

FOREWORD

The Instituto de Matemática e Estatística da Universidade de São Paulo was created in January 15th, 1970. As part of the celebrations of its 25th anniversary, several scientific meetings were held during the year of 1995. One of these events was the *Workshop on Group Rings and Related Topics*; this issue of *Resenhas* contains the proceedings of that meeting.

At the time of its foundation, due to a general reform in the whole structure of the university, the institute gathered mathematicians that were then working at different institutions, such as the Schools of Engineering and Economy and mainly from the Departamento de Matemática da Faculdade de Filosofia Ciências e Letras, and the Instituto de Pesquisas Matemáticas. The former had been created in 1934 and its foundation represents a landmark in the history of Brazilian mathematics: it was there where the first research groups were organized.

In the early years of the Institute, there was only one person interested in algebra, Prof. Luiz Henrique Jacy Monteiro who had written his PhD thesis in São Paulo under the supervision of Prof. Oscar Zariski but, unfortunately, died prematurely in 1975. In the beginning of the seventies, Prof. Alfredo Jones from the Universidad de la República, Uruguay, visited the Institute on several occasions and later assumed a permanent position from 1974 to 1988. It was under his supervision that this editor wrote the first thesis on algebra presented to the Institute, in 1974, precisely on group rings.

Since then, the algebra group has grown steadily and nowadays it gathers nineteen researchers whose interests cover a wide range of subjects, such as commutative algebra, non-associative algebra, representation theory, ring theory and group rings. The work in this last subject has been very active; seven other PhD dissertations on group rings or closely related topics have been presented to the Institute over the years and courses or seminars discussing papers in the area are offered every term.

The workshop whose proceedings constitute this volume was held from July 31st to August 5th, 1995. During the meeting, two mini-courses and several conferences were offered, one by Prof. D.S. Passman on *Semiprimitivity of Finitely Generated Group Rings* and the other by Prof. N. Gupta on *The Dimension Subgroup Problem*.

The meeting was organized under the auspices of the Brazilian Mathematical Society, the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP) and the Institute itself. We are deeply grateful to these institutions for their generous support and encouragement.

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