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Astronomical & Astrophysical Transactions

The Journal of the Eurasian Astronomical Society

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713453505>

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Online Publication Date: 01 January 2003

To cite this Article: Flin (2003) 'My understanding of international cooperation',
Astronomical & Astrophysical Transactions, 22:4, 805 - 806

To link to this article: DOI: 10.1080/1055679031000114755

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1055679031000114755>

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MY UNDERSTANDING OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

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(Received November 30, 2002)

Keywords: International cooperation; stars; astronomy

Even from my affiliations it can be easily seen that I am a strong supporter of collaboration. However, the international collaboration between countries is well beyond the scope of this paper. Such types of collaboration, involving great funds, are usually decided at the highest, namely governmental, level. I would like to present some thoughts based on my own experience, which is connected with the university level. It is based, among others, on my activity connected with

- (i) editing the Cracow Observatory Yearbook, containing ephemerides of eclipsing variables and RR Lyrae stars,
- (ii) participating in observational campaigns devoted to particular (individual) variable stars,
- (iii) organizing Cracow Cosmological Schools and
- (iv) conducting investigations together with Italian, German and Ukrainian colleagues.

On the basis of my knowledge, I am deeply convinced, contrary to common belief, that money is not the most important factor allowing one to work jointly with others. Of course this statement is correct under the assumption that the collaboration is really for scientific purposes and not for substantial enlargement of the participants' income. I think that the most important factor is not to be reluctant to do science and to carry out investigations together with another person. This person should be interested in solving a particular scientific problem. The fact that research should be accredited jointly is of great importance here. Without that, collaboration does not exist. This mutual desire of problem solving allows one to overcome difficulties. Such investigations do not need a great amount of money; so the financial problems can be solved at the university or departmental level. Moreover, in

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the twenty-first century, when the means of communication are, in general, similar everywhere, the exchange of ideas is much simpler than before. This is the basic principle for the observational international campaigns, as well as the Whole Earth Telescope, which is composed of many small telescopes located in different locations on the Earth.

My understanding of scientific collaboration is based on the human aspects of partnership. It is very close to the literal meaning of the word. In *Encyclopaedia Britannica* it is written that the Latin word 'collaborare' means 'to work together'. Afterwards, the following description is given 'to work jointly with others or together, especially on an intellectual endeavor'. In *Webster's Dictionary* it is stressed that the work should be done with a 'limited number of persons in a project involving researches to be jointly accredited'.

In the near future, on the roof of the Science Building of the Pedagogical University in Kielce, a small observatory will be constructed. The equipment consists of a Celestron 14 in Schmidt-Cassegrain telescope, which will be equipped with a charge-coupled device camera and a spectrograph. We hope that our astronomers will be able to participate in various projects, as well as to share their experience connected with the popularization of science and carrying out educational activity. In this way, among others, we can collaborate with our colleagues from other countries. All that we must bear in mind is that we share the same sky above our heads.