

Vlastislav Červený passed away on 21 May 2022 in Prague, at the age of 90, following a lengthy illness. Sláva, as he was known among his friends and colleagues, graduated in 1956 from Charles University in Prague where he earned his degree in physics with honors. Sláva spent his entire career at his alma mater, and in 1961, he received his doctorate in geophysics from there as well. He then joined the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of Charles University, where in 1966 he was made an associate professor. He then had to wait 21 years until he was at long last promoted to a full professorship in 1987.

During his long lifetime, Sláva received an impressive number of awards, among them SEG's Maurice Ewing Medal, the Beno Gutenberg Medal of the European Geosciences Union, and the Ernst Mach Honorary Medal for Merit in the Physical Sciences of the Czech Academy of Sciences. He was also an honorary member of both SEG and the European Association of Geoscientists and Engineers.

Sláva started his career in the study of reflection of a spherical wave at a plane interface, with concentration on the vicinity of the critical point. Crucial for Sláva was a long stay at Moscow State University in 1964, followed later by one at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, from 1968 to 1969. During those stays, Sláva extended his interest to the high-frequency asymptotic methods for the study of seismic wave propagation in inhomogeneous layered media. Specifically, he concentrated on his life's passion: the ray method. The introductory part of Sláva's first book (with Ravi Ravindra), *Theory of Seismic Head Waves*, published by University of Toronto Press in 1971, was dedicated to the ray method. In later years, Sláva wrote numerous papers, program packages, and a second book devoted solely to the ray method. This led to a dramatic increase in his reputation among geoscientists worldwide and therefore to an increasing number of invitations for stays at universities and research institutions all over the globe. During these many trips, he collected much new material, again bearing on the ray method as well as on its various generalizations. These efforts culminated with his comprehensive book *Seismic Ray Theory*, sometimes called the "ray-theory bible." In it one can find the basis of high-frequency asymptotic methods along with many novel ideas of Sláva's own. All are presented in an easily understandable manner. It was Sláva's gift that he could explain the most difficult and complex concepts in the simplest possible way.

Writing papers, books, and program packages were not Sláva's only activities in the world of science. He was one of the organizers of a series of workshops titled "Seismic Waves in Laterally Inhomogeneous Media." These have continued in slightly modified



Vlastislav Červený
1932–2022

form to the present day. After the later political changes in Czechoslovakia, Sláva founded and led, until recently, the consortium "Seismic Waves in Complex 3D Structures."

Although science was a high priority in Sláva's life, by no means did he live by science alone. In his younger years, he was an active mountain climber who was not afraid to attempt the most difficult climbs. Stories about this hobby and about his travels around the globe were often the subjects of get-togethers that followed intense scientific debates.

One may well ask why it took such an exceptionally gifted scientist 21 years to reach full professor rank. The answer is simple. Sláva lived for the greater part of his life under a regime that valued political activities more than scientific ones. The university authorities explained that the delay in Sláva's promotion was because they couldn't find reasons for it. The authorities were not interested in Sláva's scientific achievements; they simply expected from him participation in political events, with which he did not agree at all.

One of us (S. T.) would like to add a few reminiscences about our late friend. I first heard about Sláva and his passion for seismic ray theory from the late Franta Hron, who was Sláva's colleague at Charles University. Franta chose to leave Czechoslovakia after its invasion by the Soviet Army. He ended up in Canada where he was hired by Amoco Canada. It was Franta who convinced me that ray theory had a big role to play in exploration geophysics, and it was thanks to him that I learned about Sláva and his scientific accomplishments. I was then able to contact Sláva, who at that time was spending his sabbatical in Canada. I learned about his first book, which I brought to the attention of several of my colleagues at our lab. Many years later, Sláva invited me to attend one of his by-then-famous workshops held in a picturesque old castle near Prague. This was one of the first gatherings at which geophysicists from both East and West could meet and freely discuss their science. In all my travels around the globe, there was nobody who treated my wife and I with so much grace and cordiality as Sláva and his colleagues did, something that I shall never forget.

Even while being an extraordinarily gifted scientist, Sláva was a modest person, one who taught and supervised many students all over the world. All of us who were privileged to meet and to work with him will miss him deeply. Sláva's memory will remain with us as one of seismic ray theory's true giants.

Sláva is survived by his wife Eva, two daughters, five grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

— IVAN PŠENČÍK AND SVEN TREITEL