

Doubravka Olšáková

SENIOR RESEARCHER · HISTORIAN OF SCIENCE

Institute of Political Studies · Faculty of Social Sciences · Charles University

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RESEARCH PROFILE

Historian of science, technology, and the environment working at the intersection of science diplomacy, Cold War history, international relations, and the history of emotions. Her research examines how scientific knowledge acquires authority, travels across political borders, and becomes environmentally, emotionally, and politically consequential. She places Central and Eastern Europe within global histories of expertise, international organisations, and transnational cooperation.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

- 2024-present** **Senior Researcher**, Department of Political Science, Institute of Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, Prague
- 2011-2024** **Researcher**, Institute of Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Sciences; Head, Department of Global Conflicts and Local Consequences (2022-2023)
- 2008-2010** **Science Officer, Humanities Unit**, European Science Foundation, Strasbourg; EUROCORES Programme Coordinator (BOREAS, Inventing Europe, TECT) and ERIH Coordinator
- 2007-2008** Researcher, Masaryk Institute and Archives, Czech Academy of Sciences
- 2001-2004** Doctoral Researcher, Research Centre for the History of Science, Prague
- 2000-2001** Assistant to the Director for EU Fifth Framework Programme projects, Technology Centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences

EDUCATION

- 2007** **PhD / doctorat en cotutelle**, Université Paris IV-Sorbonne and Charles University, Prague
- 2003** Mgr., European Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University
- 2002** DEA, Histoire contemporaine des mondes étrangers et des relations internationales, Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne
- 2002** Mgr., Political Science, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University
- 2000 / 1999** BA, International Area Studies / BA, Political Science and International Relations, Charles University

CURRENT RESEARCH LEADERSHIP

- 2025-2027** **Principal Investigator**, Forging Peace in the Shadow: Czechoslovak Pugwash and Pugwash in Czechoslovakia, Czech Science Foundation
- 2022-2026** **Co-investigator / Czech institutional lead**, ERC Advanced Grant Negotiating World Research Data: A Science Diplomacy Study (NEWORLD@A)
- 2026-present** **Co-investigator**, Historicising Earth System Governance, British Academy Knowledge Frontiers

RESEARCH GRANTS AND PROJECTS

- 2022-2024** **Principal Investigator**, Science and Emotion: Rethinking the Environmental Movement under Communism in Czechoslovakia in the 1970s and 1980s, Czech Science Foundation
- 2019-2021** **Principal Investigator**, Between Stalinism and Global Infrastructuralism: The Impact of Cold War Global Science on Czechoslovak Science and International Politics, 1945-1989, Czech Science Foundation
- 2015-2017** **Principal Investigator**, Stalin's Plan for the Transformation of Nature in Czechoslovakia, 1948-1964, Czech Science Foundation
- 2011-2013** **Principal Investigator**, Sovietization of Science through the Academy of Sciences, Czech Science Foundation

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

- 2024-present** Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Centaurus: Journal of the European Society for the History of Science
- 2024-present** Editorial Board, Oxford University Press series Science and Technology in International Relations
- 2022-present** Scientific Board, Institute of Contemporary History, Czech Academy of Sciences
- 2018-2027** Regional Representative for Czechia and Slovakia, European Society for Environmental History
- 2017-present** Co-founder and Treasurer, IUHPST/DHST Commission on Science, Technology and Diplomacy (STAND)
- 2023** Member, European Society for the History of Science Early Career Prize Committee
- 2021** Member, European Society for Environmental History Turku Book Prize Committee

FELLOWSHIPS AND VISITING POSITIONS

- 2023** Berlin Center for Cold War Studies, Institut für Zeitgeschichte München-Berlin (three months)
- 2022** Visiting research stay, University of Texas at Austin (three weeks)
- 2018** Open Society Archives Fellowship, Budapest (two months)
- 2014** European Society for Environmental History Small Grant
- 2012** Visegrad Small Grant
- 2004-2008** French Government Fellowship, Paris (joint doctoral programme)
- 2004** Industrie-Club e.V. Düsseldorf Scholarship (six months); Queen Jadwiga Foundation Fellowship, Kraków
- 2003** International Visegrad Fund Fellowship, Budapest (four months)

AWARD

- 2000** Bolzano Prize for the best student research paper at Charles University

SELECTED BOOKS AND EDITED VOLUMES

- **Olšáková, D.** *Global Ambitions, Local Tensions: How Science Diplomacy Shaped Czech Science and Created Grey Zone Expertise*. Prague: Institute of Contemporary History, 2023.
- Wheeler, E. and **D. Olšáková**, eds. *Letters from Prague, 1947-1957. Rethinking the Cold War 10*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022.
- Olšáková, D. and J. Janáč. *The Cult of Unity: The Stalin Plan for the Transformation of Nature in Czechoslovakia, 1948-1964*. Prague: Academia, 2020.
- **Olšáková, D.**, ed. *In the Name of the Great Work: Stalin's Plan for the Transformation of Nature and Its Impact in Eastern Europe*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2016.
- **Olšáková, D.** *Věda jde k lidu! Československá společnost pro šíření politických a vědeckých znalostí a popularizace věd v Československu ve 20. století*. Prague, 2014.

SELECTED PEER-REVIEWED ARTICLES

- Kochetkova, E., **D. Olšáková** et al. "Zero Growth, Socialist Modernity, and the Anti-Environmental Turn in Eastern Europe." *Journal of Modern European History* 24, no. 3 (2026): 299-323. DOI: 10.1177/16118944261465602.
- **Olšáková, D.** "A Review of Science Diplomacy: Theoretical Evolution to a Post-Naïve Approach and Its Relevance for the Czech Republic." *Czech Journal of International Relations* 59, no. 3 (2024): 7-30. DOI: 10.32422/cjir.430.
- Robinson, S., M. Adamson, G. Barrett et al., including **D. Olšáková**. "The Globalization of Science Diplomacy in the Early 1970s: A Historical Exploration." *Science and Public Policy* (2023).
- Mrozek, B. and **D. Olšáková**. "The Cat-Pee-Smell Affair: Cross-Border Odor Conflicts between the Federal Republic of Germany, the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic, and the German Democratic Republic, 1976-89." *German Yearbook of Contemporary History* (2025).
- **Olšáková, D.** "Environmental Journalism? Radio Free Europe, Charter 77 and the Making of an Environmental Agenda." *Environment and History* 28, no. 2 (2022): 203-227.
- Rispoli, G. and **D. Olšáková**. "Science and Diplomacy around the Earth: From the Man and the Biosphere Programme to the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme." *Historical Studies in the Natural Sciences* 50, no. 4 (2020): 456-481. DOI: 10.1525/hsns.2020.50.4.456.
- **Olšáková, D.** "A Matter of Courtesy: The Role of Soviet Diplomacy and Soviet 'System Safeguards' in Maintaining Soviet Influence on Czechoslovak Science before and after 1968." *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 43, no. 4 (2020): 542-559.
- Janáč, J. and **D. Olšáková**. "On the Road to Stockholm: A Case Study of the Failure of Cold War International Environmental Initiatives." *Centaurus* 62 (2020): 132-149.
- **Olšáková, D.** "Pugwash in Eastern Europe: The Limits of International Cooperation under Soviet Control in the 1950s and 1960s." *Journal of Cold War Studies* 20, no. 1 (2018): 210-240. DOI: 10.1162/jcws_a_00805.
- **Olšáková, D.** "The International Biological Program in Eastern Europe: Science Diplomacy, Comecon and the Beginnings of Ecology in Czechoslovakia." *Environment and History* 24, no. 4 (2018): 543-567.

SELECTED CHAPTERS AND EDITORIAL WORK

- **Olšáková, D.** "IUPAP, Cooperative Antagonism and the GDR." In R. Lalli, ed., *Globalizing Physics: One Hundred Years of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics*, 240-256. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024.
- Janáč, J. and **D. Olšáková**. "Der Stalin-Plan zur Umgestaltung der Natur und die Grenzen des technokratischen Umweltschutzes." In R. Holec and M. Zückert, eds., *Umweltgeschichte in mitteleuropäischen Kontexten*, 101-132. Leipzig, 2024.
- Jacobsen, L. L. and **D. Olšáková**, guest editors. "Diplomats in Science Diplomacy: Promoting Scientific and Technological Collaboration in International Relations." Special issue of *Berichte zur Wissenschaftsgeschichte* 43, no. 4 (2020).

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Science diplomacy · History of science and technology · Environmental history · Cold War history · Global and transnational history · International organisations · Expertise and authority · History of emotions · Central and Eastern Europe · Czech-French relations

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- Regular contributor to the Czech national daily *Právo*: 51 opinion and historical commentary pieces published since 2024 on France, Poland, European security, environmental politics, nuclear risk, and Cold War history.
- Frequent expert commentator on contemporary European politics, the history of communism, science diplomacy, and environmental history for Czech broadcast and print media.

LANGUAGES

Czech (native) · English (professional) · French (professional) · Polish (working proficiency) · German (reading proficiency)

ONLINE PROFILES

[ORCID](#) · [Google Scholar](#) · [Charles University profile](#)

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