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Professor Jakub GUTENBAUM was born on August 17, 1929, in Warsaw. Both his parents were teachers. At the beginning of the Nazi occupation of Poland, the whole Jewish population of the country was enclosed in ghettos. Jakub, together with his mother and younger brother, was forcibly resettled in the Warsaw Ghetto. They suffered cold, starvation and the constant danger of death. In July 1942, when mass deportations to the extermination camps began, the Gutenbaums went into hiding in a concealed room. In that period, all their close relatives were murdered in the gas chambers.

During the tragic days of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, they took shelter in a hidden cellar. The house over the cellar was burnt by SS-men. At the beginning of May 1943, they were discovered by German soldiers and taken to the Majdanek concentration camp. There Jakub's mother and brother were selected for immediate extermination, while he was forced into hard labour, intended to kill him. Roughly at the same time, his father died of exhaustion in Siberia, to where he had been deported by Soviet authorities.

For two years Jakub was a prisoner of various concentration camps: Majdanek, Skarżysko-Kamienna, Buchenwald, Schlieben and finally of Teresin, where together with other prisoners, he was liberated by Soviet troops in May 1945. When in the camps, several times he escaped being killed by a hair's breadth.

After the war Jakub lived in the House for Jewish Children in Helenówek near Łódź (Poland), where he completed his high-school education. In 1949–55

he studied electrical engineering at Moscow Power Institute, where he received his M.Eng. diploma in 1955.

In 1956 he joined the Institute of Automatic Control of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, which, after several reorganizations, became the present Systems Research Institute. Jakub Gutenbaum has been associated with this Institute till today. He received his Ph.D. in automatic control in 1963 and the higher scientific degree of Dr.Hab. in 1968, both from Warsaw University of Technology. The scientific title of *Professor of Technological Sciences* was conferred upon him in 1977.

Since 1963, Dr. Gutenbaum has led various research groups and projects. His scientific interests have included a wide spectrum of problems connected with mathematical modelling and control of systems. Among others, they concern:

- design of components of automatic control systems,
- peak-holding and adaptive control,
- mathematical modelling of technological processes,
- water management problems,
- scheduling problems,
- control and optimization of multistage processes,
- mathematical modelling of economic systems, etc.

The characteristic feature of the development of his research is the evolution from control of technological plants towards general problems of system analysis and control of a broad class of different processes. The experience gathered in control of technological plants has been successfully exploited by him in such seemingly distant areas as water management and macroeconomical modelling. In this context his monograph *"Mathematical Modelling of Systems"*, Omnitech, Warszawa 1992 (in Polish) should be mentioned. Altogether, Professor Gutenbaum is the author or co-author of more than 80 publications, including four monographs.

Professor Gutenbaum has supervised and guided the research of groups of younger scientists gathered around him. He has promoted ten doctors. Although teaching was not the main field of his activities, he has taught some undergraduate and postgraduate courses, not only in Poland but also in Italy (Rome) and France (Toulouse). Professor Gutenbaum has developed close contacts with foreign scientific centers. In particular, his relations with Italian science and scientists have been so good that, jokingly, he has been called an Italian *attaché scientifique* to Poland.

Professor Gutenbaum has actively participated in the life of the scientific community. For many years he has been a member of the Scientific Committee *"Automatic Control and Robotics"* of the Polish Academy of Sciences as well as of the Scientific Councils of the Systems Research Institute and the Institute of Bionics and Bioengineering. In view of his high scientific and moral prestige in the community, he has often been asked to serve as a referee of various degree dissertations, as well as to review applications for professorship. Since 1981 Professor Gutenbaum has been the editor of the series of monographs *"Badania*

Systemowe" ("Systems Analysis") published in Polish by the Systems Research Institute. Altogether 23 volumes appeared in this series. In connection with the tragic history of his childhood, since 1991 Professor Gutenbaum has been the President of the Association of *"Children of the Holocaust"* in Poland, which gathers people who survived the Holocaust as children of various ages.

Professor Gutenbaum is married, has one son and one grand-son.

Any picture of the personality of Professor Jakub Gutenbaum would not be complete without mention of his extraordinary character. In spite of his tragic personal experience, he has remained cheerful, open, kind and friendly to all people around him. He is a conformist, in the best sense of the word, but at the same time, he is firm as far as basic principles are concerned. In particular, everybody, not only his friends, can always fully rely on him. These extraordinary features of his character have made him extremely popular in the community. These feelings were accurately expressed by Professor Franco Giannessi. When asked to contribute to this volume, he wrote: *"Even if I am full of 'debts' toward publishing houses, I accept and will do my best to be on time. Indeed, due to the appreciation and friendship I have always had for Prof. Gutenbaum, I am honoured and glad of this task".*