

## OBITUARY

### Thomas L. Saaty (18 July 1926 - 14 August 2017)

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Professor *Thomas L. Saaty*, a distinguished professor of the University of Pittsburgh, the designer of the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) and the Analytic Network Process (ANP), a new theoretical and methodological approach to the decision-making process, passed away in August 2017.

Born in Mosul, today's Iraq, in 1926, and educated in Beirut, he arrived in the United States in the early nineteen-fifties.

He defended his doctoral dissertation titled: On the Bessel Tricomi Equation in the field of mathematics in 1953, at Yale University, under the supervision of Einar Carl Hille.

Professor T. L. Saaty worked at the Operations Evaluation Group of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) at the Pentagon, the Office of Naval Research, and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency at the U.S. State Department.

He began his academic career at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, as a professor of statistics and operations research (1969-1979), and moved to the University of Pittsburgh at the invitation of the dean, where he worked until his death, being

the most famous member of Joseph M. Katz Graduate School of Business.

He is the author (for example, Saaty, 1959; 1980; 1982; 1994; 1999; 2001; 2005) and co-author (for example, Dantzig and Saaty, 1973) of a large number of scientific papers in the field of mathematics, statistics, and operations research. A special place in his work belongs to the issues of the synthesizing impact and coordination of information in the decision-making process. On this basis, he developed the Analytic Hierarchy Process theory, based on hierarchical problem decomposition and the pairwise comparison of decision-making elements using the 1-9 comparison scale, and, shortly afterwards, extended it to the cases of dependence between the elements of the same or different levels, as well as the feedback loop, which has proven to be a very useful approach in the group decision-making process and in solving large and complex multi-criteria decision-making issues, both in business and in the macroeconomic area.

In recognition of the development and generalization of the AHP/ANP approach to multi-criteria decision-making, in 2005, he became a member of the National Academy of Engineering (NAE), a part of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) of the United States of America. He received the Impact Award, awarded by the Institute for Operations Research and Management Science

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(INFORMS), for his contributing to solving complex decision-making issues.

Professor Thomas L. Saaty will remain remembered not only as an architect of decision-making theory, but also as a tireless traveler and researcher, an intellectual giant, who, with his creative and innovative approach, made a tremendous contribution to the development of Operations Research and Theory and Methodology of Decision-Making, and as “the man who changed the way things are measured”.

In the end, I would like to express my personal gratitude to Professor T. L. Saaty for the unselfish support he gave me during all these years, from the moment we first met in 2003. It was an honor to have the opportunity to personally meet and cooperate with him.

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