

## Günter Spur

Jan C. Aurich

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“Günter Spur, 1928–2013”

On August 20, 2013, Günter Spur passed away at the age of 84. On the day before, he had still been actively participating in the meetings and discussions of the 63rd General Assembly of the International Academy for Production Engineering (CIRP) in Copenhagen. It was a shock to all of us.

Günter Spur received the call on the chair of Machine Tools and Factory Management at TU Berlin in 1965 and became member of the German Academic Society of Production Engineering (WGP) in the same year. Quickly, he earned a reputation as outstanding young professor. Only 5 years later, he became president of the WGP at an age of 42 years. He was then, and still is, the youngest scientist ever to be elected as president of our academic society. The two spring meetings of WGP to be organized by Günter Spur as president took place in Kassel and Berlin

and are still memorized as scientifically important and perfectly organized events by those who participated. Günter Spur continued to contribute to the scientific advancement of WGP for more than four decades.

Günter Spur was one of the predominant researchers of WGP. His contributions to science and education in our society are countless. He was one of the first researchers in the world to realize the upcoming relevance of numerical control. At the same time, he substantially contributed to the development and implementation of computer-aided design. When it came to understanding the importance of networks in production, he was again at the forefront of research. Many scientists and industrialists alike regard him as “Father of the factory of the future”. Günter Spur was author and co-author of many standard technical books and university textbooks from the early “Handbuch der Fertigungstechnik” to his latest book “Innovationssystem Produktionstechnik”.

Yet, his contribution to WGP was not only scientific or academic. Günter Spur had a vivid interest in history, particularly in the historical development lines of production research. He was the keeper of WGP’s “genealogical tree” and always knew about the roots of each member Institute. As one of his most important historical contributions, he questioned and investigated the role of production research during the national socialist period. His book “Produktionstechnische Forschung in Deutschland von 1933–1945” is still the most significant and detailed account of the role of production research before and during World War II, his work “Vom Faustkeil zum digitalen Produkt: Ein kulturgeschichtlicher Beitrag zur Entwicklung der Berliner Produktionswissenschaft” contains a comprehensive history of manufacturing. His goal to regain the role and scientific recognition TU Berlin and its Institute for Machine Tools and Factory Management once had

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J. C. Aurich (✉)  
German Academy for Production Engineering, Kaiserslautern,  
Germany  
e-mail: aurich@cpk.uni-kl.de

under Georg Schlesinger, who had to emigrate from Germany being a Jewish professor, tells us about Günter Spurs motivation and values. His recognition of historically important times and milestones was also obvious after German re-unification, when he actively worked on bringing the East German production research and researchers back into WGP.

Günter Spur was teacher, academic advisor, mentor and friend to many members of the German Academic Society of Production Engineering and far beyond. We will always keep his memory.