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PREFACE

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PREFACE

The conference on Physics of Interstellar Matter and Nebulae, held at the Radio Astronomical Station of the Lebedev Physical Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Pushchino near Moscow on 7–10 February 1995, was the 18th in a series of national meetings on this subject organized in the USSR and then Russia since 1981. This meeting was devoted to the memory of Prof. S. B. Pikelner (1921–1975), an outstanding scientist whose ideas still largely determine the state of research in astronomy and astrophysics in the former Soviet Union, and whose many pupil and students are most actively working in this field now.

The meeting gathered scientists from Russia, Ukraine and Latvia, and the talks presented cover almost the whole range of studies in the astronomy and astrophysics of the interstellar matter carried out in these countries. This conference can be considered as an evidence of continuing research activity in both observations and theory, notwithstanding the well-known economical, political and social difficulties in the former Soviet Union. Especially important is that this meeting showed a qualitatively new level of research in some fields of observational astronomy, with new links having been established not only within the former USSR, but also between the FSU astronomers and their Western colleagues.

The conference was organized by the Workgroup “Physics of the Interstellar Matter and Nebulae” of the Russian Academy of Sciences and by the Eurasian Astronomical Society, with financial support from the Ministry of Science and Technical Policy of the Russian Federation and the Russian Foundation of Basic Research. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the contribution of the Radio Astronomical Station in providing a convenient site and informal and creative atmosphere for this meeting. The Chairman of the Organizing Committee was Dr. N. G. Bochkarev, and the conference was organized largely thanks to his active involvement.

This volume contains about a third of the papers presented at the conference, namely those submitted by the authors before October 1995. The papers are arranged in the same order as they were presented at the Conference.

A. Shukurov