

## The 16th Mediterranean Conference on Control and Automation (MED'08)

The 16th Mediterranean Conference on Control and Automation (MED'08) was held June 25–27, 2008 at the Congress Center in Ajaccio, Corsica, France. The focus of the conference was on new directions in control and automation and to promote ideas and collaboration between researchers. The conference general chair was Dominique Sauter of the University of Nancy, France. The honorary chair was Panos Antsaklis of the University of Notre Dame, United States, president of the Mediterranean Control Association (MCA). The conference program chair was Ron Patton of the University of Hull, United Kingdom, and the program vice-chair was Didier Maquin of the National Polytechnic Institute of Nancy, France.

Ajaccio is situated on the French island of Corsica. The Greeks were the first to discover the beautiful island, naming it “kalliste,” old Greek for “beautiful.” Ajaccio was founded in 1492 as a Genoan town. General Napoleon Bonaparte was born in Ajaccio.

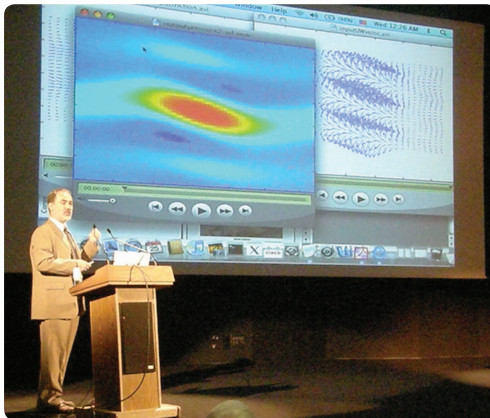
Surrounded by mountains, elegant and radiant Ajaccio welcomes visitors to its sunny shores. From the top of its citadel's ramparts, to the purity of its beautiful shores, through the alleys of the old town, discover Ajaccio's Napoleonic history, museums, and daily market.



Conference staff in front of the Congress Center of Ajaccio.



Welcome reception at the town hall of Ajaccio.



Plenary speaker Miroslav Krstic.



Napoleon's square in Ajaccio.



From left to right: Ron Patton, Didier Maquin, Panos Antsaklis, and Dominique Sauter.



The gala dinner. From left to right: Anna Maria Perdon, Didier Maquin and his wife, and Dominique Sauter.





Napoleon's square in Ajaccio.



Statue of Napoleon and his brothers.

## TECHNICAL PROGRAM

The 2008 MED received a record number of submitted papers. The technical program, comprising 53 sessions, including six invited sessions, ran in six parallel tracks for three days. Of 473 submissions, 311 peer-reviewed papers were accepted. The conference was attended by more than 300 participants from over 40 countries. The technical program was preceded by a one-day tutorial, "Closed-Loop Identification and Estimation Techniques in Linear and Nonlinear Control," by M. Fliess of Ecole Polytechnique, France, together with C. Join of Nancy-University, France, W. Perruquetti of Ecole Centrale de Lille, France, and J. Rudolph, Technische Universität Dresden, Germany. The tutorial presented a comprehensive review of the current state of research as well as methods and techniques related to identification and

estimation techniques in linear and nonlinear control. The workshop provided theoretical basis as well as numerous case studies.

## THE MED PLENARY TALKS

Three plenary speeches on timely topics were delivered. These speeches were

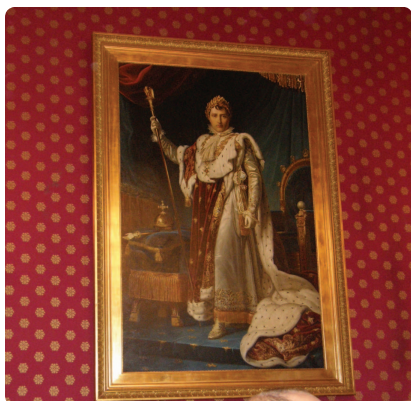
- » "Infinite-Dimensional Backstepping and Applications to Flows in Electromagnetic Fields" by Miroslav Krstic, University of California, San Diego, United States
- » "Stochastic Modeling Techniques for the Dependability Analysis of DES," Andrea Bobbio, Università del Piemonte Orientale, Italy
- » "Delay Effects on Stability of Interconnected Systems: A Control Perspective," Silviu Niculescu of CNRS-Supélec, France.

## SPONSORS

The 2008 MED was sponsored by the Mediterranean Control Association. It was technically cosponsored by the IEEE Control Systems Society and the French GdR MACS, and supported by the Research Center for Automatic Control of Nancy, Nancy University, the University Pascal Paoli of Corsica, and the Collectivité Territoriale de Corse. For more information about MED'08, please visit <http://med08.org>.

## 2009 MEDITERRANEAN CONFERENCE ON CONTROL AND AUTOMATION

The 17th Mediterranean Conference on Control and Automation (MED'09) will be held at the Makedonia Palace June 24–26, 2009 in Thessaloniki, Greece. For more information, please see <http://www.med09.org/>.



A painting of Napoleon in the town hall of Ajaccio.



The gala dinner. From left to right: Didier Maquin and his wife, Dominique Sauter, Brian Anderson, and Panos Antsaklis.





Didier Maquin thanks the organizing committee.



Announcement of MED'09 by Zoe Doulgeri.



Ron Patton expresses his appreciation to the attendees.



Concluding remarks by Dominique Sauter.



Panos Antsaklis welcoming participants at the banquet.



Attendees in front of Girolata Bay at Micro Beach.



The Girolata Fortification.



## *Participants Enjoying the Banquet*







Sailboats off the coast of Scandola reserve.



The Micro Beach at Scandola nature reserve.



A Genoa tower near Ajaccio.

### Ostensible Uselessness

The Homeostat, completed in 1948, is a fascinating machine for several reasons. Most obvious is that it is a machine with an odd sort of purpose. It does not “do” anything in the sense that a machine generally serves some useful human purpose; unlike a bicycle or typewriter, it has no real practical application. On the other hand, it has its own “purpose” in the purest sense given by cybernetics: its equilibrium-seeking behavior is goal-oriented and controlled by negative feedback and so it is a teleological mechanism. This means that the machine itself has a goal, as revealed by its behavior, which may or may not have anything to do with the goals of its designer, a distinction that was to be further elaborated in Ashby’s philosophy.

—*Mechanisms of Adaptation to Intelligence Amplifiers: The Philosophy of W. Ross Ashby*, by Peter M. Asaro. Excerpted from *The Mechanical Mind in History*, edited by Philip Husbands, Owen Holland, and Michael Wheeler, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 2008, p. 160.