JINT's 25th Anniversary

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From the Editor-in-Chief

Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pride and honor I announce to you that **JINT is 25 years old!** JINT serves the scientific and research community for a quarter of a century. It has gone through several stages and improvements with the most recent one being the addition of the special section on Unmanned Systems.

I want to take this opportunity to present to you the history of the *Journal of Intelligent and Robotic Systems*. The founding Editor and visionary was Dr. Spyros Tzafestas, now Professor Emeritus, National Technical University of Athens (NTUA), Greece. Back in the middle 1980's, Dr. Tzafestas 'predicted' the need to launch a scien-

tific journal that would serve as the home of all those who were working in the area of Intelligent Control. After the late K. S. Fu (from Purdue University) coined the term Intelligent Control in the very early 1970's, the area witnessed major and fast growth over the next 15 years, with first applications to intelligent robotics, intelligent machines, and intelligent manufacturing systems. At that time, in the 1980's, most of the research in the U.S. was done by five groups, which I list alphabetically: Dr. James Albus' group at the National Bureau of Standards - now called National Institute of Standards and Technology; Dr. Panos Antsaklis' group at Notre Dame; Dr. Alex Meystel's group at Drexel University; Dr. Umit Ozguner's group at Ohio State University, and Dr. George Saridis' group at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Not surprisingly, Dr. Tzafestas was perhaps the first one in Europe to work on Intelligent Control, thus, his idea to create JINT was the natural outcome of those times. He was the first one in Europe who created a Laboratory at NTUA dealing with Intelligent Robotic Systems. However, I am sad to say that Drs. Albus, Meystel and Saridis are no longer with us, but their leadership did shape up research directions in the area of Intelligent Control.

Perhaps I am biased (and I give the benefit of the doubt to everybody), but I grew up professionally among those giants who establish this area with their vision. I was present, as a PhD student,

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in the first International Symposium on Intelligent Control (ISIC), which continues until now under the full sponsorship of the IEEE Control Systems Society. I was very young professionally when Dr. Tzafestas invited me to be part of the Editorial Board of JINT. I was very fortunate to work with him for more than 15 years, until he decided to step down. I learned a lot from him. I admired his passion and dedication to JINT even under hard times, and I am honored being chosen by him to continue as the Editor-in-Chief of our Journal. But, JINT is Dr. Tzafestas' baby, he is the father, and if you allow me the joke, I got custody until he decides to take back JINT as he should.

I could go on and on. This journey of 25 years has been extraordinary. Dr. Tzafestas and I have worked with several Editors from Kluwer and Springer (Springer took over Kluwer). In my opinion, when Ms. Nathalie Jacobs and her able group from Springer took over JINT, things changed. Nathalie added the 'publisher passion' to the equation (that was previously missing) and completed the puzzle.

Today's JINT is the result of the hard work of everybody, from the authors to all the (previous, current and future) members of the editorial board, to the reviewers, to the Springer team. JINT is reputable; it has its place under the sun, but it is also capable and deserving of better things.

I am looking forward to the next 25 years of JINT under any capacity as JINT member. I am looking forward to working with you to make JINT better. I am looking forward to working with Nathalie, Anneke, Marie Veth and Irish (I still do not understand why they keep up with me, but I am willing to take my chances...). Above all I want to say a huge 'thank you' to Dr. Tzafestas for his vision to create the Journal serving as the founding Editor.

Happy Birthday JINT! Happy 25th anniversary! The best is yet to come.

Kimon P. Valavanis
Editor-in-Chief

From the Publishing Editor

It is with great pleasure that I accept Kimon's invitation to address our readers on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the *Journal of Intelligent & Robotic Systems*.

He has already sketched the history of the journal, and I can only confirm how fortunate we, first as Kluwer Academic Publishers, then as Springer, have been to step into the then emerging and ever-faster developing area of robotics the way we did.

I see three reasons for our success.

Firstly, we had the right connections with the right people to lead the journal. We are still grateful to our founding editor, Spyros Tzafestas, for starting the journal and keeping it going in its early stages. Then, when Kimon took over, the journal again received a powerful push forward. He is an inspiring and active editor, who expects the same from his board members. We are really glad to have so many capable, motivated, and hard-working people on board. The journal is what it is because of you, and as the publishers we are well aware of that.

Secondly, we are still going strong because we moved with the development of the subject area, making small, sometimes bigger steps, to follow where the action is, and to be relevant to today's world and anticipating tomorrow's requirements. Selecting the best topics to publish on for both our contributors and our readers is of the utmost importance, and identifying when and how to make adjustments is something that takes experience and wisdom. I think we have got the balance just right.

Thirdly, you, our readers and contributors, are using the journal as the scientific platform it is meant to be, and therefore continue to give it a reason to exist. Whatever the developments in publishing over the last 25 years, and no doubt in the years to come, the bottom line remains that we want the most innovative thoughts, the most brilliant articles, available to the widest possible readership, in as short a time as possible, to stimulate the dissemination of new work and promote further research, and ultimately more applications which lead to a better, safer world. And you come up trumps every issue.

Congratulations to all of us, on reaching this milestone. I hope to see further developments and successes with you all for many years to come, and if you have any ideas you want to share with Kimon or me, please do.

On behalf of the whole team at Springer,

Nathalie Jacobs, Senior Publishing Editor