The first year of the Danish editorial team

One year ago, when we took over the role of Nomad editors, we met with enthusiasm the challenging job of taking care of and helping nourishing the job that colleagues in other countries started fifteen years ago. The beginning was not easy since we had to learn how to manage the whole editorial process. The support from Johan Häggström and Ole Björkqvist was fundamental in setting in place new routines that would make more efficient the processing of manuscripts, from their submission to their publication. The support of the Science and Mathematics Education Research Group at the Department of Education, Learning and Philosophy at Aalborg University made possible that Hanne Lützow Kirk gave us a helping hand as editorial assistant during the first year.

As the year passed, both the Nordic and the international mathematics education community showed a rising interest in Nomad, reflected in the increase in submissions from authors inside and outside the region. With a growing number of papers in the review process our job got more complicated, but at the same time more exciting. The support of colleagues who diligently reviewed manuscripts was fundamental for succeeding in producing three regular issues and a special issue on difficulties in/with mathematics, all of which have received good comments from Nomad readers. We thank all authors and reviewers for their efforts in bringing papers of a good quality to be part of Nomad. The following persons reviewed papers processed during 2006:

> Mette Andresen, Christer Bergsten, Morten Blomhøj, Trygve Breiteig, Tone Dalvang, Hans Christian Hansen, Marit Johnsen Høines, Simon Goodchild, Gunnar Gjone, Pedro Gómez, Barbro Grevholm, Lisen Häggblom, Lena Lindenskov, Thomas Lingefjärd, Olav Lunde, Candia Morgan, Mogens Niss, Torulf Palm, Jeppe Skott, Ole Skovsmose, Paola Valero, Tine Wedege, Carl Winsløw.

We would also like to acknowledge the generous support of the Swedish National Center for Mathematics Education (NCM) in Göteborg, whose funding has been fundamental in the administration, production and distribution of the journal. In particular we thank our managing editor Johan Häggström, NCM, for his great job producing the issues. NCM's support, however, needs to be replaced by Nomad's own finances. Therefore, one of the greatest challenges this year is to balance financially though

the increase in the number of subscribers. We appreciate all the help that we can get from the readers in promoting NOMAD as the Nordic journal for mathematical education research and developmental work.

This year we have also experienced the importance of a strong Editorial Committee whose members can provide a working hand and wise advice in running the journal. Therefore, it has been decided to enlarge this committee to include three members from each country – though two from Iceland. We are in the process of renewing and welcoming the new members. We thank Ole Skovsmose for the many years he served the committee; he has decided to open space for "fresher blood" to join the committee. We welcome then Tine Wedege and Jeppe Skott from Denmark, Elin Reikerås from Norway, Kaarina Merenluoto from Finland and Johan Lithner from Sweden.

We would also like to highlight the special help from the Nordic Graduate School of Mathematics Education, NoGSME, led by Barbro Grevholm, for allowing the creation of strong connections between the education of doctoral students, the qualification of doctoral supervisors and the strengthening of NOMAD. Last year there was a fertile year for research in the region due to the very many research students who finished their dissertations. NOMAD has been a journal in which they have decided to publish parts of their doctoral work. At the same time, NOMAD has been used in several supervisor seminars to illustrate different issues related to writing, reviewing and publishing of research papers. These discussion have not only enriched the participants' understanding of the processes of publication of academic work, but also has allowed NOMAD editors to bring up discussions about the possibilities for the journal within the mathematics education community in the region. A new support action of NoGSME is announced at the end of this issue. In connection to the conference *Teaching mathematics: Retrospectives and perspectives*, which is to be held in Riga in May, NoGSME has arranged a one day seminar for supervisors from the Baltic countries on the writing of papers for scientific journals in mathematics education. As editors we will be given the opportunity to talk about NOMAD and encourage submissions of papers to NOMAD from the Baltic research environments. As a start in the strengthening of the link with Baltic countries, in this issue we publish a paper by two Estonian researchers.

About this issue

In this number we have gathered three papers, which address three different sites and aspects of mathematics education. *Anu Palu* and *Eve Kikas* in their paper "Primary school teachers' beliefs about teaching mathematics"

report on a study that investigated primary teachers' beliefs about the purposes and methods of teaching mathematics in primary school. The sample consisted of 103 practicing teachers and 26 pre-service teachers in Estonia. Teachers with similar teaching experience agree in their evaluations of the purposes of teaching mathematics. Experienced teachers give priority to the purpose of *acquiring knowledge* before the purpose of *developing the pupils' personality.* All teachers valued formalist teaching methods the least. However, teachers with different teaching experience held different beliefs about using traditional, formalist and social teaching methods. The results open for interesting discussions and further research on how teachers' beliefs are formed.

In the paper "From problem solving to modeling – the emergence of models and modeling perspectives" *Nicholas Mousoulides*, *Bharath Sriraman* and *Constantinos Christou* analyse and discuss a fair amount of the literature on mathematical modelling. The authors have identified three major strands in the literature, which are used to structure the paper, namely: (1) mathematical modelling as a problem solving activity, (2) basic principles for designing modelling activities and (3) benefits for students and teachers working with revealing modelling activities. Throughout the paper, the North American perspective on mathematical modelling is deliberately dominating. As editors we see this as a quality of the paper. The Nordic research on mathematical modelling may benefit from considering these perspectives and the paper may even raise some debate about the relation between problem solving and modelling.

Gail FitzSimons and *Tine Wedege* in their paper "Developing numeracy in the workplace" present an overview of the main discussions related to adult literacy and numeracy. They explore the meaning of the concept of numeracy and engage in clarifying how adults' mathematical skills become transformed into workplace numeracy competence. Using the result of the authors' research in Denmark and particularly in Australia, the authors show the way in which completing a complex task successfully puts in place a series of relationships among workers where mathematical competence is being created. This paper presents a contribution not only in delineating some of the main issues in the field of research on adults' mathematical learning, but also bringing forwards a strong case to feed the public debate about mathematical competencies outside school and in the workplace.

In this issue we are also happy to publish a book review. *Bharath Sriraman* and *Olof Steinthorsdottir* have reviewed the research report of the study on KappAbel 2005–06: "Mathematical competitions and classroom collaboration: antonyms or a new direction for research on teachers'

beliefs?" by Tine Wedege and Jeppe Skott. We are especially happy since the research under review is the fruit of a truly Nordic collaboration. The Norwegian KappAbel in its present form as a competition for classes is developed by Ingvill Stedøy, leader of the Norwegian Center for Mathematics Education. During the ICME-10 years 2000–2004 the Nordic Contact Committee together with enthusiastic collaborators in each of the Nordic countries managed to extend KappAbel to become a Nordic competition and the Nordic final in 2004 was held during ICME-10 in Copenhagen. These activities were financed by a generous grant from the Nordic Council of Ministers and together with support from the Norwegian Center for Mathematics Education, the research project on KappAbel conducted by Tine Wedege and Jeppe Skott was also funded.

Morten Blomhøj and Paola Valero
Editors