

The Scientific Contribution of Nikolai D. Botkin *



Paris, 1993.

The workshop “Mathematical Modelling and Scientific Computing: Focus on complex processes and systems” held on November 19-20, 2020, at the Technical University of Munich, was dedicated to Nikolai Dmitrievich Botkin who passed away on September 14, 2019. In this article, we give a short description of the most important scientific results and a complete list of his publications.

Nikolai Dmitrievich Botkin was born on March 22, 1956 in Sysert, Sverdlovsk Region (USSR) to the father Dmitrii Sergeevich Botkin who taught mathematics and the mother Matrena Samuilovna Afanasenko who taught physics. After graduating from the Faculty of Mathematics and Mechanics of the Ural State University in Sverdlovsk, he was employed in the Dynamical Systems’ Division of the Institute of Mathematics and Mechanics of the Ural Branch of the USSR Academy of Sciences (Sverdlovsk).

The scientific research of N. D. Botkin during the period of his work at the Institute of Mathematics and Mechanics (from 1978 to 1992) was devoted to the theory and numerical methods of differential games. Nikolai Botkin obtained theoretical results in the field of positional optimal control and constructing value functions [4], [5], [8], [10], [199], [200], [207], [216], a posteriori estimates

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for the numerical construction of solutions to differential games [3], [6], [77], [139], [141], and developed the first algorithms for calculating stable bridges in linear differential games [12], [76], [82], [106], [146], [201], [203], [204], [209], [211]–[214], [218], [219].

At the age of 27, in 1983, Nikolai defended his PhD thesis “Numerical solution of linear differential games” [1], [2]. During the decade 1982–1992, the methods developed by him were successfully applied [7], [9], [13], [16], [78]–[81], [107], [140], [142]–[145], [202], [205], [206], [208], [210], [215], [217] to the problems of aircraft control under wind disturbances in the framework of cooperation with the Academy of Civil Aviation in Leningrad, Russia. A method of aircraft landing control relying on switching lines was patented [104] in 1988. In the early 90s, based on an analysis of the asymptotic behavior of solutions to nonlinear differential games, he proposed a novel algorithm for computing the discriminating kernel of differential inclusion [11]. This algorithm was later on effectively implemented [46] in terms of level sets, which allowed to use it for solving many applied problems.

In 1992, Nikolai received a scientific grant from the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and worked for a year at the University of Würzburg, and for the next six months at the Technical University of Munich. During this period, he kept working on differential games [14], [83], [147], [148], [150], and was engaged in the development of new effective algorithms in the field of convex optimization and linear and quadratic programming [15], [17], [84], [149], [151], [152], [220], [221], continuing this work in later years [26], [31]. In particular, a very effective numerical algorithm for finding Chebyshev center of a finite point set in the Euclidean space R^n was created, which is often used by researchers in various scientific fields.

From August 1993 to January 1999 Nikolai Botkin worked at the Technical University of Munich: until March 1994 as a Humboldt Fellow in the Division of Higher and Numerical Mathematics, and since March 1994 as a researcher in the Division of Applied Mathematics. In line with the scientific focus of the Division of Applied Mathematics, which was primarily on mathematical models of complex physical processes, he completed the works on identification of unknown parameters both of nonlinear heat conductivity equations [18], [109], [110] and of models describing phase transitions in shape memory alloys [108], [155], [222].

In the years 1997–2002, within the framework of the DFG-project “Adaptive materials in real-time optimization” Nikolai was engaged in research of problems related to oscillations excited by piezoelectrics in thin plates. Along with a theoretical study of thin plate models excited by piezoelectric patches [19], [20], [111], [112], [153]–[156], [159], [223], [224], including homogenized variants of the models [21], [23], [85], [86], [113], [157], [158], [160], [161], as the number of piezoelectric patches tends to infinity, he designed and implemented active real-time controls which provide the desired performance of flexible constructions subjected to varying disturbances [87], [225]. Participation in this project continued after moving in early 1999 to Bonn for work at the multidisciplinary research cen-

ter CAESAR (Center of Advanced European Studies and Research). For seven and half years, he took part in numerous theoretical and applied projects. These included:

- Nonlinear interactions in piezoelectric excited surface waves (2001–2004)
- Microbalance Array Mass Spectrometry for Proteomics (2001–2004)
- Tire Sensor (2000–2004)
- Flexible Microrobot for Scanning Electron Microscopy (2000–2004)
- Shape Memory Composites for Orthodontic Archwires (2002–2005)
- Distributed Simulation of Complex Technological Systems (2004–2006)
- Elasto-Optical Biosensor on the Nanostructural Base (2004–2006)
- Safe Production and Use of Nanomaterials (2006–2007).

The work on these projects motivated the creation and substantiation of new mathematical models, the development of efficient algorithms and numerical methods. In particular, not only was a mathematical model of an acoustic biosensor, a multi-layered structure consisting of anisotropic piezoelectric and isotropic layers, created [24], [114], [162], [165], [166], [169], [171], [174], but also effective numerical methods and corresponding software [29], [118], [119], [123], [173], [177], [181], [183], [188] for the treatment of such multi-layered structures were developed. To take into account complex interactions with fluid of special biostructures (aptamers) that selectively bind biomolecules, a novel homogenization approach was elaborated [25], [27], [116], [117], [164], [167], [172], [178]. In this method, the interaction between the bristles of the aptamer molecules and the fluid is accounted for through an averaged material whose properties are derived using the passage to the limit in the model as the number of the bristles goes to infinity whereas their thickness goes to zero. It should also be noted that his contributions led to advances in the development of experimental devices such as the elasto-optical biosensor [45], [182], [187], the microfluidic reactor for producing nanoparticles [184], [189], the tire sensor [170], [179], and in the modeling composite materials and materials with memory [115], [120], [124], [163], [176], [180], [186], [226], as well as other important theoretical and experimental work [22], [28], [168].

Since August 2006, Nikolai Botkin was with the Division of Mathematical Modeling in the Mathematical Department at the Technical University of Munich. From 2006 to 2009 he was a leading researcher in the DFG project “Mathematical modeling and control in cryopreservation of living cells and tissues”. He developed and investigated models describing the processes of freezing and thawing of living cells and tissues and ingeniously applied the optimal control theory to the design of optimal cooling protocols that minimize the damaging effects caused by the release of the latent heat and by delayed freezing of intracellular fluid [32], [90], [185], [190], [230], [233]. N. D. Botkin was the co-author of the patent [105] for a device for freezing dental tissues. These and subsequent years, he also continued [35], [39], [129] his research on the numerical methods for solving differential games, developed grid algorithms for problems with nonlinear dynamics and state constraints [37], [40], [89], [193], [234]. He was among the first who applied numerical algorithms for solving differential games to biotech-

nological problems [237], [242], in particular, to the problem of propagation of surface acoustic waves in mathematical modeling of an acoustic biosensor [92], [121], [122], [162], [175], [227], [236], as well as for finding optimal protocols of freezing and thawing of living cells and tissues [34], [38], [88], [93], [194], [228], [231], [232].

In 2009–2012 Nikolai worked on a joint project “Modeling of CO_2 sequestration, including parameter identification and numerical simulation” of the Technical University of Munich and King Abdullah University of Science and Technology, Saudi Arabia. He obtained new results in the field of mathematical modeling of multiphase flows in porous medium, with accounting for the effects of hysteresis [41], [42], [126], [128], [195], [197].

His active work with graduate and postgraduate students of the Division of Mathematical Modeling is reflected in publications [30], [33], [44], [55], [125], [198], [229], where mathematical models for hydrodynamics, phase-field problems, transport in porous media, and economic problems have been developed.

Nikolai Botkin also paid great attention to research collaboration with the Poznan University of Technology, Poland. The joint results on inverse heat transfer problems were published in [36], [52], [191], [192]. Since 2012, he has been actively involved in a scientific cooperation with the Institute for Applied Mathematics, Far Eastern Branch of Russian Academy of Sciences (Vladivostok, Russia), on theoretical and numerical analysis of boundary-value problems of complex heat transfer [43], [47], [49], [53], [62], [68], [132], [196], [235], [239] and inverse and optimal control problems of complex heat transfer [48], [56]–[58], [63], [96], [131], [238].

Since 2013, Nikolay Botkin with great enthusiasm participated in the joint project “Mathematical modeling of cerebral blood circulation in premature infants with accounting for germinal matrix” of the University Clinic “rechts der Isar” and the Division of Mathematical Modeling. He applied the methods of differential game theory to the problems of modeling cerebral autoregulation [50], [67], [98], [130], [240], [241]. New models of cerebral blood circulation [60], [64], [65], [75], including models of oxygen transport [54], [69], [71], [136], [137], [243] in the brain were also developed and investigated with his direct involvement, and some peculiarities of cerebral blood circulation in premature infants were explored [70], [72], [73].

In 2015, he began work on the DFG project “Robust dynamic programming approach for solution of flight dynamics control problems” (joint with the Institute of Flight System Dynamics, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Technical University of Munich), as a leading project researcher. The algorithms for solving differential games, especially for the numerical construction of viability sets in nonlinear problems of high dimension were further developed [46], [51], [99], using novel parallelization technologies. This made it possible to solve problems with a phase vector dimension of 6–7, which was previously unattainable in differential games, and successfully apply the developed algorithms to problems of aircraft control at the stages of runway acceleration [94], take-off [91], [100], [102], [127], [133], [134], cruise flight [59], [61], [97], [135], and landing [95] un-

der wind conditions, as well as for creating algorithms for generating dangerous wind disturbances [66], [101], [103]. Moreover, new robust control methods were designed [74], [100], [102], [138].

Nikolai Botkin continued to work actively until his sudden death. Many of his 243 publications are frequently requested and cited by other researchers. Numerical and analytical methods he developed for linear and quadratic programming, optimal control and differential game problems are used by theorists and practitioners. Nikolai Botkin's friends, colleagues, and students will remember him with tenderness and gratitude.

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