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J.M. Diego, L. Goicoechea, J.I. González-Serrano, J. Gorgas (Eds.)

# Highlights of Spanish Astrophysics V

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Astronomy is a scientific discipline that has developed a rapid and impressive growth in Spain. Thirty years ago, Spain occupied a purely anecdotal presence in the international context, but today it occupies the eighth position in the world in publication of astronomical articles, and, among other successes, owns and operates ninety per cent of the world's largest optical telescope GTC (Gran Telescopio Canarias). The Eighth Scientific Meeting of the Spanish Astronomical Society (Sociedad Española de Astronomía, SEA), held in Santander in July 7–11 2008, whose proceedings are in your hands, clearly shows the enthusiasm, motivation and quality of the present Spanish astronomical community. The event brought together 322 participants, who represent almost 50% of Spanish professional astronomers. This percentage, together with the continuously increasing, with respect to previous SEA meetings, number of oral presentations and poster contributions (179 and 127 respectively), confirms that the SEA conferences have become a point of reference to assess the interests and achievements of astrophysical research in Spain. The most important and current topics of modern Astrophysics were taken into account at the preliminary meeting, as well as the number and quality of participants and their contributions, to select the invited speakers and oral contributors. We took a week to enjoy the high quality contributions submitted by Spanish astronomers to the Scientific Organizing Committee. The selection was difficult. We wish to acknowledge the gentle advice and commitment of the SOC members.

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