

## IN MEMORY

### Dr. František Patočka

November 29, 1951 – July 12, 2004



Dr. František Patočka (standing in the middle) with Polish and French colleagues on a field trip to the Karkonosze Mountains in 1996 (Photo by J. Don).

František Patočka was born into a medical family in Prague on November the 29<sup>th</sup>, 1951. His interests in science and great love of nature met with a great deal of familial support during his secondary school education, above all from his father, a professor of medicine, and from his uncle, the well-known Czech philosopher, Professor Jan Patočka. This encouragement and support of his interests were an important factor in his choice of undergraduate degree: geology at the Faculty of Natural Sciences at Charles University in Prague. He obtained a Master's degree in economic geology in the 1975, and was conferred the Czech RNDr. degree in the sciences at the same university in 1976. At the beginning of his professional career, he focused his attention on the volcanogenic strata-bound massive sulphides of the Příbram and Zlaté Hory ore districts. The data collected there for his Master's dissertations became the basis of several of his early scientific papers dealing with different aspects of the origin of stratiform sulphide mineralization.

The next stage in František Patočka's scientific career was his PhD thesis, devoted to the polarity of Devonian volcanism in the Moravo-Silesian Zone and its relationship to the distribution of massive sulphide deposits. After completing this pioneer study, he started to apply models of plate tectonics to the genesis of ore deposits in the Bohe-

mian Massif. He was one of the first Czech geologists to attempt to apply modern methods of petrology and geochemistry to (meta)volcanic and (meta)sedimentary rocks in studies of provenance and palaeotectonic setting in different areas of the Bohemian Massif, especially in the Sudetes, Moravo-Silesian Zone and in the Barrandian Proterozoic and Palaeozoic.

His great experience in studies of the protoliths of volcanic rocks and the provenance of metasediments in different areas of the Bohemian Massif provided him with a basis for publishing important synthesizing articles dealing with the plate tectonic reconstruction of the Bohemian Massif and the entire Mid-European Variscides. Several papers dealing with this topic became the core of his PhD thesis, defended in 2001. His detailed knowledge of the geology and geochemistry of the northern part of the Bohemian Massif contributed significantly to the creation of new models of the tectonomagmatic evolution of the Czech part of the Sudetes, then presented to the broader scientific community, for example during the course of the international project Palaeozoic Amalgamation of Central Europe (PACE).

František Patočka was the author and co-author of about one hundred published titles (abstracts, extended abstracts, papers, monographs, textbooks, and chapters in monographs and textbooks), and many unpublished reports and theses. He was a member of several scientific societies in the Czech Republic and abroad and a member of the editorial boards of Czech and foreign journals (*Bulletin of Czech Geological Survey*, *Geolines*, *Geologia Sudetica*). He worked as a member of the scientific councils in the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and in Charles University, and as a member of the Council of the Czech Grant Agency. Except for a short period of time spent in the Department of Economic Geology of Charles University, his professional career passed at the Institute of Geotechnics and Institute of Geology of the Academy of Sciences.

After the Russian invasion of the Czech Republic in 1968, his personal and scientific life was negatively influenced by political discrimination, especially when his uncle, Professor Jan Patočka, became a signatory of "Chart 1977", a movement for respecting human rights. Like many other Czech citizens, František Patočka lost some civil rights. He could not travel abroad and work as a university teacher. In spite of that, he collaborated with colleagues from many countries, including France, Germany, Poland and the United Kingdom. He never lost touch with the students of geology at the departments of the Charles and Misery Universities. He often helped them in the field as a supervisor or consultant on their Master's and PhD theses.

An important part of his scientific life was his cooperation with colleagues working in the neighbouring areas of the Sudetes, across the Czech/Polish border. He collaborated with many scientists from Wrocław University, the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Jagiellonian University, and with peers from several western European institutes of higher learning and research. Joint field- and laboratory work resulted in significant scientific achievements and a range of important publications interpreting the origin, ages, metamorphic evolution and palaeotectonic significance of the metaigneous complexes of the area. His broad knowledge of petrology and geochemistry, and in particular of the regional geology of the Mid-European Variscides, meant he was an excellent and very active member of the Editorial Board of *Geologia Sudetica*.

Not only a researcher focused on his work, Dr. Patočka was known to his colleagues as a broadly educated man, which liked historical literature, the fine arts and....

aviation. His love of nature never left him, and he always found time to go walking with his wife in the countryside surrounding their weekend cottage in the Šumava Mountains and in the vicinity of Prague.

František Patočka's long and fruitful scientific studies and his invaluable work in the management of research at the Institute of Geology of the Academy of Sciences were abruptly interrupted in the spring of 2003 by serious illness. After a hard, year-long struggle, he sadly succumbed to this disease, and was taken from us in the summer of 2004. He will stay in our memory not only as a significant person in the field of geology and geochemistry but far more importantly, as a role model: a brave person of great moral integrity, who always stood by his beliefs, regardless of what life and fate threw in his way.

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