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EAAS: 31 years of the Astronomical Society and 30 years of *"Astronomical and Astrophysical Transactions"*

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We present a brief overview of the history of the Eurasian Astronomical Society as well as of its professional journal, *"Astronomical and Astrophysical Transactions"*.

Keywords: History and philosophy of astronomy, publications, bibliography

1 Introduction

The Eurasian Astronomical Society (EAAS) is a society uniting professional astronomers of Russia and several other countries. The journal *"Astronomical and Astrophysical Transactions"* (*AApTr*), a professional-level international peer-reviewed scientific journal, is the most important EAAS publication. It was founded in 1991, and thus, the current year, 2021, is the year of the journal's 30th anniversary. In this paper, we briefly outline the history of the EAAS and *AApTr* and describe the achievements of the Society and its journal.

The Society was founded as the USSR Astronomical Society on April 7, 1990. A year and a half later, the USSR ceased to exist, and the Congress of the Society decided to transform the Astronomical Society into an international public organization "Astronomical Society". The English-language name of the Society is "Eurasian Astronomical Society". Now it is officially registered by the Russian Ministry of Justice. According to Russian laws, its status is established by the existence of registered branches in countries outside Russia (Latvia, Serbia). The 30th anniversary of the EAAS could not be widely celebrated because of COVID-19 restrictions.

The activity of the EAAS has several important directions, which are outlined as follows.

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The first EAAS co-chairman, one of the main organizers of the Society, Prof. N.G. Bochkarev at the First Constituent Congress.

2 Congresses and conferences

Since its foundation in 1990, the EAAS has held 14 congresses, the most recent in August, 2021. Congresses elect co-chairpersons of the EAAS, the EAAS board, and also discuss problems facing the EAAS and the astronomical community as a whole, most important tasks to be solved by the Society. Currently, the EAAS board consists of 25 members (including 3 chairpersons and 5 deputy chairpersons).

One of the most important functions of the EAAS, according to its Statutes, is arrangement of professional astronomical conferences. The latest major event, the All-Russian Astronomical Conference, was held together with Russian Academy's Science Council on Astronomy (SCA, chair: Academician, Prof. A.M. Cherepashchuk, EAAS board member) on the week preceding the 14th EAAS congress. For the first time in the history of such conferences, it was held mainly online. The conference consisted of 20 plenary talks on the most important achievements of today's astronomy, presented by distinguished scientists, and 8 sections covering different directions of the current astronomical and astrophysical research. At the sections, participants presented 325 oral talks and 76 posters.

Already at its first congress in 1990, the Society arranged talks on USSR space research projects. In March 1991, there already was the first specially arranged Society's scientific conference. During the pre-COVID time, the EAAS yearly held 5 to 10 conferences. We were co-organizers of both JENAM/EWASS congresses of the European Astronomical Society held in Russia (2000, Moscow; 2011, St. Petersburg). The EAAS is always among the organizers of SCA All-Russian Conferences, which are usually held once every three years.



The first years of the EAAS. Professor N.N. Samus, currently co-chairman of the EAAS, and V.L. Shtaerman, secretary of the EAAS.



Participants of the Kourovka conference in 2018.

The EAAS belongs to organizers of traditional Young Astronomers' Conferences "Physics of Space" at Kourovka Observatory near Yekaterinburg (Ural Mountains,

Russia), the main organizer being B.N. Yeltsin Ural Federal University. We are also co-organizers of schools for planetarium lecturers.

For many years, the EAAS has been a co-organizer of the yearly G. Gamow Conference-schools (Odessa, Ukraine). In 2021, the 21st conference-school "Astronomy and Beyond: Astrophysics, Cosmology and Gravitation, Astroparticle Physics, Radio Astronomy and Astrobiology" was held in August, in the combined online and offline format.

In 2011, the EAAS (N.G. Bochkarev, V.N. Obridko) founded its Interdisciplinary Seminar that meets in Moscow, at the Sternberg Astronomical Institute. By November 2021, the Seminar had held 55 events, mainly on borderline problems of astronomy, geophysics, geology, biology, and other sciences.

3 Astronomical education

Education problems are among the most important ones for the EAAS and its commission for astronomical education is headed by Prof. A.V. Zasov.

During the Soviet period, astronomy always remained, as a separate subject, in the programs of secondary-school education. Later, it was excluded from the program in most of the post-Soviet countries, with the markable exception of Belarus. It has always been a conviction of the EAAS that astronomy should be returned, as a special subject, to the secondary school. Finally, such a decision was taken by Russia's Ministry of Education. The then Minister, O. Vasilyeva, was elected by the International Astronomical Union (IAU) its honorary member in 2018.

However, the school subject of astronomy needs a modern textbook, and textbooks of the Soviet time obviously became obsolete. The first textbooks of the post-Soviet



Professor A.V. Zasov.

period were prepared very quickly but contained quite a number of inconsistencies. Active EAAS members (N.N. Samus, D.S. Wiebe and others) made the effort and time to review and edit the existing textbooks and suggest corrections. Currently, one of the secondary-school textbooks approved by the Ministry is that written by Prof. A.V. Zasov and his colleague from the Sternberg Institute, Dr. V.G. Surdin; this textbook is the best one from our point of view.

To help school teachers of astronomy, planetarium lecturers, popular-science writers, the EAAS regularly co-organizes (with the Association of Planetaria and other bodies) special events for these people in different cities. The next one is planned to be held in the spring of 2022 in Kaluga.

Problems of planetaria are always in the field of EAAS' attention. Several EAAS members are members of the Moscow Planetarium's scientific council. The EAAS co-chairman M.I. Ryabov is one of the organizers of the actively working planetarium in Odessa. Representatives of the EAAS board take part in the work of the Association of Planetaria of Russia, currently in the process of re-organization under the leadership of A. Lobanov and Z. Sitkova. Many active EAAS members take part in lecturing in planetaria in their cities and countries.

The EAAS is co-organizing Russian and international astronomy olympiads in astronomy for schoolchildren, the main coordinator of this work being the active EAAS member M.G. Gavrilov. Several major astronomy institutes and observatories of Russia and Ukraine organize astronomy schools for young people. Special astronomy schools are regularly organized in Moscow, Kazan, and other cities.

In future plans, there is an "AstroChat" seminar for young astronomers to be started in early 2022.

4 EAAS publications

We will consider the EAAS main scientific journal, *AApTr*, in Section 7.

The EAAS is currently among organizers of the *"Astronomicheskii Tsirkular"* (*Astronomy Circular*), a bilingual (English, Russian) professional electronic scientific journal mainly devoted to short papers (www.sai.msu.su/EAAS/AC/). It was founded as a print journal, in the 1940s, by Prof. D.Ya. Martynov (1906–1989). Later, in 2012, it was re-established as an electronic journal by Prof. G.M. Rudnitsky (1946–2020). Now the chief editor of the journal is Dr. V.N. Sementsov, a member of the EAAS revision board.

The EAAS has an electronic information bulletin *"Astrocourier"*, its editor is Dr. M.I. Ryabov. Yearly, about 10 issues appear, with a variety of information on scientific, educational, organizational news in the field of astronomy, including biographies of astronomers. It is sent to all EAAS members and to those who expressed their interest.

In 1993, Dr. E.V. Kononovich (1931–2017), a well-known Russian astronomer and university teacher of astronomy, established the EAAS popular-science almanac, *"Universe and Us"* (in Russian). It appeared irregularly; four print issues had been published by 2001. In 2017, we resumed it as an electronic publication, with four electronic issues (Nos. 5–8) in 2017–2019 (editors, Profs. S.A. Yazev, N.N. Samus). Quite recently, in December 2021, No. 9 was published.



E.V. Kononovich with his grandson in 2006.

On several occasions, the EAAS published books with proceedings of its conferences and other scientific papers. The most recent of such books, in two volumes, contains proceedings of the scientific conference attached to the EAAS congress in 2018 (Malkov et al., 2018; Obridko, 2018).

5 Contacts with European Astronomical Society, Russian Academy of Sciences, regional societies

The EAAS is affiliated with the European Astronomical Society (EAS). The EAS congress in August 2018, held during the IAU General Assembly in Vienna, approved the decision making possible EAS membership through affiliated national societies. The EAAS is such an affiliated society for astronomers from Russia. Astronomers who are EAAS members and pay EAAS fees can be EAS members and do not have to pay any additional EAS fees. Corresponding membership lists have been compiled and approved by the two societies. There still exists a possibility (so far, not actually used) to become EAS members through our society for astronomers from countries

of the former USSR that do not have national astronomical societies. The EAAS co-chairpersons regularly take part in EAS meetings with affiliated societies, online and offline – the most recent one on Tenerife island in early 2020.

EAAS representatives take active part in the work of the Science Council on Astronomy (SCA) of the Russian Academy of Sciences. As mentioned above, the EAAS often becomes a co-organizer of scientific events arranged by the SCA.

Among EAAS board members, there are (or were) leaders of astronomical societies of several former USSR republics and other countries. In the current EAAS board, we find representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Latvia, Russia, Serbia, Ukraine. The EAAS co-chairman Dr. M.I. Ryabov regularly takes part in activities of the Ukrainian Astronomical Association.

6 EAAS structures

The current EAAS Statutes were officially registered in 1999. According to the Statutes, the EAAS is based on individual membership. Other non-commercial organizations can be affiliated to the EAAS. Corrections to Russian laws in action since 2006 actually require that non-Russian citizens can be members of non-profit organizations registered in Russia only through their foreign branches. The EAAS currently has registered branches in Latvia (Dr. I. Šmeld) and Serbia (Prof. M. Dimitrijević). An important task is to create new branches in other countries where the EAAS is actively working. In Russia, there exist regional EAAS branches in Moscow and Yekaterinburg.

The Statutes determine that EAAS congresses, which re-elect the co-chairpersons, the board, and the revision board should be held once every three years. The current board, elected in August 2021, consists of three co-chairpersons, five vice-chairpersons, and 17 board members. The EAAS board yearly holds at least two meetings. The revision board elected in 2021 has three members.

Among EAAS chairpersons of the 31 years of its history, we find such well-known astronomers as Profs. N.G. Bochkarev, V.G. Gorbatsky (1920–2005), V.N. Obridko, L.V. Rykhlova, A.A. Sapar (1933–2021). The current co-chairmen of the EAAS are Prof. O.Yu. Malkov, Dr. M.I. Ryabov, and Prof. N.N. Samus.

The EAAS has, as mentioned above, a commission for astronomical education (Prof. A.V. Zasov). There also exists the EAAS international bureau (Prof. N.G. Bochkarev).

In December 1992, "Club AstrO" (the "EAAS Club") was established for non-formal contacts among astronomers, their creative activity in the field of arts. The club is headed by the board member Dr. E.A. Karitskaya. The main form of its work are concerts in the very pleasant auditorium of the SAI. The Club actively interacts with other musical societies, especially with the Mozart Society, regularly holds concerts on Mozart's birthday and other significant dates. The most active participant of the concerts is Tatyana Veretennikova, a well-known pianist, laureate of an international competition, a fan of F. Chopin's music and an author of a book about Chopin's biography and art (Veretennikova, 2010). Not only professional musicians, laureates of various competitions, but also scientists and students, who often reach the level of professional musicians, perform at concerts.



Laureate of an international competition T. Veretennikova at an EAAS Club concert.

7 *Astronomical and Astrophysical Transactions*

As mentioned above, the *Astronomical and Astrophysical Transactions* (*AApTr*) is the main international peer-reviewed scientific journal of the EAAS. It was established in 1991 and is thus now celebrating its 30-year anniversary (see Bochkarev, 1991). Professor N.G. Bochkarev has remained its editor-in-chief through all these years. Till 2020, his deputy editor was Dr. V.P. Arkhipova. Since 2020, Dr. E.A. Karitskaya is acting deputy editor. The international editorial board of the *AApTr* currently comprises representatives of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Italy, Latvia, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Tajikistan, Ukraine, USA, Uzbekistan.

The *AApTr* was founded through the collaboration and agreement between EAAS and Gordon and Breach Science Publishers to create a new international astronomical journal. Volume 1 was published in 1991 and Gordon and Breach Science Publishers continued publication of the journal until 2002. From 2002, Taylor and Francis Group was the publisher until 2007 and the publication of Volume 26 (2007). After this, there was an interval of several years with active search for a new publisher. Finally the publication of AApTr was resumed, with Volume 27 up to the latest Volume 32, by Cambridge Scientific Publishers and Editions Archives Contemporaines (EAC) the current copublishers with the Eurasian Astronomical Society.

We celebrate the 30th anniversary of the *AApTr* and during the thirty years of our journal we have published many excellent papers, review papers by outstanding scientists, important research articles, special issues, proceedings of interesting conferences. The journal can be proud of its authors and we acknowledge and extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to all of the authors who have contributed to the *AApTr*.



Dr. V.P. Arkhipova, the *AApTr* deputy editor till 2020.



Dr. E.A. Karitskaya, head of the EAAS Club, has been acting as the *AApTr* deputy editor since 2020.

The *AApTr* is a Scopus indexed journal and also all published papers are completely reflected in the Astrophysics Data Service (ADS) online database and system of abstracts in astronomy and astrophysics. Papers published in recent issues have been assigned DOI numbers. The editors and publishers are working together to implement publishing plans to further improve schedules and to develop and enhance the profile of *AApTr*, the scientific journal of the EAAS, in the forthcoming volumes.



The board of *AApTr* after an editorial board meeting. First row: V.M. Chepurova, scientific secretary; Yu.V. Barkin; M. Molodyanu, board secretary; V.P. Archipova, deputy editor; N.G. Bochkarev, editor-in-chief ; L.I. Bavrina, representative of Gordon and Breach Science Publishers; E.A. Karitskaya. Second row: E.V. Kononovich; Yu.N. Efremov; A.V. Zasov; I.D. Karachentsev; V.N. Obridko; N.M. Shchagina, representative of Gordon and Breach Science Publishers.

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