

Practical Research Information

Middle Eastern Studies in the Czech Republic – Practical Guide

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Currently, the academic study of the Middle East is primarily conducted at the Czech Academy of Sciences and Charles University. There is also some focus on the region at a few other Czech universities. Most primary and secondary resources are housed in the National Library of the Czech Republic while a large proportion of the new academic output written in Czech is published by “Academia,” the publisher run by the Czech Academy of Sciences.

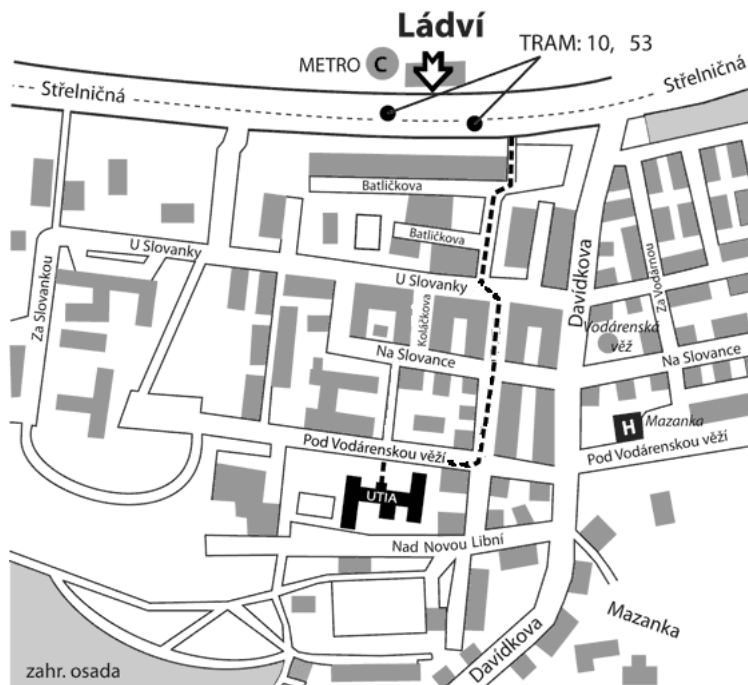
1) Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences

Address: Orientalni ustav AV CR, Pod Vodárenskou věží 4, Prague, Czech Republic

How to get there: Metro C (Red Line) – “Ládví” station

Telephone and e-mail: all contacts are available at: <<http://www.orient.cas.cz/kontakty/>>

Website: <<http://www.orient.cas.cz>>



1-1. Access to Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences from “Ládví” station, Metro C (Red Line)

* Oriental Institute, Czech Academy of Sciences

** Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Charles University



1-2. The Building where the Oriental Institute is located

The Oriental Institute (OI) is a public non-university research institution. Established in 1922, just six years after the establishment of SOAS in London, the OI is one of the oldest institutions dedicated to the study of Oriental cultures in Central and Eastern Europe. It falls administratively under the auspices of the Czech Academy of Sciences, an umbrella research

institution similar in function to its counterparts in continental Europe, such as the CNRS in France or the Max Planck Society in Germany. Since its creation, the Academy of Sciences has always been a non-university institute with the primary mission to conduct basic research in a broad spectrum of the natural, technical and social sciences and the humanities. This research, whether highly specialized or interdisciplinary in nature, aims to advance developments in scientific knowledge at the international level, while also taking into account the specific needs of both Czech society and national culture.

The OI regularly offers fellowships to foreign scholars of the history and cultures of the countries of Asia and Africa in order to enable them to stay at the Institute for research purposes. The OI aims to bring together scholars and graduate/doctoral students by hosting lectures, workshops and conferences. Simultaneously, staff of the OI are engaged in teaching at various universities. The OI is also active in the area of international cooperation, holding conferences and smaller specialized workshops, hosting visiting scholars and sending its researchers on research stays or fieldwork abroad.



1-3. The Headquarters of the Czech Academy of Sciences

Library

The library, officially inaugurated in May 1931, has always been a very significant component of the Oriental Institute. Today, with almost 300,000 volumes (including periodicals and manuscripts), the OI's library, which is open both to researchers and the general public, is one of the largest libraries within the Academy of Sciences. The general library collections include mainly publications on the histories, literatures, languages, religions, and cultures of the countries of Asia and Africa. Moreover, its depositories also hold rare collections of ostraca,



1-4. The Archive of The Oriental Institute Library

hieroglyphic prints, papyri, Old Egyptian flint instruments and many Persian, Turkish, and Arab manuscripts.

For more about the Oriental Institute see:
<http://www.vedakolemnas.cz/sys/galerie-download/vkn_11_web.pdf>

Besides regularly publishing research results in the form of monographs or peer-reviewed articles (for a more comprehensive list, visit the Institute's webpages), the OI also publishes two **academic journals**:

- *Archiv orientální* (ISSN 0044 8699, <<https://www.aror.orient.cas.cz/index.php/ArOr>>), which was established in 1929 at the Oriental Institute as a scholarly periodical devoted to Oriental studies in general. The first issue, edited by Bedřich Hrozný, introduced articles from Egyptology, Assyriology, Arabic studies and Indology. Since then, the topical scope has been broadened to embrace Sinology and African studies, among others. Unlike other specialized journals, *Archiv orientální* has opted for geographic and thematic diversity, with only one prerequisite, i.e. that all contributions have to be based on original sources.

Currently *Archiv orientální* also provides an international forum for the publication of innovative research focused on the cultures and societies of the Near East, Asia, and Africa, both past and present. It especially welcomes articles dedicated to the histories, religions, languages, and literatures of these regions, but it also gladly accepts articles of distinction by social and political scientists. The editors are especially interested in novel approaches and fresh ideas that promise to make a substantial contribution to developments in their respective fields. While English is the preferred language of publication, we also publish articles, book reviews, and review articles in French and German. For authors writing in other than their native languages, the journal provides a proofreading service, free of charge.

Archiv orientální also welcomes suggestions regarding special issues with a specific thematic focus, which are prepared by invited guest-editors from the international scholarly community. Furthermore, the journal publishes a series



1-5 The calligraphic signature of the Ottoman Sultans, *tughra* — from the Oriental Institute's collection

of Supplementa which serve as a platform for edited volumes and monographs, the topics of which fall into the thematic range of the journal. Content appearing in *Archiv orientální* is indexed in both Thomson Reuter's Arts & Humanities Citation Index (AHCI) and Elsevier's Scopus. It is also accessible via EBSCO and ProQuest.

For subscription contact: <e-mail: aror@orient.cas.cz>

Journal content: <<https://aror.orient.cas.cz/index.php/ArOr>>

Full text database (with a limited time embargo): <<https://kramerius.lib.cas.cz>>

- *Nový Orient* (*New Orient*, ISSN 0029-5302) is a Czech language journal founded in 1945. The journal addresses the needs and interests of the academic world, as well as the general reading public and follows diverse subjects, seeking to present unbiased and well-founded information on Asian and African countries, their cultures, histories and contemporary affairs. The journal also publishes book reviews and translations of short stories from Oriental languages.

<<http://www.orient.cas.cz/publikace-a-casopisy/Novy-orient/>>

Full text database (with a limited time embargo): <<https://kramerius.lib.cas.cz>>

The Czech Academy of Sciences also runs a special series of brochures called "Věda kolem nás" / "Sciences Around Us", meant for the broader public. Within this series, the Oriental Institute has also published several brochures in English related to various topics:

- The Oriental Institute

About: <<http://www.vedakolemnas.cz/co-to-je/141002-oriental-institute.html>>

PDF: <http://www.vedakolemnas.cz/sys/galerie-download/vkn_11_web.pdf>

- Alois Musil

About: <<http://www.vedakolemnas.cz/osobnosti/20191129-VKN99.html>>

PDF: <http://www.vedakolemnas.cz/sys/galerie-download/VKN_99.pdf>

- Monuments of Mosul in Danger

About: <<http://www.vedakolemnas.cz/vyzvy-a-otazky/171109-monuments-of-mosul-in-danger.html>>

PDF: <http://www.vedakolemnas.cz/sys/galerie-download/VKN_73WEB.pdf>

- Democracy Contested: China, Central Asia and the Middle East

About: <<http://www.vedakolemnas.cz/vyzvy-a-otazky/160921-democracy-contested-china-central-asia-and-the-middle-east.html>>

PDF: <http://www.vedakolemnas.cz/sys/galerie-download/vkn_53web.pdf>

Some of the OI's publications, including the two journals, may be purchased at the OI's e-shop: <<http://shop.orient.cas.cz/index.php>>.

2) Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Charles University



2-1. The main building, Faculty of Arts, Charles University



2-2. The Department of Middle Eastern Studies

Address: Celetná 20, 116 42 Prague 1

Postal Address: Nám. Jana Palacha 2, 116 38 Prague 1

How to get there: Metro A (Green Line) – “Můstek” or “Staroměstská” Station

E-mail: kbv@ff.cuni.cz

Website: [<https://kbv.ff.cuni.cz/en/>](https://kbv.ff.cuni.cz/en/)

The Department of Middle Eastern Studies (DMES) is part of the Faculty of Arts, Charles University (CUFA). Under various names and with a constantly evolving academic focus, it has existed from the beginning of the twentieth century. It is one of the 48 departments of the CUFA, which is the largest school of humanities in the Czech Republic, boasting a large variety of programs at BA, MA, and PhD level, including a number of programs unique not only in the country but also in the Central-Eastern European region. As a part of the research university, the CUFA combines educational activities at the university level with academic research. It does not neglect the so-called “third role” either, actively participating in the Czech public sphere and offering a large variety of educational and cultural activities for the public.

The DMES administers Bachelor’s, Master’s, and Doctoral programs in Middle Eastern Studies and in Hebrew and Jewish Studies. The Middle Eastern Studies branch, relevant here, combines a strong emphasis on language instruction with discursive courses. The Bachelor’s program in Middle Eastern Studies offers three specializations, namely Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. Students acquire a thorough knowledge of both theoretical grammar, including syntax and stylistics, and practical skills in the chosen language. In the second and third year, students choose a second Middle Eastern language (besides the three main languages, Egyptian Arabic Dialect and Modern Israeli Hebrew are also offered). Arabic, Persian, and Turkish are taught jointly by local experts and native language instructors. The discursive courses consist of a four-semester set of classes on the history of the Middle East from the classical to the modern and contemporary periods, as well as on Arabic, Persian, and Turkish literature. Students are

also offered courses on Islam in its different historical and contemporary forms.

While graduates of the Bachelor's program are supposed to have the necessary skills to speak and write one Middle Eastern language and display a very broad knowledge of Middle Eastern history and culture, the Master's program allows the student to choose his/her own track and to acquire higher academic skills. It is centered around a set of three mandatory seminars, in which students read the recent secondary literature and get acquainted with the existing methodological approaches to the study of the Middle East. A rich selection of elective courses, addressing the past and present issues of the Middle East from historical, literary, sociological, and other perspectives, offers students the chance to shape their own individual curriculum, typically linked to the theme of their Master's thesis. The PhD program in Middle Eastern Studies is realized jointly with the Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Past and current dissertation projects cover a wide range of topics in history, politics, gender studies, literatures, religious traditions, and cultures of the Middle East.

The DMES has important international collaboration both with Western and Middle Eastern academic institutions (including Edinburgh University, Hamburg University, the University of Granada, Sultan Qaboos University [Oman], and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem). The research activities of the DMES cover the following themes: Arabic linguistics (František Ondráš, Viktor Bielický, Adam Pospíšil), the contemporary Middle East and Northern Africa (Jitka Malečková, Pavel Ťupek, Tereza Jermanová), the history of Islamic countries in the classical period (Daniel Boušek, Josef Ženka), the Persian language and the modern and contemporary history of Iran (Zuzana Křihová, Lubomír Novák, Mona Khademi), and the social and legal history of the late-Ottoman state (Ebru Akçasu).

3) Department for the Study of Religions, Masaryk University [Brno]

Address: Ustav religionistiky FF MU, Masarykova univerzita, Filozofická fakulta, Arna Nováka 1, 602 00 Brno.

Location: Gorky street 7, Brno (the postal address is different, see above).

How to get there: Tram No. 3, 11, 12 – Grohova station, entrance to the complex is from Gorky street.

Telephone: +420 549 49 1571 **E-mail:** religion@phil.muni.cz

all contacts are available here: <<https://religionistika.phil.muni.cz/en/about-us/contacts>>

Website: <<https://religionistika.phil.muni.cz/en>>

The Department for the Study of Religions at Masaryk University is one of the leading departments for the study of religions in Europe. With its numerous academic staff and students, it also ranks among the largest European departments for the study of religions. In 1992, it became the first local institution to open a five-year degree course in the Study



3-1. Kounic's Palace in Brno, the Headquarters of Masaryk University



3-2. Department for the Study of Religions

of Religions, and one year later it became a fully-fledged independent department of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University. From the very beginning, the study of Islam has been an inseparable part of its research activities.

4) Department of Middle Eastern Studies, Faculty of Arts,

West Bohemia University [Pilsen]

Address: University of West Bohemia, Department of Middle East Studies, Sedláčková 15, 306 14 Pilsen

Location: Sedláčková street is located in the very centre of the city, close to the Square of the Republic

How to get there: From the main railway station, tram No. 1 or 2 – Hlavní posta (Central Post Office) station

Telephone: +420 602 135 368

E-mail: dkrizek@kbs.zcu.cz

Website:

[<https://kbs.zcu.cz/en/index.html>](https://kbs.zcu.cz/en/index.html)



4. West Bohemia University

The Department of Middle Eastern Studies at West Bohemia University is the educational and scientific-research institution in the field of history, culture, and languages of the Middle

East, Assyriology, Islamic studies and Judaic studies. Among other relevant specializations, the academic staff of the department strive to build a Czech tradition of the anthropology of Islam.

5) National Library of the Czech Republic

Address: National Library of the Czech Republic, Klementinum 190, 110 00, Prague 1

Location: A huge baroque complex in the Old Town, close to the Charles Bridge, entrances into the complex from Mariánské Square or from Karlova Street



5-1. General Study Room, National Library of the Czech Republic



5-2. Klementinum, the complex of buildings where the National Library is located

How to get there: Tram No. 17, 18 - Staromestska station, Metro A (Green Line) - Staromestska station

Telephone: +420 221 663 111 (Operator)

E-mail: oms.ur@nkp.cz (Foreign Relations Department)

Website: <<https://www.nkp.cz>>

Business hours: depending on the required section and services, for their overview, see <<http://www.en.nkp.cz/about-us/about-nl/contacts/services/links/opening-hours/hours>>

The National Library of the Czech Republic is the most important Czech public library, having played an exceptional role in Czech national history. Its extensive resources include a considerable collection of Oriental manuscripts as well as virtually all the contributions to Islamic studies published in Czech, including rare prints (both translations and studies) dating from the pioneering epoch of deeper local interest in the Middle East in the nineteenth century. The catalogue of Arabic manuscripts is available on CD-ROM at the library bookstore; for more information see:

<<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/memory-of-the-world/projects/full-list-of-projects/czech-republic-catalogue-of-arabic-manuscripts-of-the-national-library-of-the-czech-republic-project/>>

6) The Publishing House Academia

Address: Academia, Vodičkova 40, 110 00 Prague 1

Location: The so called Wiehl's house on the corner of the Wenceslas square and Vodičkova street

How to get there: Academia is located close to the metro A (Green Line) – Mustek station

Telephone: all contacts are available here: <<http://www.academia.cz/kontakt>>

E-mail: for foreign copyrights: Michaela Procházková, prochazkova@academia.cz
for PR: Marie Povýšilová, povysilova@academia.cz

Website: <<https://www.academia.cz>>

Business hours:

the publisher: upon individual agreement

(see contacts above)

the bookshop: daily, Monday–Friday: 8:30–20:00,

Saturday: 9:30–19:00, Sunday: 9:30–18:00.

The publishing house was established in 1953, having formerly been the publishing house of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. Today Academia has a leading position among publishers in the Czech Republic. Academia has played an



6-1. One of Academia's bookshops, Prague



6-2. Wiehl's House, the building where Academia is located

irreplaceable role in the process of spreading scholarly knowledge related to Islam and the history and cultures of Muslims in the current Czech Republic, as well as in the former Czechoslovakia. Thanks to its editorial policy, a lot of the medieval texts related to Islam and the history and cultures of Muslim countries have been made accessible to Czech and Slovak readers, among them works of Ibn Rushd, Ibn Sina, al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyya, Ibn Tufayl, al-Maqrizi, etc. Academia also runs a network of bookshops (mostly in Prague), the largest of which is located in the same building as the editorial office.

7) Karolinum Press

Address: Ovocný trh 3/5, 116 36 Praha 1

Location: The publishing house is located in Karolinum, the historical heart of Charles University in the Old Town of Prague. The Karolinum bookstore is in Celetná street 18, right next to the Department of Middle Eastern Studies.

How to get there: The nearest metro stations are “Můstek” and “Náměstí republiky”.

Telephone and e-mail: all contacts are available here:

<https://www.cupress.cuni.cz/ink2_stat/index.jsp?include=kontakty>

Website: <<https://www.cupress.cuni.cz/en>>

Business hours: the publisher: upon individual arrangement (see contacts above)

the bookshop: daily, Monday–Friday: 9:00–19:00, Saturday–Sunday: 11:00–18:00

Although Karolinum Press was established in 1990, its publishing tradition can be traced back to Humanist prints from the sixteenth century. As part of the university, Karolinum Press



7-1. Karolinum, the historical heart of Charles University



7-2. Karolinum Bookstore

supports research and education in all of the disciplines taught at the 17 faculties, including Oriental studies, history, areal studies, and the study of religion. Karolinum publishes mostly scientific monographs, journals, and textbooks, ranging from specialized exercise books to general textbooks used around the country.

8) The International Book Fair and Literary Festival “Book World Prague”



8-1. Book World Prague 2009



8-2. Book World Prague 2013

Address: Výstaviště Praha (Prague Exhibition Ground), Prague 7

Location: The territory of the Prague exhibition ground is situated nearby Holesovice quarter, close to Stromovka park.

How to get there: Tram No. 12 from metro C (Red Line) – “Nádraží Holešovice” station

Telephone and e-mail: all the contacts to the organizer of this event are available at:

<<http://sk2019.svetknihy.cz/en/the-most-important-links/contacts/>>

Website: <<http://sk2019.svetknihy.cz/en/>>

The international book fair “Book World Prague” is, within the Czech context, an exceptional cultural event, showcasing almost all major local publishing houses as well as many important foreign publishers. The fair is held annually at the beginning of May. Recently, Egypt and Saudi Arabia were among the guests of honor of the fair, which enabled both countries to

introduce their own book production and cultural activities to a Czech audience.

Photo Sources

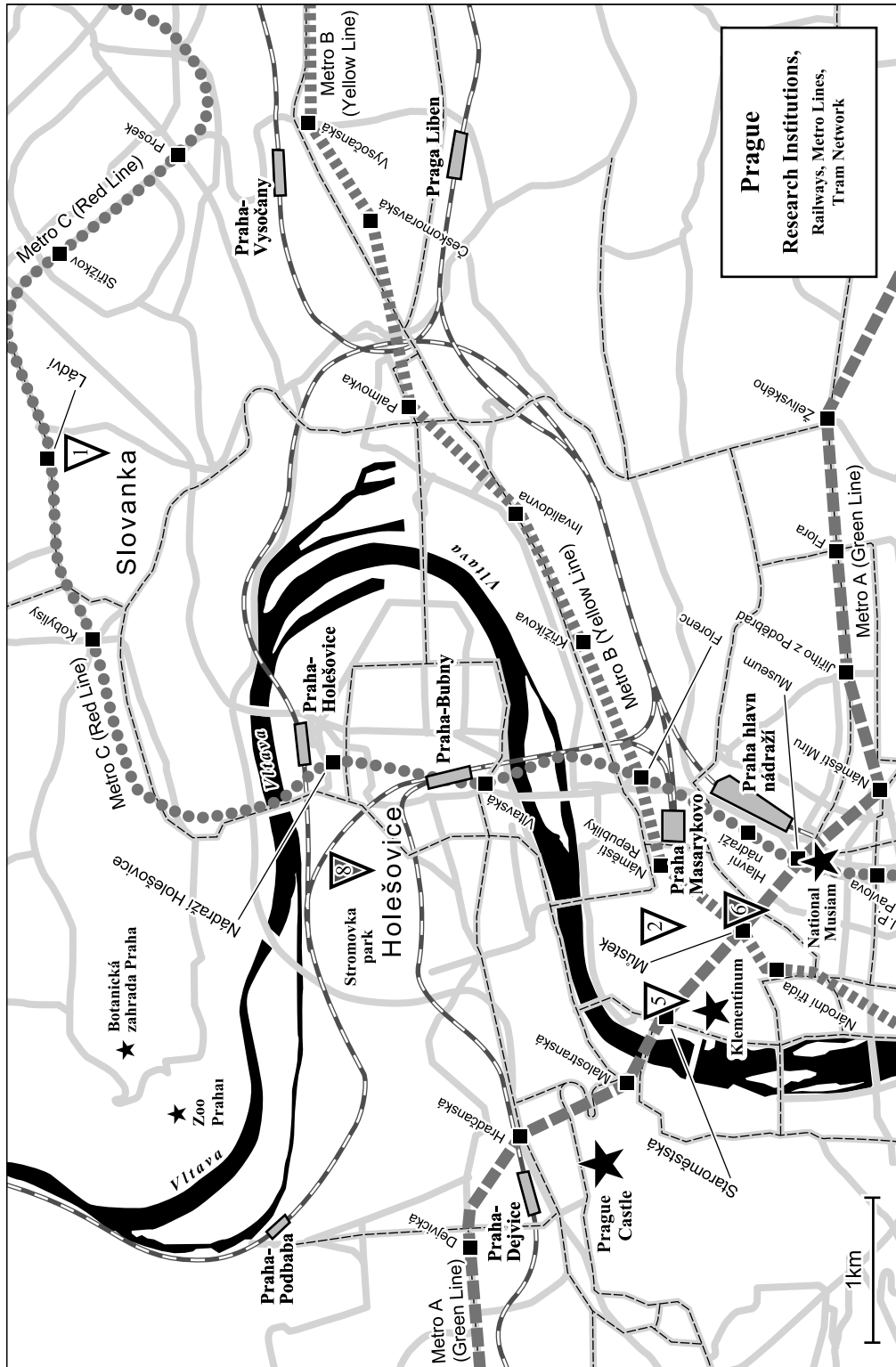
If you visit following resources and get the error message “The requested page title contains an invalid UTF-8 sequence.”, you need percent-encoding the URL. Online encoders are, e.g., <<https://www.url-encode-decode.com/>>, <<https://www.urlencoder.org/>>.

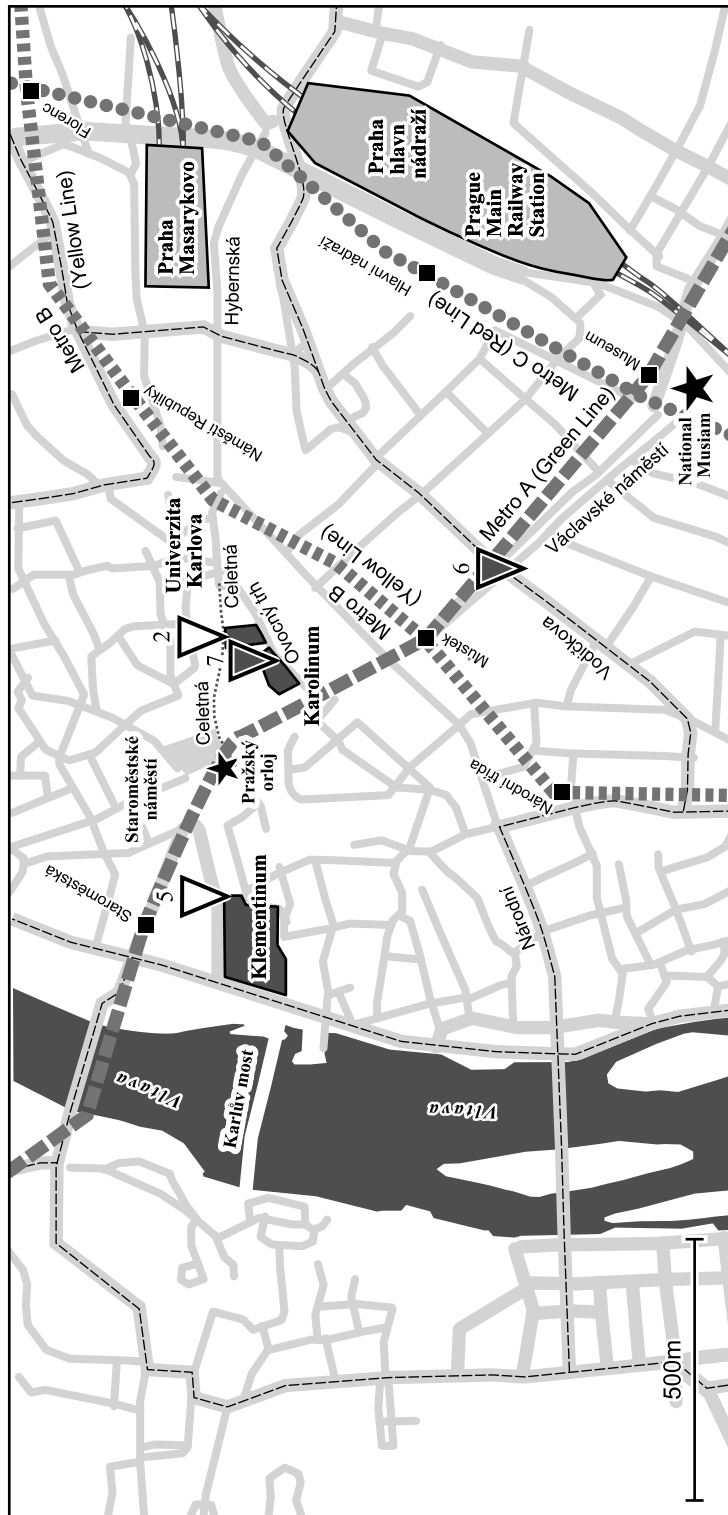
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Czech Republic and its Three Cities





Prague: Klementinum — Karolínium — Main Station

The Maps of Prague are based on OpenStreetMap <<http://www.openstreetmap.org>> and referred to GoogleMaps.