Francisco Miguel Montenegro Montes

Cyrene could manage to measure the circumference of the Earth with remarkable accuracy many centuries ago.

At some point I started studying physics (and lots of mathematics) at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Later, I moved to the Canary Islands to complete my studies and there I had the first opportunity to explore the clear Canarian skies with a professional telescope: the IAC-80 at the Teide Observatory in Tenerife. For my PhD I moved to the heart of the province of Emilia-Romagna in Italy. At the Istituto di Radioastronomia in Bologna I started to study the Universe with different "eyes". There I learnt about dishes, interferometers, correlators and day-time (non-solar) observations! In those years I gained experience with the use of several astronomical facilities around the world, like the 100-metre radio telescope in Effelsberg (Germany), the IRAM 30-metre single dish in Granada (Spain) and the VLA and VLBA arrays in the US.

I have been studying the radio emission from an interesting group of quasars, Broad Absorption Line (BAL) quasars. Forty years have passed since their discovery and it is still not clear why about 15% of quasars develop the winds that give rise to the absorption troughs we can see in the optical spectrum of BAL quasars. We have tried to use radio observations to find hints about the orientation and evolutionary status of these distant objects. I am involved in an international collaboration with participation from Italy, Spain, the Netherlands and Chile that aims to study these objects with a multi-wavelength approach.

Since December 2008 I've been working at ESO in the APEX Science Operations group. This is a great new experience for me in various ways. Working in the Atacama desert is sometimes a surprising adventure where I can find wild donkeys in the middle of the ALMA road and thousand-year-old cacti. But it is also one of the driest atmospheres in the world, which makes this prototype a privileged eye at mm and submm wavelengths. Every day I learn something new about the telescope and its many instruments. In my still short stay here, APEX has performed very important observations (see for example, the cover of last issue of *The Messenger*, 135) and I'm pretty sure it will continue like this for several years, successfully scrutinising the dry skies above Chajnantor.

The Integral Field Spectroscopy Wiki

The field of integral field spectroscopy (IFS) is now well developed, with IFS instruments installed on all the main optical telescope facilities around the world. Some of the most sophisticated are available on the VLT. However IFS continues to be avoided by large sections of the astronomical community due to perceived difficulties with data handling, reduction and analysis. There is no doubt that dealing with IFS data is more complicated than simple imaging or long-slit spectroscopy, but many of the problems that arise could easily be avoided by benefiting from the experience and knowledge of others.

In order to facilitate exchange of IFS knowledge, a repository of information, tips, codes, tools, references, etc., accessible and editable by the whole community, has been initiated. The wiki is intended for use by IFS beginners for any questions or issues with IFS data and for more expert users who are invited to contribute tips, experience of particular instrumental quirks, pieces of code, etc.

Topics covered by the wiki are:

– current and future integral field spectrographs;
– observational techniques and planning;
– data reduction, including overview of procedures for different types of IFS;
– more advanced tasks like mosaicing or differential atmospheric refraction (DAR) correction;
– analysis techniques, from visualisation to line fitting and source extraction.

The originators and maintainers of this site are currently Katrina Exter (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Belgium) and Mark Westmoquette (University College London, UK). To access the wiki go to: http://ifs.wikidot.com