

Preface

What a pleasure—and tremendous amount of work—it was to put together this volume of works submitted to the 2017 International Cartographic Conference. With contributions from every continent and 16 countries, the volume represents a celebration of maps, and map-related research. A common thread that connects all chapters is the fascination with maps as agents of communication. More broadly, the works reflect the dynamic and ever-evolving discipline while demonstrating a commonality in research topics and methods from diverse parts of the world.

156 papers were submitted to the book track for the 2017 International Cartographic Conference. All papers were reviewed by the Scientific Program Committee consisting of 79 pre-eminent scholars associated with the various commissions of the International Cartographic Association (ICA). They ranked the works and provided valuable comments, including whether the submission should be included in the book. I personally examined all 156 submissions to make sure that none had mistakenly fallen through cracks in the reviewing process. Based on this, 49 papers were selected for further consideration. Of these, 36 made it through the rigorous editing process to be included in this book. A final count shows that there are five chapters each from China, Germany, and the United States. France, Hungary, and South Africa are represented by three chapters. Countries with two chapters include Brazil, Czechia, and Poland.

In the editing process, all authors were asked to address the comments of the reviewers and re-submit their entries. An important concern for this volume on cartography was the quality of the illustrations. All illustrations containing line-work had to be submitted in a vector format (e.g., SVG or similar). Raster images needed to be of sufficient resolution for printing.

The diversity of topics represented a challenge for organizing this volume into meaningful sections. In the end, chapters were grouped primarily based on the underlying methodology and the broader purpose of the research. For example, in terms of methodology, a number of contributions employed some type of user testing in the evaluation of maps. An example of a category based on the underlying purpose is the use of maps in the analysis of geographic distributions.

The book starts with two chapters that demonstrate the span of research in cartography. The first deals with an examination and preservation of a historical map for a city in Brazil. By sharp contrast, the second chapter deals with location-spoofing—the ability to fool location-based devices about their actual location. This is followed by a series of chapters on crowdsourcing and data. The next section deals with map design, followed by a series of chapters from many different countries evaluating maps through user testing.

The fifth part of the book examines how maps are used to examine particular geographic distributions. The sixth part uses various forms of numerical methods to generalize or evaluate maps. The last part examines routes, their analysis, display, and encoding in our brains. The book concludes with a chapter evaluating the essence of cartography. Taken together, the book makes for interesting reading and serves as a good reflection on current research in cartography.

On a personal note, I first attended the biennial conference of the ICA in 1978, only the 9th meeting of the organization and the last in the United States. The meeting was held in College Park, Maryland, not far from its meeting place in 2017. At that time, all presentations were given in a large auditorium and translated simultaneously into English or French. Translators sat in a small, windowed room in the back of the auditorium. It was a daunting experience for a young scholar presenting research from a recently completed master's thesis. Addressing an international audience in this setting was a great honor. It is also an honor, 39 years later, to put these works together into a cohesive volume for the 28th International Cartographic Conference.

Omaha, NE, USA

Michael P. Peterson

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