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Volume Editors

Irwin King
Laiwan Chan
Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of Computer Science and Engineering
Shatin, New Territories, Hong Kong
E-mail: {king, lwchan} @cse.cuhk.edu.hk

Jun Wang
Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of Automation and Computer-Aided Engineering
Shatin, New Territories, Hong Kong
E-mail: jwang@acae.cuhk.edu.hk

DeLiang Wang
Ohio State University
Department of Computer Science and Engineering
Columbus, Ohio, USA
E-mail: dwang@cse.ohio-state.edu

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Preface

This book and its companion volumes constitute the Proceedings of the 13th International Conference on Neural Information Processing (ICONIP 2006) held in Hong Kong during October 3–6, 2006. ICONIP is the annual flagship conference of the Asia Pacific Neural Network Assembly (APNNA) with the past events held in Seoul (1994), Beijing (1995), Hong Kong (1996), Dunedin (1997), Kitakyushu (1998), Perth (1999), Taejon (2000), Shanghai (2001), Singapore (2002), Istanbul (2003), Calcutta (2004), and Taipei (2005). Over the years, ICONIP has matured into a well-established series of international conference on neural information processing and related fields in the Asia and Pacific regions. Following the tradition, ICONIP 2006 provided an academic forum for the participants to disseminate their new research findings and discuss emerging areas of research. It also created a stimulating environment for the participants to interact and exchange information on future challenges and opportunities of neural network research.

ICONIP 2006 received 1,175 submissions from about 2,000 authors in 42 countries and regions (Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Macao, Taiwan, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Egypt, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, UK, and USA) across six continents (Asia, Europe, North America, South America, Africa, and Oceania). Based on rigorous reviews by the Program Committee members and reviewers, 386 high-quality papers were selected for publication in the proceedings with the acceptance rate being less than 33%. The papers are organized in 22 cohesive sections covering all major topics of neural network research and development. In addition to the contributed papers, the ICONIP 2006 technical program included two plenary speeches by Shun-ichi Amari and Russell Eberhart. In addition, the ICONIP 2006 program included invited talks by the leaders of technical co-sponsors such as Wlodzislaw Duch (President of the European Neural Network Society), Vincenzo Piuri (President of the IEEE Computational Intelligence Society), and Shiro Usui (President of the Japanese Neural Network Society), DeLiang Wang (President of the International Neural Network Society), and Shoujue Wang (President of the China Neural Networks Council). In addition, ICONIP 2006 launched the APNNA Presidential Lecture Series with invited talks by past APNNA Presidents and the K.C. Wong Distinguished Lecture Series with invited talks by eminent Chinese scholars. Furthermore, the program also included six excellent tutorials, open to all conference delegates to attend, by Amir Atiya, Russell Eberhart, Mahesan Niranjan, Alex Smola, Koji Tsuda, and Xuegong Zhang. Besides the regular sessions, ICONIP 2006 also featured ten special sessions focusing on some emerging topics.

ICONIP 2006 would not have achieved its success without the generous contributions of many volunteers and organizations. ICONIP 2006 organizers would like to express sincere thanks to APNNA for the sponsorship, to the China Neural Networks Council, European Neural Network Society, IEEE Computational Intelligence Society, IEEE Hong Kong Section, International Neural Network Society, and Japanese Neural Network Society for their technical co-sponsorship, to the Chinese University of Hong Kong for its financial and logistic supports, and to the K.C. Wong Education Foundation of Hong Kong for its financial support. The organizers would also like to thank the members of the Advisory Committee for their guidance, the members of the International Program Committee and additional reviewers for reviewing the papers, and members of the Publications Committee for checking the accepted papers in a short period of time. Particularly, the organizers would like to thank the proceedings publisher, Springer, for publishing the proceedings in the prestigious series of *Lecture Notes in Computer Science*. Special mention must be made of a group of dedicated students and associates, Haixuan Yang, Zhenjiang Lin, Zenglin Xu, Xiang Peng, Po Shan Cheng, and Terence Wong, who worked tirelessly and relentlessly behind the scene to make the mission possible. There are still many more colleagues, associates, friends, and supporters who helped us in immeasurable ways; we express our sincere thanks to them all. Last but not the least, the organizers would like to thank all the speakers and authors for their active participation at ICONIP 2006, which made it a great success.

October 2006

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Table of Contents – Part III

Bioinformatics and Biomedical Applications

DRFE: Dynamic Recursive Feature Elimination for Gene Identification Based on Random Forest	1
<i>Ha-Nam Nguyen, Syng-Yup Ohn</i>	
Gene Feature Extraction Using T-Test Statistics and Kernel Partial Least Squares	11
<i>Shutao Li, Chen Liao, James T. Kwok</i>	
An Empirical Analysis of Under-Sampling Techniques to Balance a Protein Structural Class Dataset	21
<i>Marcilio C.P. de Souto, Valnaide G. Bittencourt, Jose A.F. Costa</i>	
Prediction of Protein Interaction with Neural Network-Based Feature Association Rule Mining	30
<i>Jae-Hong Eom, Byoung-Tak Zhang</i>	
Prediction of Protein Secondary Structure Using Nonlinear Method	40
<i>Silvia Botelho, Gisele Simas, Patricia Silveira</i>	
Clustering Analysis for Bacillus Genus Using Fourier Transform and Self-Organizing Map	48
<i>Cheng-Chang Jeng, I-Ching Yang, Kun-Lin Hsieh, Chun-Nan Lin</i>	
Recurrence Quantification Analysis of EEG Predicts Responses to Incision During Anesthesia	58
<i>Liyu Huang, Weirong Wang, Sekou Singare</i>	
Wavelet Spectral Entropy for Indication of Epileptic Seizure in Extracranial EEG	66
<i>Xiaoli Li</i>	
The Study of Classification of Motor Imaginaries Based on Kurtosis of EEG	74
<i>Xiaopei Wu, Zhongfu Ye</i>	
Automatic Detection of Critical Epochs in coma-EEG Using Independent Component Analysis and Higher Order Statistics	82
<i>G. Inuso, F. La Foresta, N. Mammone, F.C. Morabito</i>	

Sparse Bump Sonification: A New Tool for Multichannel EEG Diagnosis of Mental Disorders; Application to the Detection of the Early Stage of Alzheimer's Disease	92
<i>François B. Vialatte, Andrzej Cichocki</i>	
Effect of Diffusion Weighting and Number of Sensitizing Directions on Fiber Tracking in DTI	102
<i>Bo Zheng, Jagath C. Rajapakse</i>	
3-D Reconstruction of Blood Vessels Skeleton Based on Neural Network	110
<i>Zhiguo Cao, Bo Peng</i>	
Design of a Fuzzy Takagi-Sugeno Controller to Vary the Joint Knee Angle of Paraplegic Patients	118
<i>Marcelo C.M. Teixeira, Grace S. Deaecto, Ruberlei Gaiño, Edvaldo Assunção, Aparecido A. Carvalho, Uender C. Farias</i>	
Characterization of Breast Abnormality Patterns in Digital Mammograms Using Auto-associator Neural Network	127
<i>Rinku Panchal, Brijesh Verma</i>	
Evolving Hierarchical RBF Neural Networks for Breast Cancer Detection	137
<i>Yuehui Chen, Yan Wang, Bo Yang</i>	
Ovarian Cancer Prognosis by Hemostasis and Complementary Learning	145
<i>T.Z. Tan, G.S. Ng, C. Quek, Stephen C.L. Koh</i>	
Multi-class Cancer Classification with OVR-Support Vector Machines Selected by Naïve Bayes Classifier	155
<i>Jin-Hyuk Hong, Sung-Bae Cho</i>	
Breast Cancer Diagnosis Using Neural-Based Linear Fusion Strategies	165
<i>Yunfeng Wu, Cong Wang, S.C. Ng, Anant Madabhushi, Yixin Zhong</i>	
A Quantitative Diagnostic Method Based on Bayesian Networks in Traditional Chinese Medicine	176
<i>Huiyan Wang, Jie Wang</i>	

Information Security

High-Order Markov Kernels for Network Intrusion Detection	184
<i>Shengfeng Tian, Chuanhuan Yin, Shaomin Mu</i>	

Improved Realtime Intrusion Detection System	192
<i>Byung-Joo Kim, Il Kon Kim</i>	
A Distributed Neural Network Learning Algorithm for Network Intrusion Detection System	201
<i>Yanheng Liu, Daxin Tian, Xuegang Yu, Jian Wang</i>	
A DGC-Based Data Classification Method Used for Abnormal Network Intrusion Detection	209
<i>Bo Yang, Lizhi Peng, Yuehui Chen, Hanxing Liu, Runzhang Yuan</i>	
Intrusion Alert Analysis Based on PCA and the LVQ Neural Network	217
<i>Jing-Xin Wang, Zhi-Ying Wang, Kui-Dai</i>	
A Novel Color Image Watermarking Method Based on Genetic Algorithm and Neural Networks	225
<i>Jialing Han, Jun Kong, Yinghua Lu, Yulong Yang, Gang Hou</i>	
Color Image Watermarking Algorithm Using BPN Neural Networks	234
<i>Cheng-Ri Piao, Sehyeong Cho, Seung-Soo Han</i>	
A Novel Blind Digital Watermark Algorithm Based on Neural Network and Chaotic Map	243
<i>Pengcheng Wei, Wei Zhang, Huaqian Yang, Degang Yang</i>	

Data and Text Processing

Stimulus Related Data Analysis by Structured Neural Networks	251
<i>Bernd Brückner</i>	
Scalable Dynamic Self-Organising Maps for Mining Massive Textual Data	260
<i>Yu Zheng Zhai, Arthur Hsu, Saman K. Halgamuge</i>	
Maximum-Minimum Similarity Training for Text Extraction	268
<i>Hui Fu, Xiabi Liu, Yunde Jia</i>	
Visualization of Depending Patterns in Metabonomics	278
<i>Stefan Roeder, Ulrike Rolle-Kampczyk, Olf Herbarth</i>	
A RBF Network for Chinese Text Classification Based on Concept Feature Extraction	285
<i>Minghu Jiang, Lin Wang, Yinghua Lu, Shasha Liao</i>	

Ontology Learning from Text: A Soft Computing Paradigm	295
<i>Rowena Chau, Kate Smith-Miles, Chung-Hsing Yeh</i>	
Text Categorization Based on Artificial Neural Networks	302
<i>Cheng Hua Li, Soon Choel Park</i>	
Knowledge as Basis Broker — The Research of Matching Customers Problems and Professionals Métiers	312
<i>Ruey-Ming Chao, Chi-Shun Wang</i>	
A Numerical Simulation Study of Structural Damage Based on RBF Neural Network	322
<i>Xu-dong Yuan, Hou-bin Fan, Cao Gao, Shao-xia Gao</i>	
Word Frequency Effect and Word Similarity Effect in Korean Lexical Decision Task and Their Computational Model	331
<i>YouAn Kwon, KiNam Park, HewiSeok Lim, KiChun Nam, Soonyoung Jung</i>	
Content-Based 3D Graphic Information Retrieval	341
<i>Soochan Hwang, Yonghwan Kim</i>	
Performance Improvement in Collaborative Recommendation Using Multi-Layer Perceptron	350
<i>Myung Won Kim, Eun Ju Kim</i>	
Financial Applications	
NN-OPT: Neural Network for Option Pricing Using Multinomial Tree	360
<i>Hung-Ching(Justin) Chen, Malik Magdon-Ismail</i>	
A Brain-Inspired Cerebellar Associative Memory Approach to Option Pricing and Arbitrage Trading	370
<i>S.D. Teddy, E.M.-K. Lai, C. Quek</i>	
A Reliability-Based RBF Network Ensemble Model for Foreign Exchange Rates Predication	380
<i>Lean Yu, Wei Huang, Kin Keung Lai, Shouyang Wang</i>	
Combining Time-Scale Feature Extractions with SVMs for Stock Index Forecasting	390
<i>Shian-Chang Huang, Hsing-Wen Wang</i>	

Extensions of ICA for Causality Discovery in the Hong Kong Stock Market	400
<i>Kun Zhang, Lai-Wan Chan</i>	
Pricing Options in Hong Kong Market Based on Neural Networks	410
<i>Xun Liang, Haisheng Zhang, Jian Yang</i>	
Global Optimization of Support Vector Machines Using Genetic Algorithms for Bankruptcy Prediction	420
<i>Hyunchul Ahn, Kichun Lee, Kyoung-jae Kim</i>	
Neural Networks, Fuzzy Inference Systems and Adaptive-Neuro Fuzzy Inference Systems for Financial Decision Making	430
<i>Pretes B. Patel, Tshilidzi Marwala</i>	
Online Forecasting of Stock Market Movement Direction Using the Improved Incremental Algorithm	440
<i>Dalton Lunga, Tshilidzi Marwala</i>	
Pretests for Genetic-Programming Evolved Trading Programs: “zero-intelligence” Strategies and Lottery Trading	450
<i>Shu-Heng Chen, Nicolas Navet</i>	
Currency Options Volatility Forecasting with Shift-Invariant Wavelet Transform and Neural Networks	461
<i>Fan-Yong Liu, Fan-Xin Liu</i>	
Trend-Weighted Fuzzy Time-Series Model for TAIEX Forecasting	469
<i>Ching-Hsue Cheng, Tai-Liang Chen, Chen-Han Chiang</i>	
Intelligence-Based Model to Timing Problem of Resources Exploration in the Behavior of Firm	478
<i>Hsiu Fen Tsai, Bao Rong Chang</i>	

Manufacturing Systems

Application of ICA in On-Line Verification of the Phase Difference of the Current Sensor	488
<i>Xiaoyan Ma, Huaxiang Lu</i>	
Neural Networks Based Automated Test Oracle for Software Testing ...	498
<i>Mao Ye, Boqin Feng, Li Zhu, Yao Lin</i>	
Tool Wear Condition Monitoring in Drilling Processes Using Fuzzy Logic	508
<i>Onder Yumak, H. Metin Ertunc</i>	

Fault Diagnosis in Nonlinear Circuit Based on Volterra Series and Recurrent Neural Network	518
<i>Haiying Yuan, Guangju Chen</i>	
Manufacturing Yield Improvement by Clustering	526
<i>M.A. Karim, S. Halgamuge, A.J.R. Smith, A.L. Hsu</i>	
Gear Crack Detection Using Kernel Function Approximation	535
<i>Weihua Li, Tielin Shi, Kang Ding</i>	
The Design of Data-Link Equipment Redundant Strategy	545
<i>Qian-Mu Li, Man-Wu Xu, Hong Zhang, Feng-Yu Liu</i>	
Minimizing Makespan on Identical Parallel Machines Using Neural Networks	553
<i>Derya Eren Akyol, G. Mirac Bayhan</i>	
Ensemble of Competitive Associative Nets for Stable Learning Performance in Temperature Control of RCA Cleaning Solutions	563
<i>Shuichi Kurogi, Daisuke Kuwahara, Hiroaki Tomisaki, Takeshi Nishida, Mitsuru Mimata, Katsuyoshi Itoh</i>	
Predication of Properties of Welding Joints Based on Uniform Designed Neural Network	572
<i>Shi Yu, Li Jianjun, Fan Ding, Chen Jianhong</i>	
Applying an Intelligent Neural System to Predicting Lot Output Time in a Semiconductor Fabrication Factory	581
<i>Toly Chen</i>	
Multi-degree Prosthetic Hand Control Using a New BP Neural Network	589
<i>R.C. Wang, F. Li, M. Wu, J.Z. Wang, L. Jiang, H. Liu</i>	

Control and Robotics

Neural-Network-Based Sliding Mode Control for Missile Electro-Hydraulic Servo Mechanism	596
<i>Fei Cao, Yunfeng Liu, Xiaogang Yang, Yunhui Peng, Dong Miao</i>	
Turbulence Encountered Landing Control Using Hybrid Intelligent System	605
<i>Jih-Gau Juang, Hou-Kai Chiou</i>	

An AND-OR Fuzzy Neural Network Ship Controller Design	616
<i>Jianghua Sui, Guang Ren</i>	
RBF ANN Nonlinear Prediction Model Based Adaptive PID Control of Switched Reluctance Motor Drive	626
<i>Chang-Liang Xia, Jie Xiu</i>	
Hierarchical Multiple Models Neural Network Decoupling Controller for a Nonlinear System	636
<i>Xin Wang, Hui Yang</i>	
Sensorless Control of Switched Reluctance Motor Based on ANFIS	645
<i>Chang-Liang Xia, Jie Xiu</i>	
Hybrid Intelligent PID Control for MIMO System	654
<i>Jih-Gau Juang, Kai-Ti Tu, Wen-Kai Liu</i>	
H^∞ Neural Networks Control for Uncertain Nonlinear Switched Impulsive Systems	664
<i>Fei Long, Shumin Fei, Zhumu Fu, Shiyong Zheng</i>	
Reliable Robust Controller Design for Nonlinear State-Delayed Systems Based on Neural Networks	674
<i>Yan-Jun Shen, Hui Yu, Jigui Jian</i>	
Neural Network Applications in Advanced Aircraft Flight Control System, a Hybrid System, a Flight Test Demonstration	684
<i>Fola Soares, John Burken, Tshilidzi Marwala</i>	
Vague Neural Network Based Reinforcement Learning Control System for Inverted Pendulum	692
<i>Yibiao Zhao, Siwei Luo, Liang Wang, Aidong Ma, Rui Fang</i>	
Neural-Network Inverse Dynamic Online Learning Control on Physical Exoskeleton	702
<i>Heng Cao, Yuhai Yin, Ding Du, Lizong Lin, Wenjin Gu, Zhiyong Yang</i>	
Fuzzy Adaptive Particle Filter Algorithm for Mobile Robot Fault Diagnosis	711
<i>Zhuohua Duan, Zixing Cai, Jinxia Yu</i>	
Tracking Control of a Mobile Robot with Kinematic Uncertainty Using Neural Networks	721
<i>An-Min Zou, Zeng-Guang Hou, Min Tan, Xi-Jun Chen, Yun-Chu Zhang</i>	

Movement Control of a Mobile Manipulator Based on Cost Optimization	731
<i>Kwan-Houng Lee, Tae-jun Cho</i>	

Evolutionary Algorithms and Systems

Synthesis of Desired Binary Cellular Automata Through the Genetic Algorithm.....	738
<i>Satoshi Suzuki, Toshimichi Saito</i>	
On Properties of Genetic Operators from a Network Analytical Viewpoint.....	746
<i>Hiroyuki Funaya, Kazushi Ikeda</i>	
SDMOGA: A New Multi-objective Genetic Algorithm Based on Objective Space Divided	754
<i>Wangshu Yao, Shifu Chen, Zhaoqian Chen</i>	
Hamming Sphere Solution Space Based Genetic Multi-user Detection	763
<i>Lili Lin</i>	
UEAS: A Novel United Evolutionary Algorithm Scheme	772
<i>Fei Gao, Hengqing Tong</i>	
Implicit Elitism in Genetic Search	781
<i>A.K. Bhatia, S.K. Basu</i>	
The Improved Initialization Method of Genetic Algorithm for Solving the Optimization Problem	789
<i>Rae-Goo Kang, Chai-Yeoung Jung</i>	
Optimized Fuzzy Decision Tree Using Genetic Algorithm.....	797
<i>Myung Won Kim, Joung Woo Ryu</i>	
A Genetic-Inspired Multicast Routing Optimization Algorithm with Bandwidth and End-to-End Delay Constraints	807
<i>Sanghoun Oh, ChangWook Ahn, R.S. Ramakrishna</i>	
Integration of Genetic Algorithm and Cultural Algorithms for Constrained Optimization.....	817
<i>Fang Gao, Gang Cui, Hongwei Liu</i>	
Neuro-genetic Approach for Solving Constrained Nonlinear Optimization Problems	826
<i>Fabiana Cristina Bertoni, Ivan Nunes da Silva</i>	

An Improved Primal-Dual Genetic Algorithm for Optimization in Dynamic Environments.....	836
<i>Hongfeng Wang, Dingwei Wang</i>	
Multiobjective Optimization Design of a Hybrid Actuator with Genetic Algorithm.....	845
<i>Ke Zhang</i>	
Human Hierarchical Behavior Based Mobile Agent Control in ISpace with Distributed Network Sensors	856
<i>SangJoo Kim, TaeSeok Jin, Hideki Hashimoto</i>	
Evolvable Viral Agent Modeling and Exploration	866
<i>Jingbo Hao, Jianping Yin, Boyun Zhang</i>	
Mobile Robot Control Using Fuzzy-Neural-Network for Learning Human Behavior.....	874
<i>TaeSeok Jin, YoungDae Son, Hideki Hashimoto</i>	
EFuNN Ensembles Construction Using a Clustering Method and a Coevolutionary Multi-objective Genetic Algorithm.....	884
<i>Fernanda L. Minku, Teresa B. Ludermir</i>	
Language Learning for the Autonomous Mental Development of Conversational Agents.....	892
<i>Jin-Hyuk Hong, Sungsoo Lim, Sung-Bae Cho</i>	
A Multi-objective Evolutionary Algorithm for Multi-UAV Cooperative Reconnaissance Problem	900
<i>Jing Tian, Lincheng Shen</i>	
Global and Local Contrast Enhancement for Image by Genetic Algorithm and Wavelet Neural Network.....	910
<i>Changjiang Zhang, Xiaodong Wang</i>	
A Novel Constrained Genetic Algorithm for the Optimization of Active Bar Placement and Feedback Gains in Intelligent Truss Structures	920
<i>Wenying Chen, Shaoze Yan, Keyun Wang, Fulei Chu</i>	
A Double-Stage Genetic Optimization Algorithm for Portfolio Selection.....	928
<i>Kin Keung Lai, Lean Yu, Shouyang Wang, Chengxiong Zhou</i>	

Image Reconstruction Using Genetic Algorithm in Electrical Impedance Tomography	938
<i>Ho-Chan Kim, Chang-Jin Boo, Min-Jae Kang</i>	
Mitigating Deception in Genetic Search Through Suitable Coding	946
<i>S.K. Basu, A.K. Bhatia</i>	
The Hybrid Genetic Algorithm for Blind Signal Separation	954
<i>Wen-Jye Shyr</i>	
Genetic Algorithm for Satellite Customer Assignment	964
<i>S.S. Kim, H.J. Kim, V. Mani, C.H. Kim</i>	

Fuzzy Systems

A Look-Ahead Fuzzy Back Propagation Network for Lot Output Time Series Prediction in a Wafer Fab	974
<i>Toly Chen</i>	
Extraction of Fuzzy Features for Detecting Brain Activation from Functional MR Time-Series	983
<i>Juan Zhou, Jagath C. Rajapakse</i>	
An Advanced Design Methodology of Fuzzy Set-Based Polynomial Neural Networks with the Aid of Symbolic Gene Type Genetic Algorithms and Information Granulation	993
<i>Seok-Beom Roh, Hyung-Soo Hwang, Tae-Chon Ahn</i>	
A Hybrid Self-learning Approach for Generating Fuzzy Inference Systems	1002
<i>Yi Zhou, Meng Joo Er</i>	
A Fuzzy Clustering Algorithm for Symbolic Interval Data Based on a Single Adaptive Euclidean Distance	1012
<i>Francisco de A.T. de Carvalho</i>	
Approximation Accuracy of Table Look-Up Scheme for Fuzzy-Neural Networks with Bell Membership Function	1022
<i>Weimin Ma</i>	
Prototype-Based Threshold Rules	1028
<i>Marcin Blachnik, Włodzisław Duch</i>	

A Fuzzy LMS Neural Network Method for Evaluation of Importance of Indices in MADM	1038
<i>Feng Kong, Hongyan Liu</i>	
Fuzzy RBF Neural Network Model for Multiple Attribute Decision Making	1046
<i>Feng Kong, Hongyan Liu</i>	
A Study on Decision Model of Bottleneck Capacity Expansion with Fuzzy Demand	1055
<i>Bo He, Chao Yang, Mingming Ren, Yunfeng Ma</i>	
Workpiece Recognition by the Combination of Multiple Simplified Fuzzy ARTMAP	1063
<i>Zhanhui Yuan, Gang Wang, Jihua Yang</i>	
Stability of Periodic Solution in Fuzzy BAM Neural Networks with Finite Distributed Delays	1070
<i>Tingwen Huang</i>	
Design Methodology of Optimized IG_gHSOFPNN and Its Application to pH Neutralization Process	1079
<i>Ho-Sung Park, Kyung-Won Jang, Sung-Kwun Oh, Tae-Chon Ahn</i>	
Neuro-fuzzy Modeling and Fuzzy Rule Extraction Applied to Conflict Management	1087
<i>Thando Tettey, Tshilidzi Marwala</i>	

Hardware Implementations

Hardware Implementation of a Wavelet Neural Network Using FPGAs	1095
<i>Ali Karabıynk, Aydoğın Savran</i>	
Neural Network Implementation in Hardware Using FPGAs	1105
<i>Suhap Sahin, Yasar Becerikli, Suleyman Yazici</i>	
FPGA Discrete Wavelet Transform Encoder/Decoder Implementation	1113
<i>Pedro Henrique Cox, Aparecido Augusto de Carvalho</i>	
Randomized Algorithm in Embedded Crypto Module	1122
<i>Jin Keun Hong</i>	

Hardware Implementation of an Analog Neural Nonderivative Optimizer	1131
<i>Rodrigo Cardim, Marcelo C.M. Teixeira, Edvaldo Assunção, Nobuo Oki, Aparecido A. de Carvalho, Márcio R. Covacic</i>	
Synchronization Via Multiplex Spike-Trains in Digital Pulse Coupled Networks	1141
<i>Takahiro Kabe, Hiroyuki Torikai, Toshimichi Saito</i>	
A Bit-Stream Pulse-Based Digital Neuron Model for Neural Networks ..	1150
<i>César Torres-Huitzil</i>	
From Hopfield Nets to Pulsed Neural Networks	1160
<i>Ana M.G. Guerreiro, Carlos A. Paz de Araujo</i>	
A Digital Hardware Architecture of Self-Organizing Relationship (SOR) Network	1168
<i>Hakaru Tamukoh, Keiichi Horio, Takeshi Yamakawa</i>	
Towards Hardware Acceleration of Neuroevolution for Multimedia Processing Applications on Mobile Devices	1178
<i>Daniel Larkin, Andrew Kinane, Noel O'Connor</i>	
Neurocomputing for Minimizing Energy Consumption of Real-Time Operating System in the System-on-a-Chip	1189
<i>Bing Guo, Dianhui Wang, Yan Shen, Zhishu Li</i>	
A Novel Multiplier for Achieving the Programmability of Cellular Neural Network	1199
<i>Peng Wang, Xun Zhang, Dongming Jin</i>	
Neural Network-Based Scalable Fast Intra Prediction Algorithm in H.264 Encoder	1206
<i>Jung-Hee Suk, Jin-Seon Youn, Jun Rim Choi</i>	
Author Index	1217