Foreword

It is a special pleasure for me to inaugurate a new, exciting season for Pu.M.A. with the launch of a new section, named "Algebra and Theoretical Computer Science", which will replace the former "Algebraic systems" section. The scope of this project is to bring together researchers of two closely related areas of mathematics and computer science. Therefore, papers exploring matters where the interactions between algebra and theoretical computer science is particularly evident will be strongly welcome. More precisely, the efforts of the members of the Editorial Board will aim at promoting and widely spreading both results in algebra which make essential use of theoretical computer science tools and improvements in the theory of computer science having a strong algebraic flavor. The reason of this choice lies in the deep conviction that, as well as physics has greatly influenced the development of mathematics in the last two centuries, computer science and, hopefully, biology will play an analogous role in the present one. More specifically, it is not far from reality to predict that discrete mathematics will assume more and more relevance to explain several deep phenomena in many an important discipline.

In closing this preface, I express both the wish and the hope that the above considerations will turn into reality very soon, by a strong and enthusiastic participation of all those people who feel that their research work fit into the program I have expressed so far. I also take the opportunity to remind that the possibility of publishing special issues concerning topics of relevant and increasing interest in algebra, combinatorics and theoretical computer science are strongly encouraged.

My final thoughts are for all those people who were and are involved in the realization and promotion of this journal. My most special and sincere thanks are for Franco Migliorini, who founded PU.M.A. and edited it up to now together with his late friend and colleague Jenő Szép. Franco has really loved his creation and has spent incredibly many efforts to promote its diffusion in a wide sector of the mathematical community all around the world. I thank him for his generous work and also for having accepted to remain in the Editorial Board of the new section: his skill and experience will be essential. Many thanks also to Csaba Puskás, who was the executive editor of "Algebraic System" and accepted to put his valuable experience at disposal of the new section, and to all the "Hungarian people" who are involved in Pu.M.A., in particular to Péter Tallos, editor of the "Mathematics of Optimization" section. All the friends and colleagues of the renewed Editorial Board have enthusiastically accepted to give their contribution to this project, and the results of their efforts seems to me clearly evident as from this first issue: thank you very much! And, last but not least, many thanks are due to the authors of this first issue, whose fine works have allowed the publication of a selection of very high quality papers.

Firenze, July 19th, 2006

Renzo Pinzani