Wagner, 1765).

<sup>6</sup>On Endlicher's biography and scholarly network, see Christa-Riedl Dorn, *Ein uomo universale des 19. Jahrhunderts und sein wissenschaftliches Netzwerk. Stephan Ladislaus Endlicher und seine Korrespondenz mit Wissenschaftlern seiner Zeit* (Vienna: V&R unipress, 2019). For his achievements in Chinese studies, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 43–54.

<sup>7</sup>August Pfizmaier (1808–1887) and seine Bedeutung für die Ostasienwissenschaften, edited by Otto Ladstätter and Sepp Linhart, Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens 3 (Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences, 1990) and Bernhard Führer, "August Pfizmaier (1808–1887) and His Translations from Chinese Poetry," *Sinologists as Translators in the Seventeenth to Nineteenth Centuries*, edited by Lawrence Wangchi Wong and Bernhard Führer, Asian Translation Traditions Series 2 (Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2015), 245–70.

compiling a list of Chinese books. In addition, he was to acquire more Chinese books. Julius Klaproth (1783–1835) in Paris and Paul Schilling von Canstadt (1786–1837) in St. Petersburg both played important roles in the acquisition and cataloging of Chinese books. English journals compared the size of the Vienna collection of East Asian books to the size of the Chinese collections in London. The Imperial Library in Vienna “may perhaps be equal in this department to that of the British Museum, or even of the East India Company, but is certainly inferior to that of the Asiatic Society, or the London university.”<sup>8</sup>

In 1845, the President of the Royal Geographical Society (London), Roderick Impey Murchison (1792–1871) linked Endlicher’s publication of an atlas of China<sup>9</sup> not only to the legacy of the Jesuit missionaries, but also to contemporary developments in international relations in East Asia: “and with the addition of our own recent surveys of her coasts and harbours, and the Russian exploration of her mountainous northern frontiers ..., China will, I trust, be not much longer the great ‘terra incognita’ of the civilized portions of the globe.”<sup>10</sup>

For both his catalog and the list of places added to the atlas he published, Endlicher had Chinese printing types produced: “he had made a fount of Chinese types, and presented it to the national printing establishment: he published expensive works at his own cost, and presented them to the literary world.”<sup>11</sup> This fount of Chinese types had attracted the attention of August Pfizmaier who in the early 1840s took up the study of Chinese, Japanese, and Manchu. In a letter published by “M.” in the *Athenaeum* in spring 1846, Pfizmaier wrote that he had obtained from Paris “a very rare work, known by the name of ‘Tso Chuen,’ [*Zuo zhuan* 左傳] which contains memoirs of the principal feudal states of China” and that, as “the Austrian Government has now taken care to get a complete set of Chinese types, there will be every hope of having this work printed with a European translation, the first published out of China.”<sup>12</sup> The correspondent of the *Athenaeum* pointed out that Pfizmaier’s progress in his Chinese studies may “interest members of a nation whose banner is now floating in Chinese ports.” Pfizmaier would be a suitable choice for a chair of Chinese: “why should not

<sup>8</sup>“Chinese Literature,” *Mechanics’ Magazine, Museum, Register, Journal, and Gazette*, No. 730 (August 5, 1837), 304. See Stephan Endlicher, *Verzeichniss der chinesischen und japanischen Münzen des k.k. Münz- und Antiken-Cabinets in Wien, nebst einer Übersicht der chinesischen und japanischen Bücher der k.k. Hofbibliothek* (Vienna: Beck, 1837); Riedl-Dorn, *Ein uomo universale*, 147–48. Endlicher published the catalog of East Asian books as an appendix to a catalog of Chinese and Japanese coins of the Imperial collection in Vienna; see Helen Wang, “A Short History of Chinese Numismatics in European Languages,” *Early China* 35–36 (2012–13), 411.

<sup>9</sup>Stephan Endlicher, *Atlas von China nach der Aufnahme der Jesuiten-Missionäre, Volume 1: Lieferung* (Vienna: Beck, 1843); Riedl-Dorn, *Ein uomo universale*, 149–53.

<sup>10</sup>Roderick Impey Murchison, *Address to the Royal Geographical Society of London; Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting on the 26th May 1845* (London: Printed by W. Clowes and Sons, 1845), 57 (see also: *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* 15 (1845), xci).

<sup>11</sup>“Professor Endlicher,” *Hooker’s Journal of Botany and Kew Garden Miscellany* 1 (1849), 378. English translation of “Zu Endlichers Gedächtniß,” *Beilage zur Allgemeinen Zeitung*, April 17, 1849, 1641. On Endlicher’s efforts to have Chinese printing types produced, see Georg Lehner, *Der Druck chinesischer Zeichen in Europa. Entwicklungen im 19. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2004), 151–58.

<sup>12</sup>*The Athenaeum* No. 965 (April 25, 1846), 424. The part of the text referring to a translation of the *Zuo zhuan* later was reprinted in *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 2 (1850), 37–38. On the Chinese printing types of the Imperial and Royal Printing Office at Vienna, see Lehner, *Der Druck chinesischer Zeichen*, 162–79.

either University summon from the dingy Leopoldstadt of Vienna one so capable of filling it as Dr. Pfitzmayer [*sic*] in default of sufficient teachers at home?"<sup>13</sup>

From the winter of 1843/44, Pfizmaier taught "Chinese and Turkish language and literature" at the University of Vienna.<sup>14</sup> In May 1847, it was announced that "a Japanese grammar, written by Pfizmaier, and the Chinese historical work Tso-tschuen [*Zuo zhuan*] with German translation" were to be published at Vienna.<sup>15</sup> At that time, an Austrian newspaper mentioned the proposal printed in the *Athenaeum* in the summer of 1846: the prospect of Pfizmaier's appointment to a chair of Chinese and Japanese to be created in England. In this context, the wish was expressed that Pfizmaier "remains faithful to his fatherland Austria and that he should be granted a quiet place there in order to be able to bring the fruits of his tireless research to light."<sup>16</sup> This wish of a "quiet place" to pursue his research came true for Pfizmaier in early 1848, when he was made a member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences at Vienna.<sup>17</sup> This also marked the end of his teaching at the University of Vienna.

Pfizmaier's translations included parts of the encyclopedia *Taiping yulan* 太平御覽 (Imperial Digest of the Taiping Reign Period), chapters from the standard histories and works of Chinese poetry.<sup>18</sup> In the mid-1850s, Pfizmaier was involved in the preparations for the scholarly program of the circumnavigation of the Austrian frigate *Novara*. Pfizmaier drew up a list of Chinese works that the participants in the expedition were to acquire during their stay in China. In the official travelogue, Karl (von) Scherzer (1821–1903), the first officer of this expedition, reported on the acquisition of most of these books, which was made possible through the English missionary William Muirhead (1822–1900) near the east gate of Shanghai.<sup>19</sup> Scherzer not only supervised the acquisition of books and helped to increase the number of Chinese coins in Austrian collections,<sup>20</sup> but also sent in a wall poster displaying a proclamation of the Taiping forces.<sup>21</sup>

After 1848, Pfizmaier's extensive translations appeared exclusively in the publication series of the Imperial Academy of Sciences. Chinese printing types available in Vienna were used for the printing of his writings; initially those of the Imperial & Royal Printing Office, and from the early 1870s mainly those available in Adolf

<sup>13</sup>*The Athenaeum* No. 965 (April 25, 1846), 424. See also *ibid.* No. 974 (June 27, 1846), 655.

<sup>14</sup>"Vorlesungen über Chinesische und Türkische Sprache und Literatur"; advertisement in *Wiener Zeitung* No. 360 (December 30, 1843), 973. For the entry in the course catalog of the University of Vienna, see Kaminski and Unterrieder, *Von Österreichern und Chinesen*, 103, and Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 329 (academic year 1844).

<sup>15</sup>*Literarische Zeitung* (Berlin), No. 39 (May 12, 1847), col. 622.

<sup>16</sup>*Die Gegenwart. Politisch-literarisches Tagblatt*, No. 101 (May 3, 1847), 470.

<sup>17</sup>*Wiener Zeitung*, No. 35 (February 4, 1848), 153.

<sup>18</sup>August Pfizmaier (1808–1887) und seine Bedeutung, 147–64 (dynastic histories), 165–82 (*Taiping yulan*), and Führer, "August Pfizmaier (1808–1887) and His Translations from Chinese Poetry."

<sup>19</sup>Karl Scherzer, *Narrative of the Circumnavigation of the Globe by the Austrian Frigate Novara, (Commodore B. von Wullerstorf-Urbair [sic],) Undertaken by Order of the Imperial Government in the years 1857, 1858, & 1859, under the immediate auspices of his I. and R. Highness the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian, Commander-in-chief of the Austrian navy*, vol. 2 (London: Saunders, Otley, and Co., 1862), 418.

<sup>20</sup>August Pfizmaier, "Bericht über einige von Herrn Dr. Karl Ritter von Scherzer eingesandte chinesische und japanische Münzen," *Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Classe* 37 (1861), 45–55.

<sup>21</sup>August Pfizmaier, "Bemerkungen zu einem Maueranschlage der Aufständischen in China," *Sitzungsberichte der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Classe* 33 (1860), 233–246.

Holzhausen's printing establishment.<sup>22</sup> Since both printers were very well equipped for printing works in non-Latin scripts, they also took over the printing of Sinological publications from abroad: the Imperial & Royal Printing office printed Stanislas Julien's *Syntaxe nouvelle de la langue chinoise* (1869) and Holzhausen printed, among others, Georg von der Gabelentz' Chinese grammar and—from the second volume of the first edition onwards—Henri Cordier's *Bibliotheca Sinica*. A review of von der Gabelentz' grammar in the *China Review* mentioned that the quality of the author's presentation of his subject matched the “general appearance and get-up of the book ... a chef-d'oeuvre of the printer.” The reviewer could not resist a dig at the products of English printers: “A more clear and finished style of Chinese printing can scarcely be produced, and as this type is available at Vienna, we cannot understand how English authors still content themselves with the use of such clumsy characters as those which disfigure, for instance, *The Religions of China*, by Dr. Legge.”<sup>23</sup>

### A Study Trip to China and Chinese lessons in Vienna: Franz Kühnert

In 1916, the ethnologist Robert Bleichsteiner (1891–1954) wrote an overview of the works published by the Imperial Academy of Sciences in the field of Oriental studies. In the field of East Asian studies, he mentioned the “tremendous productivity” (*ungeheure Produktionskraft*) of Pfizmaier, who published “far more than 200 articles” in the Academy's publication series covering a great variety of subjects of Chinese and Japanese history, literature, and culture.<sup>24</sup> In a single sentence, Bleichsteiner summarized further Sinological activities within the framework of the Academy: “In the field of Sinology, Franz Kühnert should also be mentioned, who published a syllabary of the Nanking dialect with a subsidy from the Academy.”<sup>25</sup> Franz Kühnert (1852–1918) studied mathematics, physics, and astronomy at the University of Vienna (Ph.D., 1885); from 1873 he worked for the Austrian Geodetic Survey (*k.k. Gradmessungsbüro*). In 1882, this institution acquired Chinese translations (published in 1721) of Adriaan Vlacq's (1600–1667) *Arithmetica Logarithmica* and *Trigonometria Artificialis* and Kühnert took up the study of Chinese. In 1891, Kühnert was appointed *Privatdozent* (unsalaried lecturer) for Chinese at the University of Vienna.<sup>26</sup> His teaching was based at the Oriental Institute of the university. Kühnert wrote several Sinological articles for the *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* (Vienna Journal of Oriental Studies) published by the Oriental Institute.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>22</sup>“Oriental Printing in Vienna,” *The Publishers' Weekly*, 3.57 (February 13, 1873), 157. On Holzhausen's printing with Chinese types, see Lehner, *Der Druck chinesischer Zeichen*, 180–87.

<sup>23</sup>Review of *Chinesische Grammatik mit Ausschluss des niedern Styls und der heutigen Umgangssprache*, *The China Review*, vol. 11 (1882–83), 190.

<sup>24</sup>Robert Bleichsteiner, “Die orientalistische Tätigkeit der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien.” *Österreichische Monatsschrift für den Orient* 42 (1916), 237. For the scope of Pfizmaier's translations, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 62.

<sup>25</sup>Bleichsteiner, “Die orientalistische Tätigkeit,” 238. On Kühnert, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 73–90 and Hartmut Walravens, “Franz Kühnert: Eine biobibliographische Skizze nebst Kühnerts Schreiben an Joseph von Karabacek,” *biblos. Beiträge zu Buch, Bibliothek und Schrift* 63.2 (2014), 49–71. The obituary mentioned by Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 73n1, and Walravens, “Kühnert,” 62, was first published in *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Vermessungswesen* 16.4 (December 1918), 55f.

<sup>26</sup>W. South Coblin, “Franz Kühnert and the Phonetics of Late Nineteenth-Century Nankingese,” *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 128 (2008), 131–37.

<sup>27</sup>On the history of this journal, see Gebhard J. Selz, Rüdiger Lohlker, Stephan Procházka, Claudia Römer, and Sibylle Wentker, “Der ganze Orient: Zur Geschichte der orientalistischen Fächer am

With financial support from the Ministry of Education, Kühnert went to China for a year in August 1892 to continue his language studies. During this stay he collected materials on the Nanjing dialect, which eventually resulted in an article on the subject and the above-mentioned book *Syllabar des Nanking-Dialekts* (Syllabary of the Nanking Dialect). In October 1894, Kühnert commented on the Sino-Japanese War during one of his lectures on the history of China at the University of Vienna. In this lecture he criticized “the often-incorrect judgments of Europeans about China,” that Japan is fighting an “unjust war” and that “China is by no means the country of barbarism that some reports want to label it.”<sup>28</sup> In another attempt to correct the image of China prevailing in Europe, in 1898/99, he published a series of articles under the title “The Real China” (*Das wirkliche China*) in a Catholic conservative weekly magazine widely read in German-speaking countries.<sup>29</sup>

The consequences of the Sino-Japanese War for international politics in East Asia affected Austria-Hungary’s foreign service in China: on the one hand Chinese lessons were held for prospective consular officials at the newly established Austro-Hungarian legation in Beijing,<sup>30</sup> and on the other hand, Chinese lessons were also offered at the training school for future diplomats in Vienna, starting in autumn 1897.<sup>31</sup> This training school, which was renamed from Oriental Academy to Consular Academy at that time, had offered Japanese lessons in the 1870s, according to newspaper reports. A Chinese course was to follow as soon as a suitable teacher had been found.<sup>32</sup> In 1896, there were renewed plans to offer Chinese and Japanese at the Oriental Academy,<sup>33</sup> but eventually only a Chinese course was offered.

For almost two decades, Kühnert taught Chinese at the Consular Academy in Vienna. In the winter of 1900–01 he spoke about China at the “popular university courses” (*Volksthümliche Universitätskurse*) in Vienna.<sup>34</sup> In October 1911, Kühnert wrote a short newspaper article on the “unrest in China” that was to spread into revolution.<sup>35</sup>

A first proposal for the establishment of chairs of Chinese and Japanese language and literature in Austria was mentioned in 1902 by Theodor Gomperz (1832–1912), a professor of classical philology. In the 1890s, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs proposed the establishment of such chairs to the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of

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Beispiel einer internationalen orientalistischen Zeitschrift: Die Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes (WZKM),” *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 100 (2010), 9–35, on Chinese studies, see *ibid.*, 13.

<sup>28</sup>“Ein Vortrag über den japanisch-chinesischen Krieg,” *Local-Anzeiger der Presse*, October 25, 1894, [9].

<sup>29</sup>Franz Kühnert, “Das wirkliche China,” *Deutscher Hausschatz*, vol. 25 (1898–99), No. 19, 340–42, *ibid.*, No. 20, 355–56 and 358, No. 30, 551f. and 554, No. 31, 564–66, No. 39, 721–23 and No. 40, 742–43.

<sup>30</sup>Georg Lehner, “Chinesisch für den Auswärtigen Dienst: Zwei Dolmetsch-Eleven an der k.u.k. Gesandtschaft in Beijing in den Jahren 1897 bis 1900,” *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 46 (1998), 107–24.

<sup>31</sup>Georg Lehner, “Der Chinesisch-Unterricht an der k.u.k. Konsularakademie,” *Mitteilungen des Österreichischen Staatsarchivs* 51 (2004), 251–84.

<sup>32</sup>H.A. Barb, “Ueber die Zwecke der k. und k. orientalischen Akademie,” *Beilage zur Wiener Abendpost*, March 27, 1876, 277f. (on the Japanese lessons, see *ibid.*, 278); “Von der Orientalischen Akademie,” *Neue Freie Presse*, August 2, 1877, 5 (first exams in Japanese).

<sup>33</sup>*Wiener Zeitung*, June 12, 1896, 7; *Pester Lloyd*, June 12, 1896, second supplement (*zweite Beilage*).

<sup>34</sup>See the announcements in *Neue Freie Presse*, November 11, 1900, 7 (“Land und Leute in China”), *Ostdeutsche Rundschau*, January 13, 1901, 7 (“Kultur und Geschichte Chinas”), and the publication “China: Land und Leute,” *Das Wissen für Alle*, 1.51 (1901), 3–7 and *ibid.*, No. 52 (1901), 6–11.

<sup>35</sup>Franz Kühnert, “Die Unruhen in China,” *Die Zeit*, October 15, 1911, 1.

Vienna. Gomperz did not want to blame the faculty for the fact that the proposal had remained without consequences. He pointed out that there was a lack of scholars for these subjects internationally. Gomperz mentioned the Chinese lessons established at the Consular Academy, but the situation in this field seemed highly unsatisfactory to him: The fact that the Ministry had made this proposal showed that there were not only “speculative considerations” behind it, but tangible “material interests.” In his final remarks on the subject, Gomperz said that it would be difficult, but not impossible, to win over such persons. Without mentioning him by name, Gomperz cited the example of Friedrich Hirth (1845–1927) (“an eminent private scholar of this subject from Munich”), who had received an appointment in the United States a few weeks earlier.<sup>36</sup>

### Chinese Studies and the Austro-Hungarian Legation at Beijing

At various times, the staff of the Austro-Hungarian legation in Beijing included several men who later worked in the field of Sinology: Arthur von Rosthorn (1862–1945), Erwin Ritter von Zach (1872–1942), and Leopold Woitsch (1868–1939).

Having studied German literature, Sanskrit, and comparative linguistics at Vienna, Rosthorn went to Oxford for further study in 1882.<sup>37</sup> According to Norman Girardot, Rosthorn was the only “serious Sinological disciple” of James Legge (1815–1897).<sup>38</sup> After his stay at Oxford<sup>39</sup>, Rosthorn joined the Imperial Chinese Maritime Customs in 1883. Four decades later, he recalled setting off for China from Venice with “the feeling of a Columbus or a Marco Polo.”<sup>40</sup> For about a decade Rosthorn served in the customs and an intense study of the Chinese language and culture was “duty and passion” (*Pflicht und Leidenschaft*) for him.<sup>41</sup> During the preparations for the establishment of an Austro-Hungarian legation in Beijing, Rosthorn was accepted into the foreign service. He acted as *chargé d'affaires* several times, including during the siege of the legations in the summer of 1900. After having served as Austrian envoy extraordinary to Teheran (1905–11), he returned to China, then as envoy extraordinary (1911–17). In this capacity Rosthorn also had to take care of the fate of a China expedition financed by the Imperial Academy of Sciences. At the beginning of 1914, botanist Heinrich von Handel-Mazzetti (1882–1940), together with Camillo Karl Schneider (1876–1951), the Secretary General of the Dendrological Society, had embarked on a research trip to the southern Chinese province of Yunnan.<sup>42</sup> In Lijiang 麗江, they had met with another Austrian explorer, Anton Karl Gebauer (1872–1942), who was interested primarily in the ethnology of continental Southeast Asia.<sup>43</sup> Leaving the zoological and

<sup>36</sup>*Stenographische Protokolle: Herrenhaus*, 23. Sitzung der XVII. Session [Proceedings of the upper house (*Herrenhaus*) of the Imperial Diet (*Reichsrat*), May 30, 1902], 483. See also *Wiener Zeitung*, May 31, 1902, 6.

<sup>37</sup>Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 97–98.

<sup>38</sup>Norman J. Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China. James Legge's Oriental Pilgrimage* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 201.

<sup>39</sup>Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China*, 338: “Rosthorn, who studied classical texts at Oxford from 1882 to 1886” is obviously incorrect.

<sup>40</sup>*Kärntner Tagblatt*, July 26, 1925, 2.

<sup>41</sup>*Kärntner Tagblatt*, July 26, 1925, 3.

<sup>42</sup>For an assessment of Handel-Mazzetti's achievements, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 153–55.

<sup>43</sup>On Gebauer's travels, see Otto Cäsar Artbauer, “Zu Gebauers Himalayareise,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, November 14, 1913, 14; Ernst Friedmann, “Durch den äußersten Westen von China,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, July 5, 1920, 2–3.

ethnographical materials in Yunnan, Schneider went by land via Suifu (Xuzhou 叙州, today Yibin 宜賓) and Chongqing to Shanghai and later to the United States. Handel-Mazzetti stayed in Yunnan to do more botanical research until the end of the war and traveled to Sichuan and Hunan provinces. The necessary funding was provided by the Imperial Academy of Sciences.<sup>44</sup>

Erwin Ritter von Zach had first studied medicine in Vienna (1890–95) and, in addition to mathematical interests, had also begun studying classical Chinese with Franz Kühnert and modern Chinese with Carl Kainz.<sup>45</sup> While “recovering from appendicitis in Noordwijk, a coastal town near Leiden, and a popular resort among Germans,” Zach continued his Chinese studies with Gustaaf Schlegel (1840–1903) in Leiden for a full year.<sup>46</sup> During this time, Zach had been invited to participate in the Jessup North Pacific Expedition (1897–1902)<sup>47</sup>, but through the mediation of Karl von Scherzer, Zach was given the opportunity to join the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs Service in 1897. Scherzer was also decisively involved in Zach being accepted into the foreign service of Austria-Hungary.

Although Zach was to return to Austria only for short stays after his time in Leiden, the Viennese newspapers at first reported regularly on his career progress: According to these reports, Zach had declined an offer to become professor of German language and literature at the newly established Peking University and maintained “friendly relations” with Emilio Aguinaldo (1869–1964), the President of the Philippine Republic (1899–1901).<sup>48</sup>

From the end of March 1901, Zach worked as interpreter at the Austro-Hungarian legation at Beijing. Zach’s service in China lasted until 1908, when he was transferred to Yokohama because of constant friction and disputes with his colleagues. From 1909 to 1914 Zach served as Austro-Hungarian consul in Singapore. After the outbreak of World War I, he went to Batavia where he served as Austro-Hungarian honorary consul until the end of 1919.<sup>49</sup> As it was not possible for him to return to Europe for financial reasons, he stayed in Java. After a few years in Dutch service, he lived as a private scholar in Batavia from the mid-1920s onwards.<sup>50</sup> Due to his quarrelsome character and his repeated outbursts against other Sinologists, he gradually lost the opportunity to publish his work in Sinological journals—one only has to think of Paul Pelliot’s famous verdict in *T’oung pao*.<sup>51</sup> Nevertheless Zach continued his translations from

<sup>44</sup>“Die österreichische Expedition nach China,” *Fremden-Blatt*, May 19, 1915, 9; “Rückkehr der österreichischen China-Expedition,” *Neue Freie Presse*, June 25, 1919 (evening edition), 3.

<sup>45</sup>Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 158.

<sup>46</sup>Koos Kuiper, *The Early Dutch Sinologists (1854–1900). Training in Holland and China, Functions in the Netherlands Indies* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 475.

<sup>47</sup>“Eine ethnographische Expedition,” *Neue Freie Presse*, June 10, 1897, 5.

<sup>48</sup>“Dr. v. Rosthorn und sein Nachfolger,” *Illustriertes Wiener Extrablatt*, October 14, 1900, 3; “Ein Oesterreicher in China,” *Neue Freie Presse*, March 13, 1901, 5 (offer from Peking University); *Neue Freie Presse*, July 12, 1909, 7 (friendly relations with Aguinaldo).

<sup>49</sup>On Zach’s years in the Austro-Hungarian foreign service, see Georg Lehner, “Erwin Ritter von Zach in k.(u.)k. Diensten. Die Jahre in China (1901–1908),” *Oriens Extremus* 43 (2002), 237–60, on his transfer to the foreign service see *ibid.*, 238–40. On Zach’s later years (1908–1919) in the foreign service, see Engelbert Deusch, *Die effektiven Konsuln Österreich(-Ungarns) von 1825–1918: Ihre Ausbildung, Arbeitsverhältnisse und Biografien* (Cologne: Böhlau, 2017), 704–6.

<sup>50</sup>Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 163f.

<sup>51</sup>Paul Pelliot, “Monsieur E. von Zach,” *T’oung Pao* 26 (1929) 378: “Il ne sera plus question de M.E. von Zach dans le *T’oung Pao*.”

Chinese and published them in journals in Batavia, which were largely unknown to the specialist community.<sup>52</sup> Zach's most notable achievements lie primarily in the first (almost) complete translation of the *Wenxuan* 文選 into a Western language, and especially in the translation of the Tang-era authors Li Bai 李白 (701–762), Du Fu 杜甫 (712–770), and Han Yu 韓愈 (768–824).<sup>53</sup> Zach lived in the Dutch East Indies until World War II. When he was to be taken to Ceylon with about 500 other German internees in January 1942, the ship sank during a Japanese air raid.

From 1899 onwards, Leopold Woitsch, who worked for the actuarial service in the Austrian Ministry of the Interior took up the study of East Asian languages. Apart from Chinese he also included Tibetan, Mongolian, Manchu, and Japanese in his studies. He was guided by the idea of “one day obtaining a teaching position for the languages mentioned” at the University of Vienna. He was further encouraged by the fact that “Tibetan, Mongolian, Manchu and Japanese are not taught at all at the local university and a representative of the language group mentioned is hardly to be found elsewhere.” These motives were behind his application for a position in the Austro-Hungarian consular service in China, which he submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on July 27, 1903.<sup>54</sup>

A few months before this application, Woitsch gave a lecture in Vienna on Chinese language and language teaching methods in China. For Woitsch, a look at the peculiarity of the Chinese language seemed to provide the answer to the question “whether and to what extent China as a whole is accessible to European culture” (*ob und inwieweit China als Ganzes der europäischen Kultur zugänglich ist*).<sup>55</sup>

From spring 1904 onwards, Woitsch served at the Austro-Hungarian legation in Beijing and at the Austro-Hungarian Consulate General in Shanghai. In May 1908 he was diagnosed with “mental overstrain” (*geistige Überanstrengung*). After his return to Vienna, he again began working in the Ministry of the Interior from autumn 1909 onwards.<sup>56</sup> Woitsch also began teaching Chinese at the University of Vienna. The different interests of Kühnert and Woitsch were evident from their teaching programs: “the growing interest in East Asia is mirrored by the lectures of ... Dr. Franz Kühnert on the grammar of Chinese official documents and Dr. L. Woitsch on the Beijing colloquial language.”<sup>57</sup> Woitsch taught at the University of Vienna until 1934,<sup>58</sup> and he also taught Chinese at the Public Teaching Institute for Oriental

<sup>52</sup>On the conditions under which Zach worked in Batavia, see, for example, his letters to Albert Ehrenstein (1886–1950) from the period 1930 to 1940: Carsten Näher, “Materialien zur Biographie des österreichischen Sinologen und Mandschuristen Erwin v. Zach (1872–1942). Teil 1: Aus dem Briefwechsel mit Albert Ehrenstein,” *Nachrichten der Gesellschaft für Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens/Hamburg* 167–170 (2000–2001), 205–59.

<sup>53</sup>For an assessment of Zach's Sinological achievements, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 157–87.

<sup>54</sup>Georg Lehner, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der k.(u.)k. Konsularvertretungen in China. Von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs* (Ph.D. diss., University of Vienna, 1995), 281. In addition to the biographical sketch in Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 133–35, see also Hartmut Walravens, “Leopold Woitsch (1868–1939): Zu Leben und Werk eines österreichischen Sinologen,” *Auskunft. Zeitschrift für Bibliothek, Archiv und Information in Norddeutschland* 39 (2019), 116–39.

<sup>55</sup>Leopold Woitsch, “Chinesische Sprache und Sprachunterrichtsmethode in China,” *Reichspost*, March 8, 1903, 9–11 and *ibid.*, March 10, 1903, 1–2.

<sup>56</sup>Lehner, *Beiträge*, 281–82.

<sup>57</sup>*Die Zeit*, April 25, 1911, 5.

<sup>58</sup>Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 134.

Languages (Öffentliche Lehranstalt für orientalische Sprachen)<sup>59</sup>, which from 1919 onwards was located in the building of the Consular Academy. In 1928, a Chinese course was held with six participants.<sup>60</sup> According to an advertisement from 1938, Chinese and Japanese courses were offered at this institution in addition to courses in Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. At that time, the language courses only took place when there were twenty or more participants.<sup>61</sup> Woitsch, who was said to have spoken fifteen languages,<sup>62</sup> published on the Beijing colloquial language, worked extensively on the Manchu language, and translated Chinese poetry.<sup>63</sup>

### A Chinese Library and East Asian Art History: The Interwar Years

In the interwar period, it was Arthur von Rosthorn who decisively shaped Chinese studies and a more sophisticated image of China in Austria. In addition to his teaching activities at the University of Vienna (held in the rooms of his private library), some of his publications, his public lectures, his political commitment, and his Chinese library contributed to this. As Girardot put it, Rosthorn published “extensively on ancient Chinese society, religion, and philosophy as well as on the work of his mentor, Legge, and on Max Weber’s sociological studies of China.”<sup>64</sup> Rosthorn’s only book-length monograph was a history of China, which received positive reviews in both history and orientalist journals in the German-speaking world.<sup>65</sup>

Rosthorn regularly commented on developments in China and on China’s relations with foreign countries, to mention only his remarks on China’s treatment at the Paris Peace Conference and on the causes of the Chinese Civil War.<sup>66</sup> In addition, he took a stand on general social issues, such as women’s suffrage, and served as president of the Austrian Peace Society.<sup>67</sup>

Rosthorn was able to accommodate his Chinese library in the rooms of the former Imperial Palace.<sup>68</sup> These rooms soon emerged as a meeting place not only for his Viennese students but also for Chinese living in Vienna. Rosthorn made the holdings of his library accessible to other Austrian researchers who were engaged in comparative cultural studies. For example, the historian of technology Hugo Horwitz (1882–1942) thanked Rosthorn for allowing him to use the copy of the encyclopedia *Gujin tushu jicheng* 古今圖書集成 (“Complete Collection of pictures and books of ancient and modern times”) and of the *Songshi jishi benmo* 宋史紀事本末 (“The History of the Song topically arranged”) for a study on the history of paddlewheel propulsion. In his acknowledgement, Horwitz mentioned that one of Rosthorn’s students, Erwin

<sup>59</sup>Lehner, “Der Chinesisch-Unterricht,” 281n90.

<sup>60</sup>“Welche Sprachen lernt man heute in Wien?” *Reichspost*, November 25, 1928, 12.

<sup>61</sup>*Verordnungsblatt des Stadtschulrates für Wien* No. 18 (November 1, 1938), 123.

<sup>62</sup>According to a note in “Chinaforscher aus Oberösterreich,” *Linzer Volksblatt*, February 26, 1949, 6.

<sup>63</sup>For an assessment of Woitsch’ Sinological work, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 135–48.

<sup>64</sup>Girardot, *The Victorian Translation of China*, 201. See also *ibid.*, 338: “his [i.e., Legge’s] first and only, real Sinological disciple.”

<sup>65</sup>Arthur von Rosthorn, *Geschichte Chinas* (Stuttgart: Perthes, 1923). Reviews by Alfred Forke in *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 78 (1924), 67–70, and by F.M. Trautz in *Vierteljahresschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 18 (1925), 404–8.

<sup>66</sup>“China und Versailles,” *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, July 8, 1919, 2 (interview); “Dr. Rosthorn über China,” *Neue Freie Presse*, March 23, 1927, 2.

<sup>67</sup>Arthur von Rosthorn, “Ein offener Brief an die Frauen [An open letter to women],” *Fremden-Blatt*, January 12, 1919, 13.

<sup>68</sup>Lehner, “Zur Geschichte der Sinica-Sammlung,” 64–65.

Reifler (together with a certain “Kuo-Ying-do”), had done the translation of the passages in question.<sup>69</sup> Erwin Reifler (1903–1965)<sup>70</sup> had been one of the students attending Rosthorn’s classes in his library, which had been termed “seminary of the smile” (Seminar des Lächelns) and “China Institute” (*Chinainstitut*) by their contemporaries.<sup>71</sup> Among other things, Reifler had worked for the Chinese news agency in Europe and for a short time acted as an interpreter for the Chinese police students who had come to Vienna.<sup>72</sup> In an interview given to him by the actress Anna May Wong (Wong Liu-tsong; i.e. Huang Liuxiang 黃柳霜, 1905–1961), Reifler noted that he had studied “the Chinese classics in the original” at the University of Vienna.<sup>73</sup> In 1932, Reifler was attached to an Austrian expert invited to Shanghai to reorganize the Chinese police. Shortly thereafter, Reifler was appointed professor at Jiaotong University. As an Austrian newspaper put it, Reifler was the only foreign professor at Jiaotong University who gave his lectures in Chinese.<sup>74</sup>

After ten years of missionary work in China, Theodor Bröring SVD (1883–1960) came to Austria.<sup>75</sup> In addition to teaching at the University of Vienna and pursuing further research on the Chinese language, Bröring was involved in the redesign of two Austrian museum collections on China: He rearranged not only the ethnological collections of the mission museum (Missionsmuseum) in St. Gabriel (south of Vienna, founded in 1889)<sup>76</sup> but also the Chinese collection of the Museum of Ethnology in Vienna.<sup>77</sup> Newspaper articles written in connection with the reopening of the Museum of Ethnology (formed from the holdings of the ‘Anthropological-Ethnographic Department’ of the Natural History Museum) mentioned the fact that some of these objects were loot brought to Europe in the wake of the Boxer Rebellion.<sup>78</sup> After World War II, Bröring wrote the preface to the German translation

<sup>69</sup>Hugo Th. Horwitz, “Zur Geschichte des Schaufelradantriebes,” *Zeitschrift des Österreichischen Ingenieur- und Architektenvereins*, No. 41/42 (1930) 359n11 and 12. On Horwitz’s earlier use of the *Gujin tushu jicheng* see Hartmut Walravens, “The Qiqi Tushuo 奇器圖說 revisited,” *Missionary Approaches and Linguistics in Mainland China and Taiwan*, edited by Ku Wei-ying, Leuven Chinese Studies 10 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001), 184–5.

<sup>70</sup>On Reifler’s Sinological achievements and later academic career, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 245–65.

<sup>71</sup>“Die chinesischen Polizeioffiziere in Wien: Dank an die Wiener Bevölkerung—Das Chinainstitut des Gesandten a. D. Rosthorn,” *Kleine Volks-Zeitung*, April 15, 1931, 8; “China in Wien,” *Kleine Volks-Zeitung*, February 2, 1932, 4. For a later reference to Rosthorn’s “China Institute,” see “Im Wiener Chinesenviertel,” *Kleine Volkszeitung*, July 15, 1937, 5.

<sup>72</sup>Erwin Reifler, “Was die chinesischen Polizeioffiziere aus Hang chou erzählen,” *Öffentliche Sicherheit* 11.4 (April 1931), 14, and *ibid.* 11.5 (May 1931), 11.

<sup>73</sup>Erwin Reifler, “China—Anna May Wong—und wir,” *Der Tag*, August 14, 1930, 7.

<sup>74</sup>“Oesterreichische Gelehrte für China gesucht,” *Die Stunde*, January 14, 1933, 5.

<sup>75</sup>On Bröring, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 209–11.

<sup>76</sup>“Bilder aus dem neuen Missionsmuseum von St. Gabriel bei Mödling,” *Neuigkeits Welt-Blatt*, August 9, 1929, 1. See also “Die völkerkundlichen Sammlungen des Missionshauses St. Gabriel-Mödling” and the two photographs showing the Chinese collection of this museum in *Radio-Wien* 6.35 (May 30, 1930), 21. On the history of this museum, see Andreas Bsteh, “Das Missions-Ethnographische Museum St. Gabriel,” *Österreichs Museen stellen sich vor* 13 (1980), 23–30, on China, see *ibid.*, 26 and 28.

<sup>77</sup>Michael Haberlandt, “Das neue Wiener Völkermuseum [sic],” *Neue Freie Presse*, May 26, 1928, 2–3; “Zehn Jahre Missionär in Schantung. Gespräch mit Dr. Theodor Bröring,” *Neues Wiener Journal*, Nr. 12396 (27 May 1928), 15. Wilhelm Koppers, “Zur Eröffnung des neuen Museums für Völkerkunde in Wien,” *Reichspost*, 26 May 1928, 7, included a description of the four rooms displaying Chinese objects.

<sup>78</sup>“Neue Schätze des Naturhistorischen Museums,” *Neues Wiener Journal* Nr. 12393 (May 24, 1928), 6–7.

of the *Daodejing* 道德經 prepared and published by Haymo Kremsmayer (1916–1992). An Austrian reviewer, the linguist Manfred Mayrhofer, mentioned Bröring's "bold hypothesis" of China as the retreat of the Sumerians.<sup>79</sup>

An unnamed observer ("M.E.") objected that the selection and arrangement of the exhibits in the Ethnological Museum of Vienna entirely reflected the missionaries' point of view, according to which works of Buddhist and Daoist art were generally dismissed as "idoltrous objects."<sup>80</sup> Melanie Stiassny (1876–1966)<sup>81</sup>, a historian of East Asian art, argued that the objects exhibited in the museum would need a reevaluation in the context of the history of Asian art.<sup>82</sup> Stiassny was a student of the art historian Josef Strzygowski (1862–1941), as was Ernst Diez (1878–1961). In an exhibition curated for the Austrian Museum of Arts and Industry (today Museum of Applied Arts, Vienna) in 1922, Stiassny and Diez presented Chinese and Japanese art.<sup>83</sup> Stiassny and Diez had thus prepared the ground for a broader reception of (East) Asian art in Vienna. This was also mentioned in a report about the works of modern Chinese painters—especially works by Qi Baishi 齊白石 (1864–1957)—brought to Vienna and exhibited in the *Secession* (Association of Visual Artists Vienna) by Vojtěch Chytil (1896–1936).<sup>84</sup> Chytil, who came from Bohemia and had escaped to China from Russian captivity during World War I, taught at the Beijing Academy of Painting. Viennese newspapers reported plans to exhibit the works of Austrian artists in China.<sup>85</sup>

While Diez taught at American universities (at Bryn Mawr College and at the then Western Reserve University) in the late 1920s and the 1930s and undertook a research trip to Asia for the study of Buddhist art<sup>86</sup>, Stiassny played a key role in the activities of the "Association of the Friends of Asian Art and Culture in Vienna" (Verein der Freunde asiatischer Kunst und Kultur) and in publishing the association's yearbook *Wiener Beiträge zur Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte Asiens* (Viennese contributions to

<sup>79</sup>Manfred Mayrhofer, "Fortschritte in der Sprachwissenschaft. Neuerscheinungen seit Kriegsende (IV)," *Berichte und Informationen des österreichischen Forschungsinstituts für Wirtschaft und Politik* 4.143 (January 21, 1949), 19. On this aspect, which has also been sharply criticized by other reviewers, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 224f.

<sup>80</sup>M.E., "Unser Ostasiatisches Museum," *Der Tag* Nr. 1972 (May 30, 1928), 3.

<sup>81</sup>On Stiassny/Stiaßny, see E.H. von Tscherner, "Melanie Stiaßny zum achtzigsten Geburtstag," *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* 9 (1955), 1–4, Marguerite Lobsiger-Dellenbach, "Hommage de Genève a Madame Stiassny," *ibid.*, 9 (1955), 4–5 and id., "Mélanie Stiassny 1876–1966," *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* 20 (1966), 130–37.

<sup>82</sup>Melanie Stiassny, "Ostasiatische Kunst am Wiener Markt," *Belvedere. Art and Culture of the Past. A Journal for Collectors and Lovers of Art* 1261/62 (1928), 116f.

<sup>83</sup>"Ausstellung ostasiatischer Kunstwerke im Oesterreichischen Museum," *Neue Freie Presse*, January 27, 1922, 9 (advance notice on the exhibition). See the introductory paragraph in "Die Ausstellung chinesischer Malerei und japanischer Holzschnitte in der Seession," *Wiener Zeitung*, April 5, 1930, 3. On Diez, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 149–51.

<sup>84</sup>On Chytil's relations with Qi Baishi and on Chytil's descriptions of these works for the exhibitions of Chinese paintings organized by him in Europe, see Michaela Pejčochová, "Chinese or Western. A Few Observations on the Works of Some Twentieth Century Chinese Painters Housed in European Collections," *Oriens Extremus* 51 (2012), 273–76.

<sup>85</sup>"Von Sibirien in die Pekinger Kunstakademie. Gespräch mit Professor A. Chytil, Peking," *Neues Wiener Journal*, March 15, 1930, 6; "China und Japan in der Seession," *Der Abend*, March 20, 1930, 6; Dora Münch, "Ausstellung österreichischer Kunst in China: Ein Projekt Professor A. Chytils," *Neues Wiener Journal*, May 1, 1930, 12.

<sup>86</sup>"Forschungsreise eines österreichischen Gelehrten," *Neues Wiener Tagblatt*, February 19, 1930, 8.

the history of Asian art and culture).<sup>87</sup> This association was chaired by Rosthorn, and Stiassny served as vice president. Rosthorn, Stiassny, and the association succeeded in bringing a whole series of both established and young promising China scholars from other European countries to Vienna for lectures, including Paul Pelliot (1878–1945; May 1928), Richard Wilhelm (1873–1930; December 1928), Wolfram Eberhard (1909–1989; December 1936), and Bernhard Karlgren (1889–1978; November 1937).<sup>88</sup> The fruitful activity of the association ended in 1938. After the *Anschluss*, a new board was installed and Stiassny had to emigrate to Switzerland, where she continued her scholarly work.

In November 1937, a “Chinese-Austrian Cultural Association” was founded in Vienna. Arthur von Rosthorn became president of the association, and Dekien Toung (i.e., Tong Deqian 童德乾, 1887–1944?), the Chinese chargé d’affaires in Vienna, became honorary president. The main aim of this association was the establishment of closer contacts between Chinese students in Austria and Austrians studying Chinese language and culture.<sup>89</sup>

In the 1930s, scholarly preoccupation with China was no longer content with presenting findings in publications and exhibitions or within the framework of lectures organized by scholarly-oriented associations. Chinese art and translations of Chinese poetry also became the subject of some radio broadcasts: In June 1930, Melanie Stiassny reported on an exhibition of Asian art from the holdings of the Museum of Arts and Industry and from other collections in Vienna and in November 1932, she gave a presentation on an exhibition of East Asian painting and graphics held at the Albertina in Vienna.<sup>90</sup>

Another of these broadcasts featured translations of Chinese poetry by Anna (von) Rottauscher (1892–1970)<sup>91</sup> and Erwin Weill (1885–1944)<sup>92</sup>, mentioning their “sensitive and carefully recreating translation” (*empfindende und sorgsam nachschaffende Übertragung*).<sup>93</sup> While Weill fell victim to the Holocaust, Rottauscher continued her translating and publishing activities after the *Anschluss*. In 1944, she even published four longer articles in the Vienna edition of *Völkischer Beobachter*, the party organ of the National Socialists. Thematically, these articles dealt with Chinese ink painting, Confucius and his teachings, the family in ancient China, and female figures in Chinese history.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>87</sup>Andrea Brandstätter, *Verein der Freunde Asiatischer Kunst und Kultur in Wien. Ein Beitrag zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte über die Entstehung ethnologisch orientierter Ostasienforschung in Österreich in der ersten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts* (M.A. thesis, University of Vienna, 2000). Full text: <https://phaidra.univie.ac.at/open/o:1240079> (accessed December 28, 2021).

<sup>88</sup>*Der Tag*, May 24, 1928, 6 (“Paul Pelliot in Wien”); *Neues Wiener Journal*, December 18, 1928, 6 (“Der berühmteste deutsche Chinaforscher in Wien”); *Die Stunde*, December 8, 1936, 2. *Der Tag*, November 5, 1937, 7.

<sup>89</sup>*Der Tag*, November 6, 1937, 7.

<sup>90</sup>Melanie Stiassny, “Ausstellung von Werken asiatischer Kunst aus Wiener Besitz,” *Radio-Wien* 6.38 (June 20, 1930), 16; id., “Zur Ausstellung Ostasiatische Malerei und Graphik,” *Radio-Wien* 9.5 (October 28, 1932), 20.

<sup>91</sup>On Rottauscher, see Führer: *Vergessen und verloren*, 213–18.

<sup>92</sup>*Österreichisches Biographisches Lexikon* 16 (2019), 60f; online edition: [www.biographien.ac.at/oebl/oebl\\_W/Weill\\_Erwin\\_1885\\_1944.xml](http://www.biographien.ac.at/oebl/oebl_W/Weill_Erwin_1885_1944.xml) (accessed February 12, 2022), and Austrian Victims of the Holocaust Database (Documentation Centre of Austrian Resistance, Vienna), [www.doew.at](http://www.doew.at) (accessed February 12, 2022).

<sup>93</sup>“Chinesischer Herbst,” *Radio-Wien* 12.4 (October 18, 1935), 6.

<sup>94</sup>Anna von Rottauscher, “Die Familie im alten China,” *Völkischer Beobachter* (Vienna edition) No. 69 (March 9, 1944), 3; “Die chinesische Tuschemalerei,” *ibid.* No. 92 (April 1, 1944), 3; “Kungfudse und seine Lehre,” *ibid.* No. 130 (May 9, 1944), 3; “Frauengestalten aus dem alten China,” *ibid.* No. 184 (July 2, 1944), 3.

In 1938, Benno Greiser (1873–1950)<sup>95</sup> moved to Vienna, where he worked, among other things, as a court interpreter. Before that, if a Chinese interpreter was needed in court, the Sinologists working in Vienna were consulted, as examples of Leopold Woitsch (1914) and Arthur von Rosthorn (1930) show.<sup>96</sup> Among the languages for which there were court interpreters in Vienna, Chinese was explicitly mentioned in a newspaper report from March 1940.<sup>97</sup> During World War II, Greiser also worked on the cataloging of the Chinese books of the Austrian National Library.<sup>98</sup>

### Belated Institutionalization: From the Margins of Oriental Studies to the Department of East Asian Studies

Shortly after the end of World War II, an “Austro-Chinese Cultural Association” (Österreichisch-Chinesische Kulturvereinigung) was formed from a circle of China friends led by Greiser during the war.<sup>99</sup> This association provided a forum for the exchange of information about China. The lectures regularly organized by the association had an average of forty and sometimes two hundred visitors. The topics of the lectures included issues of both ancient and modern China, such as literature, philosophy, numismatics, and astrology. A beginners’ course in Chinese “held by the university lecturer Wurm at the Oriental Institute of the University of Vienna was the only opportunity to learn Chinese in Vienna at that time.”<sup>100</sup> Speakers at the association’s events included Benno Greiser, Anna von Rottauscher and the above-mentioned lecturer Stefan A. Wurm (1922–2001).

Wurm taught Chinese and Manchu at the Oriental Institute from 1945 to 1951—a more recent biographical sketch only mentions “Altaic languages.”<sup>101</sup> Wurm’s preoccupation with the Chinese language may be inferred from some book reviews for the journal *Anthropos*.<sup>102</sup> In 1951, Wurm moved to London and later to Australia where he became professor of linguistics at Australian National University in 1967. Wurm did not pursue Chinese studies, but he was one of the co-editors of the *Language Atlas of China* (2 vols., 1987–89).

While the emigration of scholars was not an issue in the Austrian public sphere after World War II, there is at least one example of coverage of the research activities of an Austrian-born scholar working in East Asia. In 1947, the Austrian-born Joseph Francis Rock (1884–1962)<sup>103</sup>, commissioned by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the

<sup>95</sup>On Greiser, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 203–6 (see *ibid.*, 206n17: “His traces are lost in the late 1940s in the 19th district of Vienna”). Greiser died on June 27, 1950; see *Das kleine Volksblatt*, June 30, 1950, 8.

<sup>96</sup>“Ein Chinese vor Gericht,” *Prager Tagblatt*, June 24, 1914 (evening edition), 3, “Das Pech des Chinesen,” *Reichspost*, January 18, 1930, 7.

<sup>97</sup>“Man spricht nicht siamesisch in Wien ...,” *Das kleine Volksblatt*, March 17, 1940, 6.

<sup>98</sup>Lehner, “Zur Geschichte der Sinica-Sammlung,” 64.

<sup>99</sup>Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 205. On the foundation of the association, see “Österreichisch-Chinesische Kulturvereinigung,” *Neues Österreich*, July 14, 1945, 3.

<sup>100</sup>“Österreichisch-Chinesische Kulturvereinigung,” *Wiener Zeitung*, January 5, 1947, 3.

<sup>101</sup>Katharina Hobiger, *Stefan Wurm: Das Leben des Wiener Linguisten aus ethnohistorischer, biographisch-geschichtlicher Sichtweise und seine Bedeutung für die Kultur- und Sozialanthropologie unter besonderer Berücksichtigung seiner Forschungen in Australien und Ozeanien* (M.A. thesis, University of Vienna, 2012), 15, full text: <https://phaidra.univie.ac.at/open/o:1289235> (accessed December 28, 2021).

<sup>102</sup>See his reviews of R.A.D. Forrest, *The Chinese language* (1948) in *Anthropos* 46 (1951), 653–55, and of Franz Giet, *Zur Tonität nordchinesischer Mundarten* (1950) in *ibid.*, 1029–32.

<sup>103</sup>Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 189–97; Hartmut Walravens, *Joseph Franz Rock (1884–1962): Tagebuch der Reise von Chieng Mai nach Yünnan, 1921–1922: Briefwechsel mit C. S. Sargent, University*

Geographical Society in Washington, was about to undertake “his third great journey to Southwest China” with the objective of “mapping the area of the old Nakhi [Naxi 納西] kingdom.”<sup>104</sup> Several months earlier, Rock’s nephew, Robert J. Koc (1914–1994), published a short overview of Rock’s life and work. Koc mentioned that his uncle was called “the Chinese-Austrian-American” by an American newspaper. Rock, who was in Dalat, Indochina, at the outbreak of World War II, would have spent the period until 1944 in Hawaii.<sup>105</sup> In early 1948, it was reported that Rock would return to Europe “in the very near future” for health reasons: Rock had “previously been in Likiang [Lijiang], Southwest China, a locality on the border of Tibet and eighteen days’ journey from the nearest major city, on behalf of the U.S. government. Dr. Rock has collected interesting research material on the ancient Nashi [*sic*] kingdom during twelve years of work, but hundreds of photographs and native writings went down with a ship bombed by the Japanese.”<sup>106</sup>

Anna von Rottauscher continued to publish her translations of Chinese literature and she also continued her publication activities in Viennese newspapers, such as the *Wiener Kurier*, founded by the United States Forces in Austria in 1945.<sup>107</sup> In 1952–55, she worked at the Austrian National Library. Her task was to inventory Arthur von Rosthorn’s library. If Rosthorn was mentioned in the Viennese newspapers in the twenties and thirties due to his social and cultural commitment, the library he left behind was apparently only mentioned once in the media until it was bought by the Austrian National Library in 1949. In a court case on the illegal sale of fifty tons of sugar (October/November 1947) one of the defendants said that he had only participated in the matter because he wanted to use the money to keep the Rosthorn library in Austria.<sup>108</sup>

After Wurm had left Vienna, Chinese language courses at the Oriental Institute were taught at first by Diep Trieu Mao (Ye Shaomu 葉少穆) and later—from 1956 to 1977—by Vivien Pick (Xu Zhixiu 徐芝秀).<sup>109</sup>

After the establishment of diplomatic relations between Austria and the People’s Republic of China (May 1971) it was decided to establish an Institute of Sinology (Institut für Sinologie).<sup>110</sup> A Sinological library had to be built up from scratch—only some older books could be taken over from the library of the Oriental Institute. Teaching at the newly founded institute began in October 1973. Otto Ladstätter (1933–2005), who had studied in Vienna, Taipei, and Munich, and taught at the universities of Bonn, Heidelberg, and Tübingen, had been appointed to the newly founded Chair of Sinology. In his publications and in his teaching, he focused on language and linguistics and on the region of Xinjiang—both with a focus on modern China.<sup>111</sup> Apart from Ladstätter, teaching at the institute was mainly carried out by Erich Pilz (1941–2010)

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of Washington, *Johannes Schubert und Robert Koc* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007).

<sup>104</sup>*Die Welt am Abend*, April 14, 1947, 4.

<sup>105</sup>Robert J. Koc, “Der österreichische Tibetforscher J.F. Rock,” *Welt am Abend*, January 15, 1947, 5.

<sup>106</sup>“Heimkehr eines österreichischen Tibetforschers,” *Welt am Abend*, January 3, 1948, 8. On Rock’s losses, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 192.

<sup>107</sup>Anna von Rottauscher, “Ueber die chinesische Poesie,” *Wiener Kurier*, June 25, 1946, 4.

<sup>108</sup>*Neues Österreich*, October 28, 1947, 3.

<sup>109</sup>Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 207–8.

<sup>110</sup>Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 291.

<sup>111</sup>On Ladstätter, see Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 293–4. See also Richard Trapp, “In memoriam Otto Ladstätter 1933–2005,” *Institut für Ostasienwissenschaften, Universität Wien. Institutsbericht* 5. Studienjahr 2004/2005 (October 2005), 2–3. In 2015, a collection of essays was dedicated to Ladstätter’s memory: *Religion in China: Major Concepts and Minority Positions*, edited by Bernhard

and Richard Trappl, the former focusing on historiography and social history, the latter focusing on literature.<sup>112</sup> On January 1, 2000, the previously separate Institutes of Sinology and Japanese studies were merged to form the Department of East Asian Studies. After Ladstätter's retirement in 2001, Susanne Weigelin-Schwiedrzik was appointed to the chair (2002–2020), mainly focusing on modern Chinese history. In 2020, this chair was filled by Rossella Ferrari whose research focuses “primarily on the performance cultures of the contemporary Chinese-speaking world.” A second chair in Sinology with a focus on social sciences was created in 2013, and Christian Göbel has held this chair since its founding.<sup>113</sup> In 2006, a Confucius Institute was founded at the University of Vienna, a second Confucius Institute in Austria was founded in October 2010 at the University of Graz as a “cross-university and cross-faculty institution.”<sup>114</sup>

Among the non-university institutions that deal with Chinese language and culture, the most notable is the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia of the Austrian Academy of Sciences founded in 1991. One of the research foci of this institute is on the “history of Buddhist philosophy in South Asia, China and Tibet.”<sup>115</sup> Since the 1970s, the Chinese holdings of the Austrian National Library have been made more accessible to international researchers: first by means of a printed catalog (compiled by Basilia Fang, who worked in the library from 1974–1993) published in 1992,<sup>116</sup> and then by including most of the Chinese-language holdings to the library's general online catalog (Georg Lehner, 2009–11). Parts of the collection are now available online via Google Books.

The outlines of a history of Chinese studies in Austria presented here show considerably more disruptions than continuities. The acquisition of Chinese books and the procurement of Chinese printing types were met with media interest in the middle of the nineteenth century but did not initiate a lasting and continuous preoccupation with China. While the conclusion of the first treaty between Austria-Hungary and China (1869) had no significant impact on the development of Chinese studies, it was the establishment of diplomatic relations between Austria and the People's Republic of China (1971) that paved the way for the creation of a Chair in Sinology at the University of Vienna.

### Conflicts of interest

The author declares none.

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Scheid and Max Deeg, *Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens* 85 (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2015).

<sup>112</sup>Führer, *Vergessen und verloren*, 295–7 (on Pilz) and 298 (on Trappl). For the situation in the late 1990s, see the short presentation in *Universitätscampus Wien, Volume 1: Historie und Geist*, ed. Alfred Ebenbauer, Wolfgang Greisenegger, and Kurt Mühlberger (Vienna: Holzhausen, 1998), 134–36.

<sup>113</sup>“The History of the Institute of Sinology at the University of Vienna,” <https://sinologie.univie.ac.at/en/the-institute/history/> (accessed January 31, 2022); “Staff Members,” <https://sinologie.univie.ac.at/en/staff-members/> (accessed February 12, 2022).

<sup>114</sup>University of Vienna, Confucius Institute: [www.konfuzius-institut.at](http://www.konfuzius-institut.at) (accessed January 31, 2022); University of Graz, Confucius Institute: “Institute,” <https://konfuzius-institut.uni-graz.at/en/institute/> (accessed December 27, 2021).

<sup>115</sup>On more recent developments see Austrian Academy of Sciences, Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, [www.oeaw.ac.at/en/ikga/institute/about-us](http://www.oeaw.ac.at/en/ikga/institute/about-us) (accessed December 28, 2021).

<sup>116</sup>Führer: *Vergessen und verloren*, 312f.

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