

Preface

When in October 1996 in Cholula (Puebla, Mexico), I took charge of organizing the scientific program of the next Ibero-American Congress on Artificial Intelligence (IBERAMIA 98) I bet on a couple of ideas. First, I adopted the spirit of the Portuguese adventurers to get the Sixth Congress on a truly international track. In order to attain this aim I needed to convince everybody that the Ibero-American AI community had improved over the years and attained a very good level in what concerns individuals. Second, I brought my colleagues beside me so that we were able to collect sufficient excellent papers without destroying the pioneering spirit of those who first inaugurated the Congress. Getting together to find out what is in progress in the vast region in which Latin languages (Portuguese and Spanish) are spoken, attracting others to exchange ideas with us, and by doing this advancing AI in general, is a risky undertaking. This book is the result, and it sets a new standard to be discussed by all of us.

IBERAMIA was established in 1988 (Barcelona) by three Ibero-American AI Associations (AEPIA from Spain, SMIA from Mexico, and APPIA from Portugal), after a first meeting in Morelia (Mexico) in 1986 of SMIA and AEPIA. The event was organized every two years from then on in Morelia (1990), La Habana (1992), Caracas (1994), and Cholula (1996), taking Portuguese and Spanish as official languages and with the aim to promote and diffuse the research and development carried out in the countries associated with those two Latin languages and connected by strong historical links from the 16th century. Over the years, the Executive Committee of IBERAMIA was enlarged with the inclusion of AVINTA (Venezuela), SMC (Cuba) and SBC (Brazil).

The IBERAMIA 98 scientific program is structured along two main modules, the open discussion and the paper track. The first day of the conference (Tuesday, October 6, 1998) is organized with tutorials directed to informatics professionals, the formal opening, the IBERAMIA lecture delivered by a distinguished Ibero-American researcher, and the declaration of the José Negrete prize awarded by the Scientific Committee to the best paper submitted. The open discussion track (Wednesday, October 7) is composed of working sessions devoted to the most important areas of research in Ibero-American countries, the AI Education Symposium dedicated to confronting ideas about the best ways to teach AI, a session presenting the best M.Sc. and Ph.D. theses of the whole region, and a video conference panel to establish bridges between Europe and America (involving those unable to attend this panel). The paper track (Thursday and Friday, October 8–9) is composed of invited talks and paper presentations from all over the world on the full range of AI research and covering both theoretical and foundational issues, and applications as well.

We received more than 150 technical papers distributed along 21 countries and 14 areas (see below). From those 149 accepted for reviewing, 30 were written in Spanish and Portuguese, and were the only candidates to the open discussion track. All were rigorously reviewed by the program committee, and only 32 were

accepted as full papers to be published by Springer (the paper track). This high rejection rate was a reflection of the care and thought that the program committee and area chairs put into the review and selection process in order to obtain a standard of quality for the first publication of IBERAMIA proceedings by Springer.

Countries	Submitted	Paper Track
Argentina	2	-
Austria	1	1
Brazil	14	4
Canada	1	-
Colombia	2	-
Cuba	1	-
Ecuador	1	-
France	12	2
Germany	1	-
Italy	1	-
Japan	2	1
Mexico	26	7
Netherlands	1	-
Paraguay	1	-
Portugal	16	3
Singapore	1	-
Spain	45	10
Tunisia	1	-
UK	9	2
USA	2	-
Venezuela	9	2
Total	149	32

Areas	Submitted	Paper Track
Case-Based Reasoning	5	-
Constraint Programming	5	1
Distributed AI	22	5
Genetic Algorithms	15	5
Intelligent Tutoring Systems	9	1
Knowledge Engineering	5	2
Knowledge Representation	12	-
Machine Learning	17	6
Natural Language Processing	18	1
Neural Nets	9	1
Planning	3	1
Reasoning	13	5
Robotics	6	-
Vision	10	4
Total	149	32

We have included five invited lectures by Héctor Geffner, James Allen, Cristiano Castelfranchi, Aaron Sloman, and Ricardo Baeza-Yates to ensure an adequate interaction between different fields, and also to assure a broadening of the thematic spectrum of the whole conference.

The Conference is accompanied by two workshops, the Second Ibero-American DAI and Multiagent Systems Workshop, to be held in Toledo, on October 2–3, 1998, and the First Ibero-American Causal Networks (From Inference to Data Mining), to be held in Lisbon, on October 3, 1998, and also by a set of four tutorials: Agent Programming by José M. Ramirez (Venezuela), Mining the World Wide Web by Tom Mitchell (USA), Intelligent Information Retrieval by Ricardo Baeza-Yates (Chile), and Arquitecturas Multiagentes y sus Aplicaciones, by Fernando de Arriaga (Spain), Ana Lilia Laureano Cruces (Mexico), and Mohamed El Alami (Spain). In the week before, September 28 – October 4, the AI Portuguese association (APPIA) organizes the Sixth International Summer School (EAIA-98) dedicated to Knowledge Discovery in Databases and Data Mining: Methods and Applications.

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