

September 30, 2009

Congratulating the 40th Anniversary of IFToMM

I would like to express my sincere congratulation to the 40th anniversary of IFToMM community.

First of all, I would like to share with you my encounter with IFToMM. My advisor Prof. Hideo Hanafusa at Kyoto University attended 1978 ROMANSY and brought back B4-size blue-printed preprints, among which was Oussama Khatib's paper on the potential function approach of manipulator control. Though I was a first-year Master-course student without much knowledge of the field, the paper attracted me and as a result I applied the potential function to determine the null-space motion of manipulators in my Master thesis in March 1979. I later heard from another young scholar who attend the symposium that Prof. Hanafusa enjoyed the symposium much not only because of the technical aspects and even he was almost drunk at the banquet with family-like atmosphere. I was impressed by the story and created my image of ROMANSY and IFToMM community.

Afterwards I met and enjoyed personal communications with IFToMM fellows in robotics, among who are Prof. Bernie Roth, Prof. Ken Waldron, Prof. James Treveryan, Prof. Oussama Khatib and many others. However, I had not had an opportunity to participate IFToMM conferences before I started working in the University of Tokyo in 1991 as an Associate Professor. I was appointed at the laboratory of Prof. Ken'ichi Yoshimoto, who was the secretary general of the Japan IFToMM Council and actively worked mainly in Automotive Control. The laboratory was originally established by the late Prof. Sumiji Fujii, who was among a few funders of Japan IFToMM council with Prof. Teru Hayashi of Tokyo Institute of Technology and the late Prof. Ichiro Kato of Waseda University. I am among the third generation in the Japan IFToMM community.

The late Prof. Sumiji Fujii is known as the founder Robotics Research, Automotive Research, Rail Transportation Research, Nonlinear Vibration Research and Automatic Control Research in Japan. He served as the president of Japan Society of Mechanical Engineers and the founding president of the Robotics Society of Japan. He supervised many scholars in those fields. Unfortunately he passed away in 2004. I am sure he

would have most joined celebrating this anniversary of IFToMM. His family survived offered a donation to the Japan IFToMM Council. We use the generous offer for the fund of the Young Investigator Award for papers presented by the young researchers at the annual conference of Japan IFToMM Council.

Based on such relationship and environments, I was appointed as the chair of Japan IFToMM council and started enjoying working in the IFToMM community. At the same time, I am getting understood that the problem of the Japan IFToMM council is the miniaturized problem that we discussed the Executive Council today. As we have good discussions and proposed many ideas to make changes, I am with all of you determined to make efforts so that the later generations can also celebrate similar happy anniversaries in the future.

Congratulations to the whole IFToMM community!

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Yoshihiko Nakamura". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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