

IN MEMORIAM

N. P. BARABASHOV (1894–1971)

With the passing, on 29 April 1971, of Professor Nikolai Pavlovich Barabashov, the world of science lost one of the leading students of planetary astronomy; and our journal, one of the senior members of its editorial board.

Professor Barabashov was born on 29 March 1894; and in 1919 graduated from Charkov University in a subject to which he remained faithful for the rest of his long life. He joined the staff of the Charkov University in the year of his graduation; in 1930 he became Director of its University Observatory and head of the Department of Astronomy since 1934 – a position he held for more than a third of a century. In due course, he was elected member of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, of the Astronomical Council of U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences and chairman of its committee for study of the Physical Conditions of the Moon and the Planets – in addition to many other functions which he held in the course of his long and fruitful life.

The scientific contributions of Professor Barabashov – extending over more than half a century – were concerned mainly with the photometry and astrometry of the planets of the solar system and, in particular, of our Moon. To the students of our satellite Barabashov is, perhaps, best known by his discovery of the ‘law of photometric homogeneity’ of the lunar face, enunciated by him in 1923 and having important bearing on the interpretation of the structure of the lunar surface, confirmed in the last few years by spacecraft. Photometry of the Moon remained, in fact, one of the main preoccupations of the Charkov Observatory for many years; and the names of several of Barabashov’s students and colleagues working with him (Fedorets, Orlova) have become well known all over the world. It is, in fact, no exaggeration to say that – until the past 10–15 years – most part of what was known on lunar photometry came out of two active centres of work in this field in the Soviet Union: from the Charkov school of Professor Barabashov, and from his colleagues at the University of Leningrad (Sharonov, Sytinskaya, Markov).

In the last years of his life, Professor Barabashov took a very active part in Russian work on the Moon obtained by spacecraft; and he was co-author of the 1959 *Atlas of the Far Side of the Moon*, based on the pioneer work of Luna 2.

His name and work will be remembered with gratitude by all students of the Moon for many years to come.

ZDENĚK KOPAL