Shigeyuki Morita lecturing at BΓ school (2003)

**This volume is dedicated to Professor Shigeyuki Morita
on the occasion of his 60th birthday**

Preface

This volume consists of selected paper on recent trends and results in the study of groups of diffeomorphisms and related topics. Most of the authors were invited speakers or participants of the *International Symposium on Groups of Diffeomorphisms 2006*, which was held at the University of Tokyo, Japan, during the period 11-15 September, 2006.

During the preceding week, Professor Shigeyuki Morita, one of the leading topologists of our time, saw his 60th birthday on September 5, 2006. A principal purpose of the symposium was to present and discuss mathematical results concerning various groups of diffeomorphisms, including mapping class groups, from the point of view of algebraic and differential topology, so that the lectures would form an appropriate birthday present for Professor Morita. This volume, which bears the same title as the symposium, has been prepared in the same spirit aiming in both cases for the highest possible mathematical quality. The program, the list of participants, and photos from the meeting can be found on the following web site: http://faculty.ms.u-tokyo.ac.jp/~gd2006/

Several expository papers are included in this volume along with a large number of research papers. Centered around the study of mapping class groups of surfaces, the topics of the papers range from algebraic-topological studies to dynamical ones involving foliations and symplectic or contact diffeomorphisms. We believe that the scope of this volume well reflects Shigeyuki Morita's mathematical interests. It would be our great pleasure for this volume to inspire not only the specialists in these fields but also a wider audience of mathematicians.

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the contributors for their excellent articles as well as to the anonymous referees for their important contributions. In most cases, the manuscripts were greatly improved by the suggestions of the referees. We are also grateful to

many people from Morita's school, including M. Fujii, Y. Kasahara, T. Morifuji, and K. Horie and also to younger mathematicians in the generation of his mathematical grandchildren who worked hard to make the symposium a success. Among other things, Masaaki Suzuki took care of most of the practical aspects of producing this volume. His devotion is highly appreciated.

However, our greatest thanks must be reserved for Shigeyuki Morita himself. His mathematical influence and his taste and style are surely evident from the contributions to this volume. His wit and frank and inspiring personality abundantly shone and reverberated at the symposium, during which the wide respect and love for the man were apparent. We know that Morita-sensei never stops developing his mathematics, and we hope this volume will help many other mathematicians do the same.

Editors
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Takashi Tsuboi (The University of Tokyo)
Nariya Kawazumi (The University of Tokyo)
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All papers in this volume have been refereed and are in final form.
No version of any of them will be submitted for publication elsewhere.