

OBITUARY

CARLOS CRUZ-GONZÁLEZ (1941-1977)

On April 8, 1977 Mexican Astronomy suffered the loss of a gifted and knowledgeable scientist, through the untimely death of Dr. *Carlos Cruz-González*. Born in México in 1941, *Carlos Cruz-González* grew up surrounded by affection and ample material as well as intellectual possibilities to which he so well responded.

At the National University of Mexico he studied physics and astronomy. Meanwhile becoming interested in computer science, he soon developed into an accomplished programmer whose assistance we sought all too often. He graduated from the University with a thesis on the origin and evolution of comets, an interesting piece of research which is quoted often.

From 1965 to 1968 *Carlos Cruz-González* was a graduate student at Harvard University where he obtained the degree of M.A. Back in Mexico he was engaged in teaching and research at the Instituto de Astronomía of the University of Mexico until 1970 when he left for Britain to continue graduate work at the University of Sussex, with a fellowship offered by the British Council. The last year of his stay in Britain was spent at Cambridge University near Prof. Lynden-Bell, his thesis supervisor, whom he esteemed highly.

After a year and a half of service at the National University of Mexico as a staff member of the Institute of Astronomy he returned to Sussex to defend a thesis on the Kinematic Parameters and Spiral Structure of the Galaxy whereby he obtained the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Science in early 1975.

He was overcome by illness on his return from England, an illness that led to his untimely death. Dr. *Cruz-González* was well aware of the condition of his health yet he was active in research and teaching to the very end exhibiting an astonishing courage. Meanwhile he collaborated effectively as

an editor to this journal with the thorough and meticulous care he exercised in all his endeavors.

Over a dozen papers have been published by Dr. *Cruz-González*, a few in collaboration with other authors, particularly in the field of stellar dynamics which so well suited his mathematical spirit. During his student years at the University of Mexico, *Carlos Cruz-González* collaborated with A. Poveda on stellar motions in spherical galaxies, the mass-luminosity ratio of the local cluster of galaxies, on the dissolution time of binary systems and related problems, using computer methods. At the Harvard Observatory he did research with M. Lecar on the phenomena of encounters and escapes of stars, and relaxation of stellar systems through N-body simulations. In Britain his activities were centered on dynamical studies of the Galaxy: local density gradients and galactic parameters and problems of spiral structure. *Carlos Cruz-González* continued his researches in Mexico, publishing three papers on a variety of galactic problems. He leaves four papers to be published posthumously.

His approach to science was unusually sincere. He took delight in research and teaching, pursuing his interests at a pace natural to him, living with his ideas and work: Astronomy was his only passion, as he often said. Though thrifty in words, the clarity and elegance of his speech reflected his scholarly background and wide culture.

Carlos Cruz-González has left a memory few perhaps would leave behind. A loyal friend and colleague his advice was sought by young and old alike. He was firm in his convictions but kind at the same time; qualities which seldom are combined.

He is survived by his wife Elsa, also an astronomer and two children.

PARIS PISMIS

