

Dear readers,

In the last year 2019 the 150-th anniversary of the founding of the Bulgarian Literary Society, whose direct successor without interruption of tradition is the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences (BAS) was celebrated with the due attention. This is the first officially registered BULGARIAN institution, 10 years before the establishment of the third Bulgarian kingdom and 39 years before Bulgaria became an independent political subject on the world map. In the last 61 years, since 1959, automation, telemechanics, cybernetics, robotics and related fields have taken their permanent and confident place in the structures of BAS.

The date of birth of the development in this field at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, and not only there, is considered to be November 3, 1959, when an independent section “Automation and Telemechanics” was established in the Department of Technical Sciences. The numerous metamorphoses of this section to today's Institute of Information and Communication Technologies (IICT), Institute of Robotics (IR), Center for Qualification and Innovation, etc. within the framework of BAS are discussed in detail in the article on the history of the Department of Engineering at BAS in the current issue of the journal.

Since its establishment, the scientific units in the field have started to publish their results and achievements periodically. In August 1963 the Central Laboratory of Automation and Telemechanics (CLAT) was established and in the same year, the first volume of “Proceedings of CLAT-BAS” was published. The current journal "Problems of Engineering Cybernetics and Robotics" is a direct successor of these first “Proceedings”, i.e. it has been published without interruption for 57 years. At that time, the preparations for the establishment of the Institute of Technical Cybernetics (ITC) at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences has begun.

ITC-BAS was established on 1-st of April 1964 and the same year, as a continuation of “Proceedings of CLAT-BAS”, the journal “Proceedings of the Institute of Engineering Cybernetics” began to be published. In 1967, the journal was renamed “*Problems of Technical Cybernetics*” and continued to be published periodically until 1978.

At the end of 1978, the ITC has been radically transformed, received a new, modern edifice and has become “Institute of Engineering Cybernetics and Robotics” (IECR) at BAS, with a new leadership, a new structure and a new

scientific council. Since 1979, the journal has been under the name “*Problems of Engineering Cybernetics and Robotics*”.

From the beginning of the 80’s of the last century, the journal began to be published entirely in English with abstracts in Russian.

During 1989-1990, as is well known, there were serious geopolitical upheavals that led to the collapse of the Soviet bloc. This did not bypass Bulgaria either, and respectively BAS and in particular IECR. Repeated restructurings, mergers, new institutes, etc. followed. However, the journal *Problems of Engineering Cybernetics and Robotics* went on to be published periodically and without interruption. In any case, to date there is not a single year without the publication of at least two issues of the journal. In our opinion, this is a pretty good achievement in these difficult times.

Since 2019, the journal of “Problems of Engineering Cybernetics and Robotics” is supported by three scientific units of BAS – Institute of Information and Communication Technologies, Institute of Robotics, and the Laboratory of Telematics. The first two members are immediate successors of IECR-BAS. The new editorial board includes both prominent Bulgarian scientists and specialists in the field, as well as well-known foreign scientists.

The intention of the editorial board is to renovate and update the appearance of the journal in four issues a year, and the aim is to raise its scientific rating in order to enter the world databases of scientific journals. This meets with understanding and support from the management of BAS. All submitted manuscripts are carefully reviewed by independent reviewers before being approved for publication. Any submitted manuscript is welcome for possible publication in the journal.

Here is the place to note the great contribution to the renewal of the journal of all Bulgarian participants in the editorial board and especially of the editor-in-chief and the secretary of the editorial board, who have the main credit for the successful implementation of the project.

We hope that the interested audience will find interesting materials in the journal, as well as provide new manuscripts for publication.

*From the Editorial Board*