

Editors: Vincenzo Niola, Ka-Lok Ng



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Montreux, Switzerland, December 29-31, 2011

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Plenary Lecture 1

Magnetic Stimulation Can Modulate Seizures in Epileptic Patients



Professor Photios Anninos

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to investigate the influence of external magnetic stimulation (EMS) in epileptic patients using magnetoencephalographic (MEG) measurements and non-linear analytic techniques. The examined group consisted of 15 men aged 19-56 years (mean: 39.5 ± 11.3) and 15 women aged 15-53 years (mean: 36.7 ± 11.4). For each one the magnetic activity was recorded from 32 points for each temporal lobe. External magnetic stimulation (EMS) with proper field characteristics (intensity: 1-7.5 pT, frequency: the a-rhythm of the patient (8-13Hz)) was applied in the frontal, occipital and temporal lobes for 2 to 6 minutes and the emitted brain magnetic activity was recorded again. In order to investigate if there is any alteration in the MEG complexity underlying the neural dynamics characterizing the pathologic brain before and after the EMS, chaotic analysis approach was applied for the estimation of the dimensional analysis of the existing strange attractors. The application of EMS resulted in rapid attenuation of the MEG activity of epileptic patients. The obtained results of the dimensionality calculation provide a shift from lower to higher dimensional values. Such a shift is an indication that we are dealing with a chaotic system similar with the one characterizing normal subjects. The increased values of the dimensional complexity and the lower activity of the MEG after the application of EMS strongly supports the beneficial effects of EMS in epileptic patients.

Brief Biography of the Speaker:

Prof. P.Anninos is Emeritus Prof. of Medical Physics in the Department of Medicine of Democritus University of Thrace, Alexandroupolis, Greece after serving there as a Professor of Medical Physics for many years. His research interests concern Theoretical neural models, experimental Neurophysiology with emphasis in MEG measurements using SQUID's and the use of pTMS(picoTesla Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation) in patients with CNS disorders. He has published more than 200 scientific papers in reviewed journals and have written several books in his field. He is a scientific reviewer for several international Journals.

Plenary Lecture 2

Continues Wavelet Transform for Extraction of Topographic Features from High-Resolution Digital Elevation Model



Associate Professor Vahid Nourani

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and

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Abstract: Current progress in computer, geographic information system (GIS) and remote sensing technology has led to the LIDAR (light detection and ranging) data, as a new generation of high-resolution digital elevation model (DEM). Although such a high resolution DEM can be a useful tool for terrain analysis, high amount of noise is also expected to be existent in a megadata set. To deal with this problem in this study, continues wavelet transform(CWT), as a mathematical filter, was employed to extract slope, specific area and topographic index which are important parameters in hydro-environmental studies. In this way the proposed methodology was applied to 1-m resolution LIDAR DEM of the Elder Creek River watershed where is a sub-basin of the South Folk Eel River basin at California. The results were also compared favorably with the results of two classic methods. The result indicate that multi-resolution concept of wavelet transform which takes advantage of different space scales within a unique framework can be a promise DEM processing alternative to cope with the noise and pits of a high resolution DEM.

Brief Biography of the Speaker:

Vahid Nourani was born in Tabriz, Iran in 1975 and received his B.Sc. and M.S. degrees in Civil Engineering from University of Tabriz, Iran in 1998 and 2000, respectively. He then continued his graduate study in Civil and Environmental Engineering in the field of Hydrology at Shiraz University, Iran and Tohoku University, Japan and was graduated in 2005. Nourani was with the Faculty of Civil Engineering, University of Tabriz as an Assistant Professor from 2005-2009 and as Associate Professor from 2009-2010 and in this period, 34 Ph.D. and M.Sc. students were graduated under his technical supervision. Currently, he is a visiting Associate Professor in St. Anthony Falls Laboratory of Civil Engineering Department at University of Minnesota, USA. His research interests include rainfall-runoff modeling, Artificial Intelligence in water resources engineering, Hydroinformatics and computational hydraulics. His research outcomes have been published as 32 Journal articles, 2 book chapters and more than 40 papers presented in international and national conferences. He is currently researching about 2-D wavelet transform applications in hydrological simulation.

Plenary Lecture 3

Design/Development of New Adsorbents from Waste Materials within an Industrial Ecology Framework



Associate Professor Dimitris Sidiras
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Abstract: Industrial Ecology is a new inter-/multi-disciplinary topic, dealing with material and energy flows through productive systems, mainly functioning in the same area, especially when the materials are wastes or by-products of low value. These flows may be extended to form a network or they may be isolated within a sub-system including only two nodes: one upstream, giving a material/energy output (as product or by-product or waste) to be used, as is or after proper modification, as input to a downstream plant/work/activity. In this framework, we have modified agricultural residues and industrial lignocellulosic wastes to create new adsorbents, either for product decolorization within a production stage at industrial scale or for wastewater treatment. More specifically, we have modified wheat/barley straw and wood sawdust (beech, pine, spruce), with (i) acid hydrolysis, (ii) autohydrolysis, (iii) chloride salts, and (iv) organic solvents (ethanol, butanol, diethylene glycol). The effectiveness of these treatments was evaluated in packed bed columns of various scale (from laboratory to pilot plant), according to standard scale-up procedures. The efficiency of the new adsorbents was validated in dye and heavy metals aquatic solutions. Last, a techno-economic approach is also presented for demonstrating the feasibility of the implementation of the novel adsorbents under the Industrial Ecology framework.

Brief Biography of the Speaker:

Assoc. Prof. D. Sidiras holds a 5-year diploma and a PhD in chemical engineering (1990) from the National and Technical University of Athens. He is teaching at the Department of Industrial Management and Technology of the University of Piraeus since 1999. He is teaching at the interdepartmental postgraduate courses (i) Systems of Energy Management and Protection of the Environment, running by the University of Piraeus in cooperation with the Chem. Eng. Dept. of the Nat. Tech. Univ. of Athens, and (ii) Techno-Economic Systems, running by the Electr. & Comp. Eng. Dept. of the Nat. Tech. Univ. of Athens in cooperation with the University of Athens and the University of Piraeus. His research interests include: experimental and computational simulation of industrial/chemical processes; economo-technical analysis of industrial branches/organic chemical industry; renewable energy sources; biomass; natural resources management; GIS based management; environmental management; manufacturing of agricultural product/byproducts; teaching methodology; distance learning.

Assoc. Prof. Sidiras has 17 publications in ISI journals, and 80 in conference proceedings (after peer-review), with 132 citations and an h-index of 8 (source: ISI Web of Science, Thompson Scientific; self-citations excluded). He participates continuously since 1989 in the European Biomass Conferences and published more than 26 papers in their proceedings, while recently he joined the conference's scientific committee.

Plenary Lecture 4

Heritage Tourism as a Tool of Development



Professor Rui Antonio Rodrigues Ramos

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Abstract: Heritage tourism, that is, tourism at sites with history as their main attraction, is a well-analysed area of research, mainly in the marketing and management domains. However, the role that heritage tourism can play in the development of peripheral territories is much less explored and can be seen as an under-researched field in literature. In its broadest context, heritage tourism is concerned with the development of touristic activities where the attractions often include natural features, built and intangible heritage and sites of historic interest. As a result of the economic and demographic changes suffered in the last decades, peripheral territories are searching for alternative ways of development to reverse the trend of depopulation, demographic ageing, economic decadence and heritage deterioration. Heritage tourism can refurbish the economy of these territories by providing alternative ways of entrepreneurship, creating jobs and engaging new economic opportunities, encouraging the growth of a wide range of supportive services and activities, stimulating the diversification of the economic activities, renewing traditional activities by creating an added-value for local products and enhancing the cultural and natural heritage safeguard. There is a consensus about the fact that tourist exploitation of heritage values has potential to launch a more sustainable development in peripheral regions. In fact, tourism has become a recurrent and strategic subject in a wide range of public speeches and policies, often aiming to provide sustainability to the economy of these territories. For example, the development of tourism initiatives in peripheral regions has been actively encouraged and supported by several EU policies, such as the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the LEADER Programme. Nonetheless, some researches show that the real impact of heritage tourism stays far from the generalised rhetoric. In fact, the exploitation of heritage attractions for tourist purposes is not a simple task for these territories. There are several internal and external factors that can threaten this intent, including competition, community support and participation, funding, human skills, remoteness, facilities, the quality of the own attractions, etc. Many of these factors are co-dependent and the social and economic dilapidation of these territories can largely restrict the potential of tourism as a tool of development. The case study explores and shows the main problems of launching a sustainable development process based on heritage tourism in Almeida, a peripheral Portuguese municipality. Basically, the main purposes of the research are the following: (i) identify the vision of a selected group of local and regional stakeholders for the municipal development; (ii) show the fragmentation between the theoretical purposes defended by those stakeholders and their practical actuation; (iii) clarify the different relationships of cooperation, competition and cooptation that coexist among the tourism stakeholders; (iv) and finally, highlight the magnitude of the actions required to put Almeida as a destination of heritage tourism. The research provides practical implications to heritage tourism in their efforts to collectively market their destination and the changes need to adopt a sustainable process of public participation.

Brief Biography of the Speaker:

Rui Ramos is an associate professor of Civil Engineering Department, Engineering School, University of Minho, Portugal. His area of expertise is Urban and Regional Planning and he is a PhD Researcher at Territory, Environment and Construction Centre from University of Minho. In 1993, at University of Minho, he started his regular work as a lecturer and researcher. Since then he published as author or co-author over 60 scientific papers in reviewed journals or presented at international conferences, and 6 PhD and 18 MSc students were graduated under his technical supervision. Moreover, since 2000, he had the opportunity to be an invited Professor at the Department of Transportation of the School of Engineering of Sao Carlos, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Plenary Lecture 5

The Effects of Public Life on Interior Space Organizations



Asst. Prof. Dr. Gozen Guner Aktas

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Abstract: Built environments are the most significant outputs of social life. Every social change, transformation and development finds a spatial counterpart. Recorded changes and transformations in public life, social life, family life, city life transforms a change in the built environments and consequently interior space organizations. Interior spaces and interior space organizations, are directly affected from public life and with its private and public demands. The creation of interior public spaces can be considered as a complex process from the perspective that, the interior space ought to meet various human needs (ecological, physiological, emotional and socio-cultural) and as a result should stimulate life styles, functional necessities and various senses. To analyze interior space organizations, it is essential to evaluate and understand the context, enrich existing character, provide people choice in places, make connections, encourage creativity, practice custodianship and employ collaboration. As a starting point, the above principles show that interior public spaces are a product of the process employed. Interior public spaces are often valued differently by different groups of people. The reason for this lies in the fact that there are multiple dimensions or aspects of public space. Each aspect may attract the attention of a particular stakeholder group. Public space has a formal, structural, perceptual, social, visual, functional and temporal dimension. Public interiors can be considered as the reflections of public life, social identification and social sensitivities.

Brief Biography of the Speaker:

Gozen Guner Aktas graduated from Bilkent University, Interior Architecture and Environmental Design department in Turkey in 1997. She worked as a research assistant and completed her masters degree in Interior Architecture and Environmental design at Bilkent University in 1999. She continued her professional career in some of the most important design firms of Turkey as an Interior Architect. She completed more than 50 Interior Architecture projects. During her professional career she also completed her PHD degree in Interior Architecture and Environmental Design department at Hacettepe University in Turkey. She is presently continuing her academic studies as an Asst. Professor at TOBB ETU University in the department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design. Her research interests are; public life and interior space relations, public interior spaces, recreational interior spaces, sustainability in interior spaces. She is the member of Chamber of Interior Architects of Turkey.

Plenary Lecture 6

Interrelations Among Cultural Identity, Place Identity and Environmental Design



Asst. Prof. Nur Ayalp

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Abstract: Culture is the essential phenomenon standing at the centre of environmental perception. That means, people perceive the world in terms of their cultural and place identities. Cultural identity of a specific community occupies the entire history including; living manners, attitudes, and beliefs. Place identity considered as, private and social extension of a person are two concepts and strongly interrelated with each other. As such, cultural identity shapes the perception of environmental features and the identity of a place. On the other hand, place identity is defined as extension of oneself in a place, affecting the cultural identity of a community. Place identity is the major concept in the environment design as it is essential. People can easily adapt to a place which is concurrent with their place identities. That is, designing an environment should focus on the maximum fulfilment of a specific function in a certain place. The fatal point is, designer as the environment creator, is the mediator of reflecting users' cultural identity. The question is; should the designer stand on the way of representing the 'new' identities in the global world, or is he the determiner of 'old' in the post global era? The lecture focuses on these interrelations among cultural identity, place identity and environmental design.

Brief Biography of the Speaker:

Nur Ayalp is Associate Professor in the Department of Interior Architecture and Environmental Design in TOBB ETU University. Nur Ayalp was born in Adana, Turkey on 18 May 1976. Nur Ayalp took bachelor degree of Interior Architect and Environmental Designer from Bilkent University, Turkey in 1999. She took her master of fine arts degree from same university in 2001. She also worked as a research assistant in Bilkent University during master education. She worked as an Interior Architect in MRA Architecture and Construction Firm between 2001-2004. She is a member of Chamber of Interior Architects in Ankara, Turkey. She took her PhD degree from Hacettepe University in 2008. Her researches are focused on cultural settings; the historical interiors, renovation of historical interiors, and environmental psychology.

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