

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

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Ladies and Gentlemen:

It is a great pleasure for me to have this honor to give some introductory remarks related with this symposium.

First of all, I should like to join Prof. Qu in welcoming all of you to attend this meeting. We are very happy that so many distinguished astronomers and physicists have been able to come here and will give their interesting talks and/or posters on various aspects related with origin and evolution of neutron stars. This is a rather grand meeting in the field.

More than 1600 years ago, Wang Xizhi (321-379), a great calligrapher and writer of Eastern Jin Dynasty, used the Chinese words

羣賢畢至，少長咸集

'lots of worthies are all coming and both
younger and elder people are gathering here'

to describe a wonderful meeting in his famous essay "Preface of Anthology of Orchid Pavilion". I think, the very same words could also appropriately be used to describe our present symposium.

This symposium has just been opened by Prof. David J. Helfand. Perhaps, I may be allowed to say some words about the way this meeting has come about. Almost exactly three years ago, Prof. David J. Helfand first suggested to hold such a symposium in his letter to me of 10 June 1983. Prof. S. G. Wang, Prof. Q. Y. Qu, my colleagues and myself are all interested in holding such a meeting. Within a year or so, things were progressively going on. Heads of Nanjing University, Astronomy Department, Astrophysics Institute and Columbia Astrophysics Laboratory

are willing to support it. Presidents of IAU Commissions No.40 and No.48 are also willing to sponsor it. By the summer of 1984, Scientific Organizing Committee and Local Organizing Committee were already really formed. As early as in June 1984, this meeting was formally approved by the Chinese Ministry of Education (now the Educational Committee of PRC). This symposium was originally suggested to be held in the autumn of 1985 just preceding the IAU General Assembly in New Delhi. However, the Executive Committee of the IAU decided to sponsor it and name it officially as the IAU Symposium No.125 in February 1985, but postpone it to be held in 1986. This is the present symposium coming about.

Since the IAU Symposium No.95 on Pulsars, Bonn, FRG, August 1980, it has been nearly six years. This is really a rather long period for such a rapidly progressive field. People have observed the neutron stars through more and more "windows" and got much more information from X- and gamma-ray observations. Especially, the investigations on X- and gamma-ray bursts, both observational and theoretical, have provided important background for understanding the physics of neutron stars. The recently discovered phenomena of Quasi-Periodic Oscillations (QPO) may throw new light on their origin and evolution. Even in the field of pulsars themselves, the discoveries of milli-second pulsars have excited a lot of deep investigations on the ways that the pulsars come and go. We are very happy to have so many experts to talk about all these things to us.

Thank you.