ASTROPHYSICS AND SPACE SCIENCE PROCEEDINGS

R.K. Chaudhuri M.V. Mekkaden A.V. Raveendran A.S. Narayanan *Editors*

Recent Advances in Spectroscopy

Theoretical, Astrophysical and Experimental Perspectives



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Editors

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Preface

Spectroscopy is the basic tool employed in astronomy to derive physical parameters, like temperature, density, chemical composition, velocity and magnetic fields, that give insights into the physical processes that are operative in the celestial objects. Much of our understanding of stellar atmospheres and even low-density collisionally excited plasma, such as supernova remnants, is based on the understanding of plasma processes in the solar atmosphere. Although some of these processes can be studied by high spatial resolution images of the sun, our knowledge of the temperature, densities and dynamics of different regions of the solar atmosphere is based on the high-resolution spectroscopy in the X-ray, UV and optical spectral regions.

The atomic and molecular spectroscopy plays a key role in understanding astrochemistry. For example, the carbon bearing molecules, such as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), are now thought to be widespread in the interstellar medium in their neutral and ionized forms. Identifying the carriers responsible for several observed interstellar bands will allow us to derive important information on cosmic elemental abundance as well as on the physical conditions reigning in specific interstellar environments. The identifications of these carriers are the key for a correct understanding of the energetic mechanisms that govern the origin and evolution of the interstellar medium.

Comprehensive and accurate transition probability data are needed to determine the abundances of neutral atom and all of its ions in different astrophysical environments. Determination of radiative lifetimes can provide the absolute scale for converting the branching fractions into atomic transition probabilities and vice versa. Since the derivation of the physical parameters of the prevailing astrophysical conditions is an inverse problem, accurate theories of line formation under widely varying conditions that one encounters in celestial objects have to be developed.

It is imperative that a multi-disciplinary approach, by combining astrophysical observation with laboratory simulations and theoretical modeling, is essential to address the complex issues involved in interpreting the data for a better understanding of the physical conditions prevalent in celestial objects. Also for a proper interpretation of the high-resolution data that we obtain from space missions, it has become necessary to improve the accuracy of the theory of line formation to a great extent. It is with this idea that the *International Conference on Recent Advances in Spectroscopy : Theoretical, Experimental, and Astrophysical Perspectives* was organized at Kodaikanal, India. Peers in the areas of theoretical and experimental atomic physics, and observational astrophysics were brought together during the conference.

The conference began with a welcome note and opening remarks by M. V. Mekkaden. The conference had 12 sessions spread over three and half days. The first two sessions were devoted to the general aspects of Atomic and Molecular Spectroscopy. They were followed by three sessions on theoretical aspects of spectroscopy. One session was devoted to line formation in stellar atmospheres. There were two sessions on observations and analysis on Solar spectroscopy and three sessions on similar topics in Stellar spectroscopy. The conference was summarized by T. P. Prabhu, while the vote of thanks was delivered by R. K. Chaudhuri.

We would like to acknowledge the sponsors, Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Department of Science and Technology (DST), Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and Board of Research in Nuclear Sciences (BRNS), without whom the conference would not have materialized. We thank Prof. Siraj S Hasan, Director, IIA, for his whole-hearted support, encouragement, and advice, right from the planning of this conference. Dr K. Sundararaman and his colleagues of the Kodaikanal Observatory are thanked for their unstinted support during the conference. Dr C. Kathiravan helped us in designing the cover pages for both the abstract book and the proceedings. The untiring support of the LOC and SOC members is gratefully acknowledged.

Bangalore, August 2009 R K Chaudhuri M V Mekkaden A V Raveendran A Satya Narayanan

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