Preface

This part of Volume 52 of RIMUT is dedicated to professor Bruno Zimmermann on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. This section contains invited papers from mathematicians who have collaborated with Bruno in various ways. Mattia Mecchia and Emilia Mezzetti who have taken care of this part are grateful to all of them for their contributions. Many thanks also to the referees who helped us in preparing the special issue. Finally, we wish to warmly thank Bruno's wife Gisela for sharing with us the beautiful story of their arrival in Italy.

Bruno Zimmermann was born in Werl (Germany) on September 24, 1950. In June 1977 he obtained his Ph.D. in Mathematics at the Ruhr-Universität in Bochum under the supervision of professor Heiner Zieschang. The Ph.D. advisor of Heiner Zieshang had been the famous knot theorist Kurt Reidemeister, the father of the famous moves, a basic concept in the study of knots. As Bruno sometimes says to the students defending a thesis in knot theory, this makes him the "academic grandson" of Reidemeister.

After obtaining the Habilitation in 1983 he spent a period as visiting professor at the University of Michigan and then he came back to Bochum as lecturer (Dozent). In 1986 one of the turning points of his career and life happened: he won the national competition for a position in Italy as full professor in Algebra. Bruno's passion for research and teaching led him and his wife Gisela to embark on one of the greatest adventures of their life and they decided to move with their five children to Trieste where a full professor position was available. At first the situation was tricky for Bruno's family: a new language to learn, new schools to find for the children, a new culture to understand. But after a while, the initial problems were solved and the new country became familiar. Bruno's family discovered the beauty of the hills surrounding Trieste and, also thanks to some colleagues, in particular Marco Reni, they began to appreciate hiking in the Italian Alps.

Bruno has been a professor at the University of Trieste for 33 years. He taught Algebra and Geometry to hundreds of students, who appreciated his clarity and his deep insight into mathematics. It is impossible to know the time when Bruno leaves the classroom after his lessons because he usually stays for a long time talking with the students about problems and ideas concerning

the topic of the course. He introduced the study of Algebraic and Geometric Topology to Trieste. During his career, he has advised several undergraduate and master theses and has supervised six Ph.D. students. For many years he also taught a course in the ICTP Postgraduate Diploma Programme; he really enjoys teaching students from different countries and from different cultures.

Bruno is an outstanding researcher. He has written more than one hundred papers on low dimensional topology, knot theory, geometric topology, and geometric group theory. He has obtained many significant results and has opened numerous lines of research. His papers have been cited more than five hundred times attesting to his influential role in the international research community. During his career, he was often invited as a speaker at international conferences where the public could appreciate his continuous effort to reveal the conceptual ideas behind the results he presented.

He has served as Editor of our journal since 1987 and as Director from 2005 to 2007. We thank him for the all the work done for RIMUT.

Bruno has just retired and we wish him more time for his hobbies such as music, running and hiking, but we hope he continues to make his valuable contribution as a researcher and teacher.