

Rapid Spectrophotometric changes in R127 and Reversal of the Decline

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R127, the famous Luminous Blue Variable in the Large Magellanic Cloud, was found in the peculiar early-B state and fainter in brightness in January 2008, suggesting that the major outburst which started sometime between 1978 and 1980 was drawing to a close, and that the star would presumably continue to fade and move to earlier spectral types until reaching its quiescent Ofpe/WN9 state. Archival data showed that the main spectral transformation from the peculiar A-type state at maximum started between 2005 and 2007, and that it was in close concordance with features in the light curve. However, subsequent observations during 2008 and early 2009 have shown that the spectrum of R127 is now returning to a cooler, lower excitation state, while the photometry shows a new brightening of the star. The time variation of selected spectral regions will be displayed, along with the accompanying light curve evolution. A speculative 7-year cycle during the decline bears further investigation. The curious behavior of R127 provides an opportunity to gain further insight into the rapid transitional stages in the late evolution of very massive stars.