Preface

The eighth working group (WG 13.8) of the IFIP Technical Committee 13 on Human–Computer Interaction (HCI) was established in 2008 as a special interest group, and turned into a working group in 2014. The scope of this group is to support and develop the research, practice, and education capabilities of HCI in institutions and organizations based around the world, taking into account their diverse local needs and cultural perspectives; and also to develop links between the HCI community in general and other relevant communities involved in international development and cross-cultured aspects of ICT development. In an attempt to demonstrate links to other relevant communities interested in cultural aspects of ICT, this volume presents revised selected chapters from papers presented at the 10th Cultural Attitudes Towards Technology and Communication (CaTaC) conference organized jointly with WG 13.8. This working conference was held at the University of West London during June 15–17, in 2016 in Brentford, UK.

The chapters included in this volume explore the intersections between culture, technology, and communication, applying different theoretical and methodological perspectives, genres, and styles. Addressing the concerns of IFIP WG 13.8, the following pages include good examples of how to address challenges for design and innovation in the Global South. However, we will also see examples of design for community development outside of the Global South, as a way to understand points of convergence and divergence.

Since 1998 the CaTaC conference series has fostered a distinctive conference culture, one that is remarkably interdisciplinary and critical, on the one hand, but at the same time, exceptionally supportive and collegial. Fast forward 2016, and the CaTaC community still continues to encourage scholars to explore, try out new ideas and approaches, and offer their best critical insights, but always only in a collaborative spirit that rests on our shared conviction that we are all in this together, however seriously our academic lives require us to focus on our own achievements and progress. It was an honor for WG 13.8 to be a co-protagonist of this edition.

We hope this book becomes a resource for the type of discussion topics that took place at the working conference in London. Culture remains a contested concept and phenomenon for humanists and social science scholars, and its value for ICT academics and professionals regularly comes into question. However, the concept of culture provides the signifiers that allow us to reflect on our condition of symbolic beings driven by beliefs and emotions. This is turn allows to think of the need for technologies to be more human, and to be able to do something about it.

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José Abdelnour-Nocera
Michele Strano
Charles Ess
Maja van der Velden
Herbert Hrachovec

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Abdelnour-Nocera, J.; Strano, M.; Ess, C.M.; Van der Velden, M.; Hrachovec, H. (Eds.)

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