

## **Speach at the opening ceremony of the conference “Physics of magnetic stars”**

**28 August, 2006**

**Yury Yu. Balega and Iosif I. Romanyuk**

Dear friends,

On behalf of the Organizing Committee of the Conference “Physics of Magnetic Stars” we are happy to welcome you at our observatory.

In 2006 the Special Astrophysical Observatory of the Russian Academy of Sciences — the largest observational astronomical center in Russia — marked by celebration its fortieth jubilee. Thanks for the origin of the observatory are mainly due to the following outstanding researchers and organizers: President of USSR Academy of Sciences M.V. Keldysh, academicians B.P. Konstantinov, L.A. Artsimovich and others.

Originally SAO was created as a center of public use for the entire astronomical community, and the largest telescopes of the observatory — the 6 m optical telescope BTA and the radio telescope RATAN-600 — have always had the status of common-use tools.

The gamut of observation tasks to be performed with the telescopes spans the whole conceivable range — from objects at cosmological distances and microwave background of the Universe to nearby bodies of the Solar system.

The most significant part in the formation of the creative potential of SAO was played by the first director of the observatory I.M. Kopylov, who formed the scientific staff, built the organizational structure that has preserved up to present.

Investigation of stellar magnetism is one of the most important leads of the work being done at the observatory. Under the leadership of Yu.V. Glagolevskij a complex of devices for measuring magnetic fields was made, which includes classical circular polarization analyzers and photoelectric magnetometers. The observatory is correctly recognized to be the world center concerned with the magnetic field measurements of stars.

This year we are 40 years of age, we are thus still relatively young. Traditionally, every 3–4 years our observatory receives the scientists from all over the world dealing with magnetic fields of stars. Many of those who are present at the conference have attended it time and again. This is already the seventh magnetic conference being held at our observatory; we are happy that you support our tradition.

The most remote guests have come to us from Canada. We welcome an old friend of ours professor John Landstreet — a scientist who made an outstanding contribution to the study of stellar magnetism, also his younger colleagues — professors Gregg Wade and Jaymie Matthys. They repeatedly visited our observatory earlier as well. Chris Cameron is with us for the first time, and we hope that this is not his last visit. Our former staff member Dmitry Monin is working now in Canada and we are also cordially welcome him.

Austria is represented by Werner Weiss and Theresa Lueftinger. Professor Werner Weiss is the one of the first foreign scientist who was for a visit at the observatory as early as 1978. Thanks to Werner, we could take part in a number of international conferences held in Vienna. This city has always been one of the centers of the study of chemically peculiar stars, and, after the database VALD came to be available, tens of spectroscopists from the whole world are virtually present in Vienna.

The researchers have come from the Czech Republic. One of them is our kind intimate friend Zdenek Mikulasek. Many of us recall a remarkable concert with participation of John Landstreet

and Zdenek Mikulasek given in Poprad 2 years ago. The other Czech attendant of the conference is a young man Jan Janik, who has come together with Zdenek. We are happy to receive both of you.

Ewald Gerth, a representative from Germany. He is the only foreign guest who has taken part in all magnetic conferences at SAO. We are very glad to see you again.

To-day, we are pleased to welcome two astronomers from Sweden, Nikolai Piskunov and Oleg Kochukhov. The very famous professor Nikolai Piskunov from Uppsala is, unfortunately, not as a frequent guest with us as we would desire. He contributed a great deal not only in the development of the methods of the Doppler-Zeeman mapping of the surfaces of different stars, not only wrote a colossal programs of calculations, but also largely helped our observatory in the creation of the present-day devices for high resolution spectral observations. It is not long ago that Oleg Kochukhov defended his thesis. We marked the event here, at SAO, three years ago. Oleg is a very active researcher, he is sure to be in for promising scientific future, and we shall always be glad to see him at our place.

David Mkrtchian and Gennady Valyavin have come from Korea. David is famous for that he is making an attempt to construct the Whole Earth Telescope to observe rapid pulsations of magnetic stars, while Gennady is advantageously dealing with magnetic white dwarfs.

The Ukraine is represented by astronomers from the Crimea and Mykhajlo Skulskij from Lviv. Nina Polosukhina, a charming woman, made her best to convert the minor question of possible lithium line identification in a separate star into a large scientific lead in which many people are now working actively and successfully. Her papers on the rapid variability of magnetic stars are well known. One more representative of the Crimean Observatory, Sergei Plachinda, as well as Nina Savel'evna, has been at our observatory many times. He is an experienced researcher of magnetic field of stars, and his favorite objects are cool stars and Cepheides. We also heartily welcome Varvara Butkovskaya, who has arrived for a visit for the first time. Vadim Tsymbal from Simferopol University has written many computer programs which are widely used for study of magnetic stars. Mykhajlo Skulskij is famous not only for the fact that he is the best expert on  $\beta$  Lyrae, but he is a wonderful singer. Everybody could make certain of it at the concert in Poprad during the IAU Symposium 2 years ago.

Finally, for the Russian astronomers — the guests of our observatory. The capital of our country, Moscow, is represented by Tanya Ryabchikova and Misha Sachkov. Tanya has a lot of publications in a different highly cited journals. Without having a hand of Tanya the organization of international conferences at SAO would be impossible. For many years, Tanya was the first person seen by our foreign participants after they crossed the frontier of Russia. Now Misha Sachkov assists her in this noble work. He (as well as Tanya) is working on the detailed spectroscopy of stars and modeling the surfaces of magnetic stars. This time, we hosted a big delegation (5 persons) from Pulkovo observatory (St. Petersburg) headed by professor Gnedin. Yuri N. Gnedin is a well known Russian physicist-theorist. He is the author of many works in the sphere of transfer of polarized radiation in stellar atmospheres, which have become classical, and also in the area of physics of elementary particles. He works in co-operation with Tinatin Natsvlishvili and Mikhail Piotrovich. They often come to observe magnetic white dwarfs and other exotic targets. Mikhail Pogodin has obtained interesting results in the investigation of Herbig Ae/Be stars, whereas Nikolai Sokolov is busy with the determination of effective temperatures.

In the end, about our closest neighbors from the Stavropol territory. They are involved with the Sun. Our kindest greetings to the astrophysicists-observers from Kislovodsk Solar Station — Andrei Tlatov and physicist-theorist Lev Kaplan from Stavropol University. Several post-graduate students from this University are also among the conference attendants.

The Organizing Committee will try to do everything possible to make you feel quite at home. Wishing you every success in your work.