

## PREFACE

This volume constitutes the proceedings of Colloquium N° 38 of the International Astronomical Union, held at the Nice Observatory during the week of August 16-20, 1976.

The scientific organizing committee was composed of L. Biermann, F.H. Busse, P. Ledoux, B. Paczynski, E.A. Spiegel (chairman), R. Van der Borcht, N.O. Weiss and J.P. Zahn. They decided to adopt a format of general reviews followed by discussion and informal contributions, much more in the spirit of a workshop than in that of a classical colloquium. For this reason, the number of participants was limited to about fifty, but particular care was taken to represent a wide range of interests and ages. It was also agreed that papers submitted for publication in the proceedings, other than the invited reviews, should be refereed.

The colloquium was funded by the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, whose Directeur Scientifique J. Delhaye was of great help, by the Comité National Français d'Astronomie, the City of Nice and the Nice Observatory. The International Astronomical Union provided travel grants for young astronomers. Most participants were accommodated at the Centre Artistique de Rencontres Internationales, thanks to P. Oliver and Ch. de Saran.

The local organization lay in the competent hands of D. Benotto and R. Petrini. The social events were highlighted by a visit of the Musée Chagall under the guidance of its curator P. Provoyeur, and followed by a concert given by the Trio de Freville whose violonist, M.E. McIntyre, was also an active participant of the colloquium. R. Zahn took care of the ladies' programme.

These proceedings were put together by D. Benotto and R. Petrini, and D.O. Gough carefully checked them in their final form.

To all those quoted above, to the many others who also contributed to the success of the meeting and to the editors of the Springer Verlag, we express our warm thanks.

Jean-Paul Zahn