

FOREWORD

The Second Brazilian School of Probability was held in Barra de Sahy, a secluded beach in the State of São Paulo, Brazil, the week of August 2–7, 1998. It was characterized by the geographical diversity of its participants and the scientific diversity of the subjects discussed.

Its 43 participants came from several institutions from abroad [University of California at Irvine (USA), University of Wisconsin at Madison (USA), Universidad Nacional de La Plata (Argentina), Université de Cergy Pontoise (France), CNRS Marseille (France), Forschungszentrum Jülich (Germany), Iowa State University (USA) and Universidad Autónoma de México (Mexico)] and throughout Brazil [Instituto de Matemática Pura e Aplicada (Rio de Janeiro), Universidade de Campinas, Universidade Federal de Pernambuco em Recife, Universidade Federal de Rio Grande do Sul, Universidade Federal de Rio de Janeiro, Universidade Nacional de Brasília, and Universidade de São Paulo].

While the School included issues of mainstream probability theory (large deviations, hydrodynamic limits, equilibrium measures of complex systems), there was a distinct focus on applications to a variety of scientific and technological areas (statistics, radar images, random graphs, computer science, localization of light, quantum statistical mechanics). Some of the speakers kindly accepted the invitation to provide written notes of their expositions. They are the content of this issue of *Resenhas*. This valuable and informative material is, unfortunately, only a fraction of what was presented and discussed at the meeting. But it is enough to convey the friendly multidisciplinary atmosphere of those School days.

I take this opportunity to thank the work of the members of the scientific and organization committee, and the generous support of the Brazilian agencies FAPESP and CNPq. And, of course, I thank the speakers and participants for a beautiful and inspiring week.

Roberto Fernández

Member of the Organizing and Scientific Committees