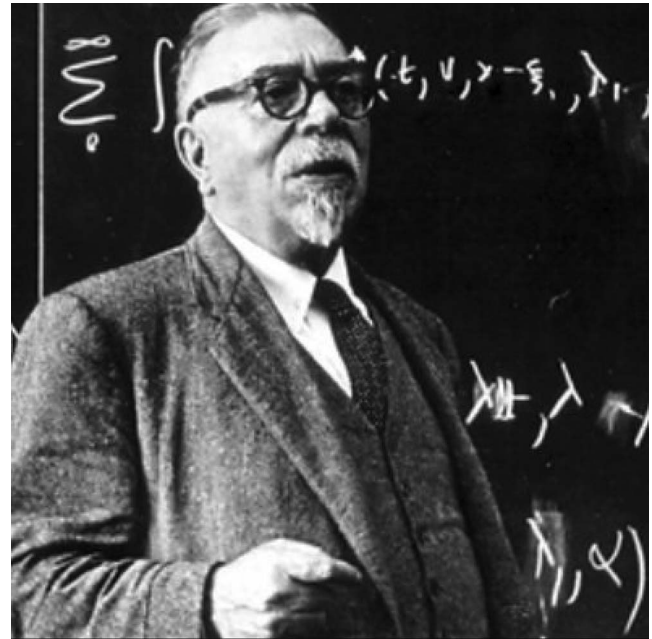


Convergence of Cognitive Informatics and Cybernetics—Guest Editorial on Special Issue on Cybernetics and Cognitive Informatics

Abstract—The three greatest theories in science and engineering developed in the 1940s are cybernetics, information theory, and systems theory. *Cybernetics* is the science of communication and control in humans, machines, organizations, and societies across the reductive hierarchy of neural, cognitive, functional, and logical levels. A contemporary form of cybernetics, known as cognitive informatics (CI), is a transdisciplinary inquiry of cognitive and information sciences that investigates into the internal information processing mechanisms and processes of the brain and natural intelligence and their engineering applications via an interdisciplinary approach. This special issue on cybernetics and CI focuses on the theme of “convergence of CI and cybernetics,” which investigates the shared foundations of cybernetics and CI and their impacts on cybernetic and cognitive systems. This editorial demonstrates that the investigation into CI and cybernetics may encouragingly result in fundamental discoveries toward the development of next-generation intelligent systems and cognitive computing technologies.

Index Terms—Abstract intelligence, cognitive informatics (CI), computational intelligence, cybernetics cognitive computing, denotational mathematics, natural intelligence.



Norbert Wiener (1894–1964)

I. CONTEMPORARY CYBERNETICS

CYBERNETICS, delineated by Wiener in 1948, is the science of communication and autonomous control in both machines and living things. In his seminal work entitled *Cybernetics or Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine* [43], Wiener initiated the field of cybernetics to provide a mathematical means for studying adaptive and autonomous systems. Cybernetics mimics information communicated in machines with that of the brain and nervous systems. It also attempts to elaborate human behavior by cybernetic engineering concepts [2], [3], [7]–[11], [14], [16], [18], [20], [42], [44], [48]. Cybernetics constitutes one of the roots of modern cognitive science and computational intelligence.

Definition 1: *Cybernetics* is the science of communication and control in humans, machines, organizations, and societies across the reductive hierarchy of neural, cognitive, functional, and logical levels.

Studies in cybernetics cover biologically, cognitively, and intelligently motivated computational paradigms such as vision, neural networks, genetic algorithms, fuzzy systems, autonomic systems, cognitive systems, computational intelligence, and robotics. The domain and architecture of contemporary cybernetics encompass a wide range of coherent fields from the machine, natural, and organizational intelligence to social

intelligence in the horizontal scopes and from the logical, functional, and cognitive models to neural (biological) models in the vertical reductive hierarchy. Therefore, cybernetics in nature is a multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary inquiry of cognitive information processing and autonomic systems.

The scope of contemporary cybernetics has been extended from mainly machine intelligence to natural, organizational, and societal intelligence. Its reductive framework has been enriched from logical and functional models to cognitive and neural models. A number of emerging fields have developed in cybernetics and closely related areas such as cognitive informatics (CI) [13], [24], [26], [29], [41], abstract intelligence [35], natural intelligence [27], computational intelligence [1], [12], [17], [22], [23], [30], [38], [40], autonomous agent systems [15], [36], and denotational mathematics for cybernetics [30].

II. CI

The theories of informatics and their perceptions on information as the object under study have evolved from the classic information theory to modern informatics and then to CI in the last six decades. *Classic information theories* [5], [9], [21], particularly Shannon’s information theory [21], known

71 as the first-generation informatics, study signals and channel
72 behaviors based on statistics and probability theory. *Modern*
73 *informatics* studies information as properties or attributes of the
74 natural world that can be generally abstracted, quantitatively
75 represented, and mentally processed. The first- and second-
76 generation informatics put emphasis on external information
77 processing, which overlooks the fundamental fact that human
78 brains are the original sources and final destinations of infor-
79 mation and that any information must be cognized by human
80 beings before it is understood. This observation leads to the
81 establishment of the third-generation informatics, known as *CI*,
82 a term coined by Wang in 2002 [24].

83 *Definition 2:* *CI* is the transdisciplinary inquiry of cognitive
84 and information sciences that investigates into the internal
85 information processing mechanisms and processes of the brain
86 and natural intelligence and their engineering applications via
87 an interdisciplinary approach.

88 An intensive review on the *theoretical framework of CI*
89 was presented in [29], which provides a coherent summary
90 of the latest advances in the transdisciplinary field of *CI* and
91 an insightful perspective on its future development. The latest
92 advances of *CI* not only encompass a coherent set of theories
93 for explaining the logical and cognitive mechanisms of abstract
94 intelligence and computational intelligence but also result in
95 plenty of engineering applications such as cognitive computers,
96 machine learning systems, autonomous agent systems, and in-
97 telligent search engines. The theories and applications of *CI* are
98 rigorously supported by new forms of mathematics, collectively
99 known as denotational mathematics [30].

100 *Definition 3:* *Denotational mathematics* is a category of
101 expressive mathematical structures that deals with high-level
102 mathematical entities beyond numbers and sets, such as abstract
103 objects, complex relations, behavioral information, concepts,
104 knowledge, processes, and systems.

105 The emergence of denotational mathematics is driven by the
106 practical needs in cybernetics, *CI*, computational intelligence,
107 cognitive computing, software science, and knowledge engi-
108 neering, because all these modern disciplines study complex
109 human and machine behaviors and their rigorous treatments.
110 These phenomena stem from the fact that new problems require
111 new forms of mathematics [6], [19], [30], [45], [46] and the ma-
112 turity of a scientific discipline is characterized by the maturity
113 of its mathematical underpinnings [28], [30].

114 Typical forms of denotational mathematics are *concept alge-*
115 *bra* [31], *system algebra* [32], [39], *real-time process algebra*
116 (RTPA) [25], [33], [34], and *visual semantic algebra* (VSA)
117 [37]. Among the four forms of denotational mathematics,
118 *concept algebra* is designed to deal with the new abstract
119 mathematical structure of concepts and their representation
120 and manipulation in knowledge engineering. *System algebra*
121 is created for the rigorous treatment of abstract systems and
122 their algebraic relations and operations. RTPA is developed
123 for algebraically denoting and manipulating system behavioral
124 processes and their attributes. In addition, VSA is developed for
125 the formal modeling and manipulation of abstract visual objects
126 and patterns.

127 The key application areas of *CI* can be divided into two cat-
128 egories. The first category of applications uses informatics and

129 computing techniques to investigate cybernetics and cognitive
130 science problems such as abstract intelligence, memory, learn-
131 ing, and reasoning. The second category includes the areas that
132 use cybernetic and cognitive theories to investigate problems
133 in informatics, computing, software engineering, knowledge
134 engineering, and computational intelligence. *CI* focuses on the
135 nature of information processes in the brain, such as infor-
136 mation acquisition, representation, memory, retrieval, creation,
137 and communication. Through the interdisciplinary approach
138 and with the support of modern information and neuroscience
139 technologies, mechanisms of the brain and the mind may be
140 systematically explored within the framework of *CI*.

III. CONVERGENT FRAMEWORK OF CYBENETICS AND CI

141
142
143 Among the three abstract scientific disciplines that emerged
144 in the 1940s—cybernetics, information science, and system
145 science—it was conventionally perceived that cybernetics is
146 closer to system science than to information science. However,
147 the descriptions provided in Sections I and II, particularly the
148 emergence of *CI*, reveal that cybernetics is actually closer to
149 information science supplement to system science. This notion
150 leads to an interesting convergence between contemporary cy-
151 bernetics and *CI*, as well as system science and intelligence
152 science, in a systematic and transdisciplinary context.

153 The theme of this special issue in IEEE TRANSACTIONS
154 ON SYSTEMS, MAN, AND CYBERNETICS (PART B) is on the
155 “*convergence of CI and cybernetics*,” which investigates the
156 shared foundations of cybernetics and *CI* and their impacts on
157 cybernetic and cognitive systems. This special issue focuses on
158 the cognitive, functional, and logical levels of cybernetics that
159 explain what the cognitive mechanisms of the brain are and how
160 it processes cognitive information in cybernetic systems.

161 The convergent framework of the transdisciplinary field of *CI*
162 and cybernetics mainly encompasses the following topic areas:

(A) Fundamental Theories of Cybernetics and CI

- Cybernetics in *CI*. 164
- *CI* for cybernetics. 165
- Denotational mathematics for *CI*/cybernetics. 166
- System algebra for modeling cybernetic system 167
architectures. 168
- Process algebra for modeling cybernetic system behaviors. 169
- Cybernetics versus intelligence science. 170
- Abstract system theories. 171
- Cybernetic mechanisms shared by natural and machine 172
intelligence. 173
- Neural models of knowledge. 174
- Neural models of intelligence. 175

(B) Systems Shared in Cybernetics and CI

- Cybernetic models of the brain. 177
- *CI* models of the brain. 178
- Hybrid man–machine systems. 179
- Distributed intelligent systems. 180
- Long-life-span systems. 181
- Knowledge systems. 182
- System models of memory. 183

- 184 • Cognitive agent systems.
- 185 • Autonomic learning systems.
- 186 • Cognition systems of web contents.
- 187 • Soft and granular computing.
- 188 • Autonomous agent systems.
- 189 • Machine learning systems.

190 IV. STRUCTURE OF THIS SPECIAL ISSUE

191 This special issue on *CI* and *cybernetics* presents the latest
 192 advances in cybernetics, CI, and computational intelligence
 193 [47]. This special issue includes nine papers on the following
 194 key areas of cybernetics and CI:

- 195 • The contemporary framework of cybernetics.
- 196 • The advances in CI and cognitive computing.
- 197 • The CI aspect of cybernetics.
- 198 • The computational intelligence aspect of cybernetics.
- 199 • Collaborative intelligent systems.
- 200 • Denotational mathematics for cybernetics.
- 201 • Software engineering and cybernetics.
- 202 • Granular computing and cybernetics.
- 203 • Multimodal biometric systems.
- 204 • Formal unification verification.
- 205 • Autonomous agent systems.
- 206 • Generalized competitive learning.
- 207 • Absorbing Markov chains.

208 The guest editors expect that readers of the IEEE
 209 TRANSACTIONS ON SYSTEMS, MAN, AND CYBERNETICS
 210 will benefit from the papers presented in this special issue on
 211 theories, models, algorithms, and applications of contemporary
 212 cybernetics in general and CI, natural intelligence, and compu-
 213 tational intelligence in particular.

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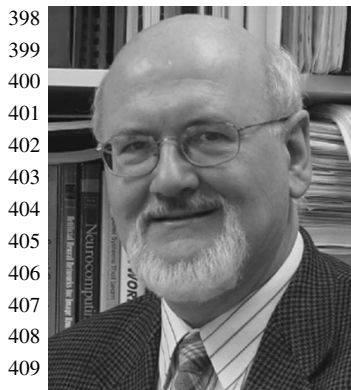
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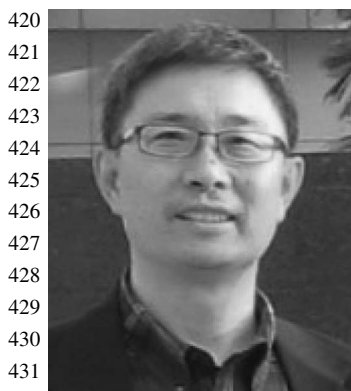


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