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Editors

Compositional Data Analysis

CoDaWork, L'Escala, Spain, June 2015



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Foreword

In 1982, Prof. John Aitchison read his well-known article *The Statistical Analysis of Compositional Data* before the prestigious Royal Statistical Society (RSS) in London. Whilst its 21 densely written pages are tremendously stimulating from a scientific point of view, reading the replicas and counter-replicas by prestigious scientists from different areas of knowledge—statistics (eg. D.R. Cox, J.E. Mosimann, D.M. Titterington), geology (eg. R.J. Howart) and finance (eg. G.J. Goodhardt), among others—who critically evaluated the article, is even more so. I have always been of the opinion that almost all of the main issues involved in analysing compositional data (CoDa) and the feasible solutions to them were dealt with during the presentation and subsequent discussions about that historical session of the RSS. Later developments and improvement of the methodology for CoDa carried out by J. Aitchison himself and his continuers have persistently drawn from that presentation

Despite the transcendence of Prof. Aitchison's scientific contribution to CoDa, as often happens in the field of science it remained practically ignored for more than a decade. It was Dr. V. Pawlowsky's innate curiosity and stubborn persistence that made other scientists finally take an interest in this methodology for CoDa, bringing it once again to the fore in discussion forums, initially in the narrow field of geology and later in a wide range of scientific areas of knowledge. CoDaWorks (CDW) illustrates the point well. The first CDW took place at the University of Girona in 2003 with just 28 contributions, while the number of CDWs held to date now totals 6, the last one—with 53 contributions—in L'Escala (Girona) in 2015. CDWs continue to maintain the germinal idea originally conceived: to be a place for theoretic and applied researchers interested in CoDa to exchange ideas. Aside from Prof. J. Aitchison, who despite his advanced years has attended most of the CDWs, other distinguished guest professors invited to participate in the different editions must also be acknowledged: D. Billheimer (Vanderbilt University, USA), G. van der Boogaart (University of Greifswald), A.C. Atkinson (London School of Economics), V. Liebscher (University of Greifswald), J. Bacon-Shone (University of Hong Kong), P. Filzmoser (Vienna University of Technology), M.L. Eaton

(University of Minnesota, USA), C. Glasbey (Biomathematics & Statistics Scotland, UK), C. Reimann (Geological Survey of Norway), R. Tolosana-Delgado (Helmholtz-Institute Freiberg for Resources Technology, Germany), E. Grunsky (University of Waterloo, Canada) and R.S. Kenett (KPA Ltd., Raanana, Israel).

The publication you are holding is a collection of 12 noteworthy contributions to CoDaWork 2015. As you will see, with CoDa as the common denominator they deal with a diverse range of topics from geochemistry to archaeology, and there are also some methodological contributions.

More than 30 years have passed since Prof. J. Aitchison's lone presentation before the scientific collectives of the RSS. This book, wholly dedicated to CoDa, demonstrates that that presentation by the old professor was not given in vain. Let us hope it remains that way for many years to come!

Dr. Carles Barceló-Vidal
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