

## PREFACE

The 198th I.A.U. Symposium "The Light Elements and Their Evolution" was held between Sunday 21st November and Friday 27th November, 1999, in Natal, a city in the North-East of Brazil.

The light elements deserve special attention because of their relationship to several important astrophysical problems, ranging from stellar structure to cosmology. The previous large meeting on this topic was held in May 1994, so five years have elapsed between the two meetings, which, for this rapid progressing field, is a long time. During this symposium, many new results and many new problems were presented and discussed. It was attended by 102 astronomers from all over the world and 24 Brazilian PhD students. The participants were: 25 astronomers from North America, 36 from Latin America, 34 from Europe, 3 from the Middle-East, 3 from Asia and 1 from North Africa, which is impressive for a astronomical symposium taking place outside the USA-Europe axis.

This book contains all the invited papers and contributed talks presented at the meeting, organized by topics. Likewise, due to the large number of young astronomers participating in the symposium, we have also decided to include also the posters.

This symposium was sponsored by Division IV (Stars) and Commission 29 (Stellar Spectra), and was supported by the Divisions VI (Interstellar Matter) and VII (Galactic System) and the Commissions 34 (Interstellar Matter), 35 (Stellar Constitution), 36 (Theory of Stellar Atmospheres) and 47 (Cosmology) of the IAU. This broad support shows the scope of the subject. The organizers would like to thank all their members, specially their respective presidents, and the IAU Executive Committee, specially Dr. Johannes Andersen, the IAU General Secretary.

The Scientific Organizing Committee consisted of:

M. Spite (co-chairperson), France	L. da Silva (co-chairperson), Brazil
G. Michaud, Canada	B. E.J. Pagel, UK-Denmark
L. Pasquini, ESO, Italy	Y. V. Pavlenko, Ukraine
M. Peimbert, Mexico	M. Rugers, USA
S. G. Ryan, Australia	I.-J. Sackmann, USA
K. Sato, Japan	V.V. Smith, USA
G. Steigman, USA	E. Terlevich, Argentina-UK
T. L. Wilson, USA-Germany	

The location of the symposium, Natal, is a beautiful city of 600,000 inhabitants and is located on the estuary of the River Potengi, on the coast of the Atlantic Ocean. The symposium was the most important scientific event in the celebration of Natal's 4th centenary. The importance of this symposium in these

celebrations was demonstrated by the participation of the Lord Mayor of the city, Mrs. Wilma de Faria, at the opening of the meeting. This session counted also with the presence of Dr. Johannes Andersen, the IAU General Secretary, who received from Madam the Mayor, in name of the organizers, a celebrative plate of the event.

The very local organization of the symposium was carried out by the Astronomical Group of the Physics Department of the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte (UFRGN). They had the assistance from colleagues of the University of São Paulo (USP) and the Observatório Nacional, Rio de Janeiro (ON).

The Local Organizing Committee consisted of:

J.R. de Medeiros (Chairperson), UFRGN	B. Barbuy, USP
E. Bonelli, UFRGN	J. C. Carvalho, UFRGN
K. Cunha, ON	S. R. Gomes Jr., UFRGN
M. R. G. Maia, UFRGN	R. de la Reza, ON
J. A. S. de Lima, UFRGN	L. C. Jafelice, UFRGN
N. Pires, UFRGN	W. Maciel, USP
J. Santos, UFRGN	

The "The Light Elements and Their Evolution" symposium was possible thanks to generous support of:

- the International Astronomical Union,
- the Conselho Nacional de Desenvolvimento Científico e Tecnológico (Brazil),
- the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Nível Superior (Brazil),
- the Observatoire de Paris,
- the Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo ,
- the Fundação de Amparo a Pesquisa do Estado de Rio de Janeiro,
- the Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Norte and
- the Prefeitura do Município de Natal.

The editors would like to thank the participants for providing their papers, many of them promptly. The organizers give their warmest thanks to all the institutions and individuals who have contributed to the success of the symposium. They thank Mrs. Marina Freitas, for having been in charge of the secretary of the event, and Miss Maria Jose F. Ferreira, for her help during its realization. Licio da Silva acknowledges the ESO for the computational infrastructure used to prepare this volume.

L. da Silva, M. Spite and J. R. de Medeiros  
July 2000