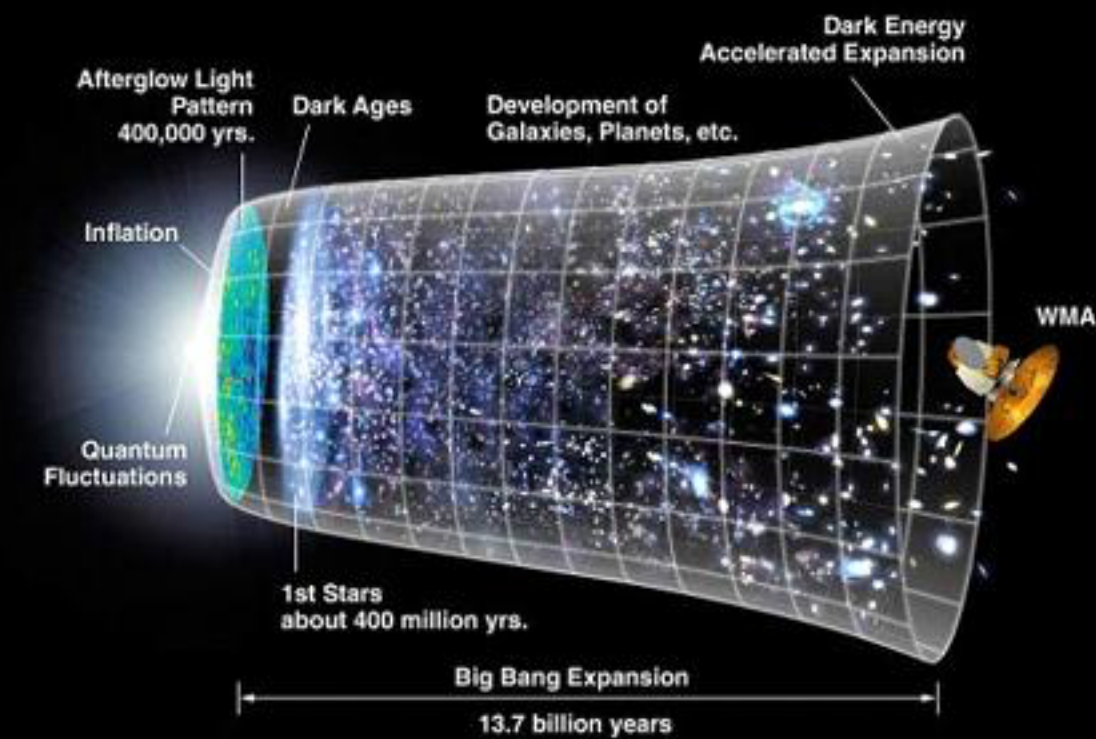


Cosmology and Large Scale Structure

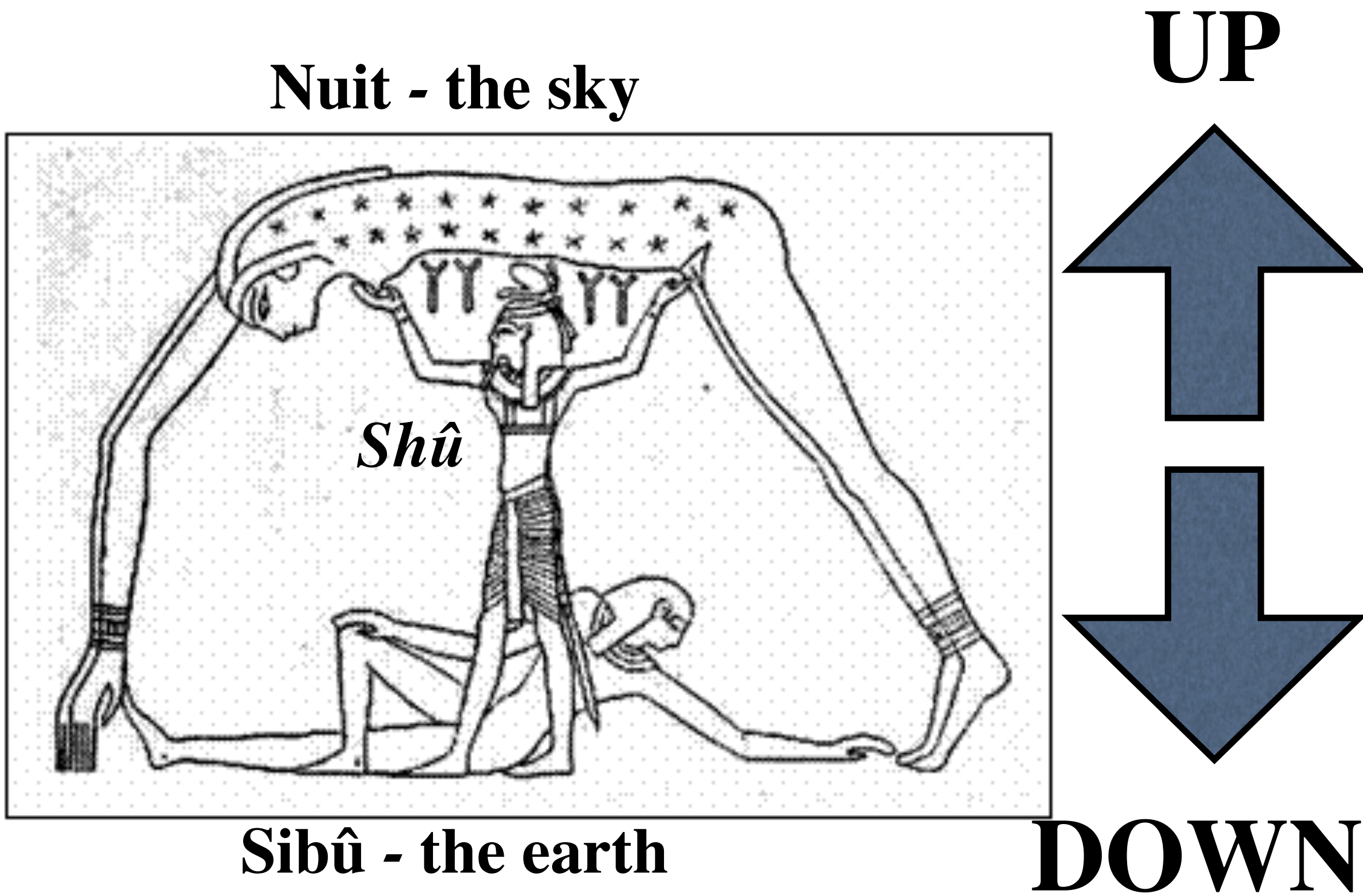


S McGaugh Fall 2020

<http://astroweb.case.edu/ssm/astr328/>

Nuit, the goddess of the night, was in a tight embrace with her husband *Sibû*, the earth god. Then one day, the god *Shû* grabbed her and elevated her to [*become*] the sky despite the protests and painful squirming of *Sibû*. But *Shû* has no sympathy for him and freezes *Sibû* even as he is thrashing about. And so he remains to this day, his twisted pose generating the irregularities we see on the Earth's surface. *Nuit* is supported by her arms and legs which become the columns holding the sky.

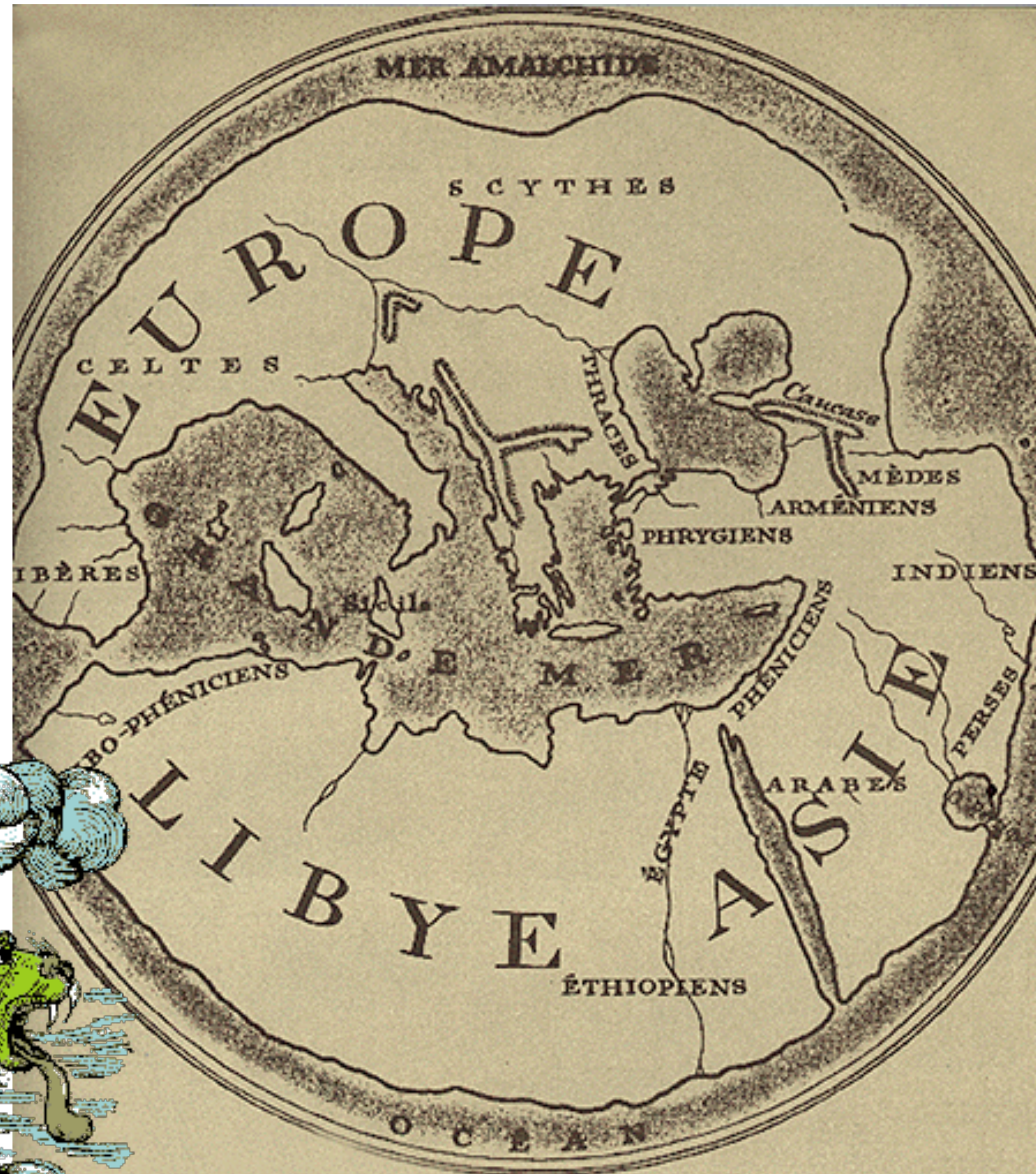
Ancient Egyptian Creation Myth



The ancient Egyptians conceived the sky as a roof placed over the world supported by columns placed at the four cardinal points. The Earth was a flat rectangle, longer from north to south, whose surface bulges slightly and having the Nile as its center. On the south there was a river in the sky supported by mountains and on this river the sun god made his daily trip (this river was wide enough to allow the sun to vary its path as it is seen to do). The stars were suspended from the heavens by strong cables, but no apparent explanation was given for their movements.

Ancient Cosmology: A Flat Earth

Here there
be
dragons!



Old Map of Hecataeus of Miletus (c. 500 BC)

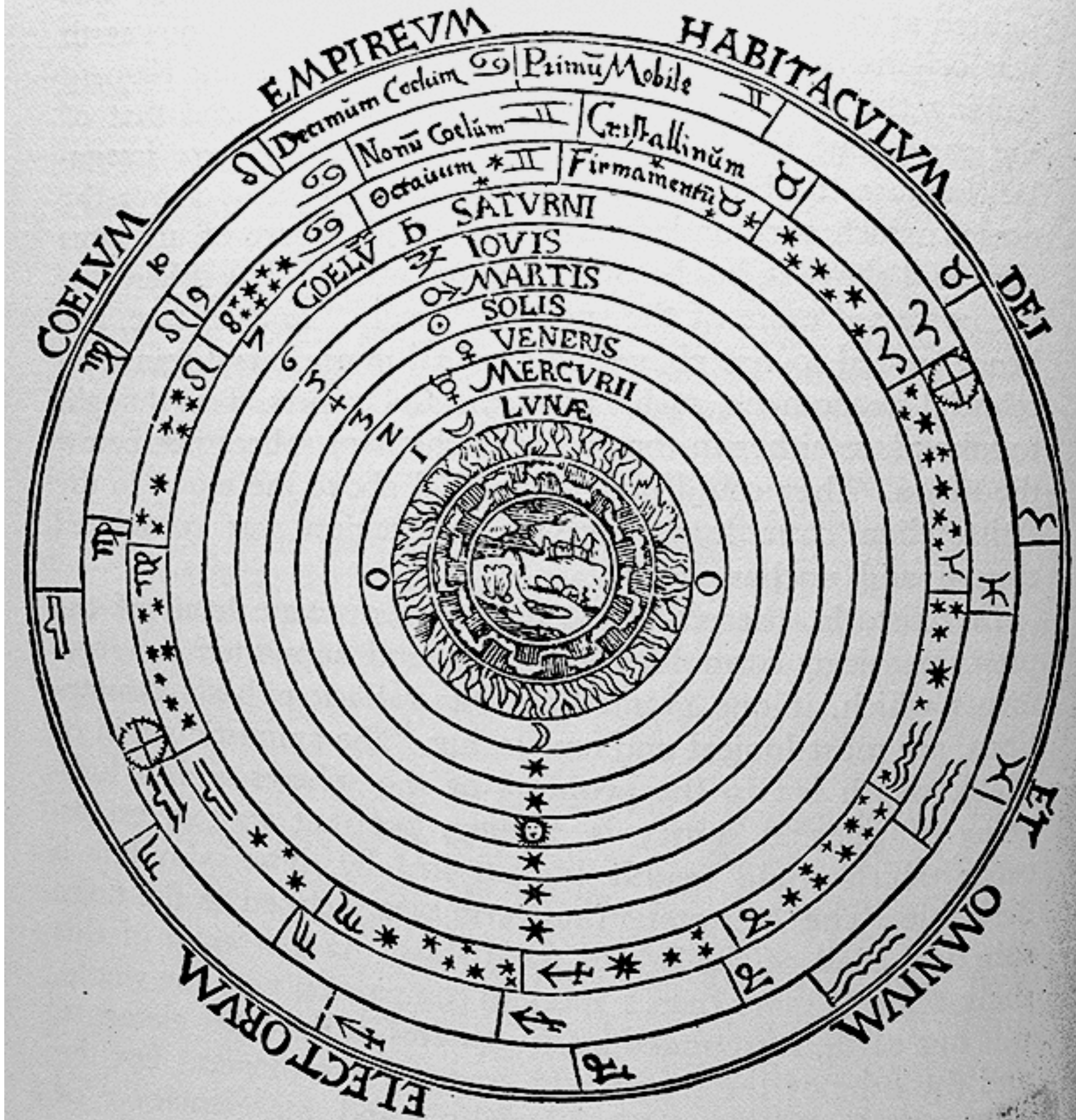
Cosmological classifications

See Harrison's *Cosmology - the science of the universe*

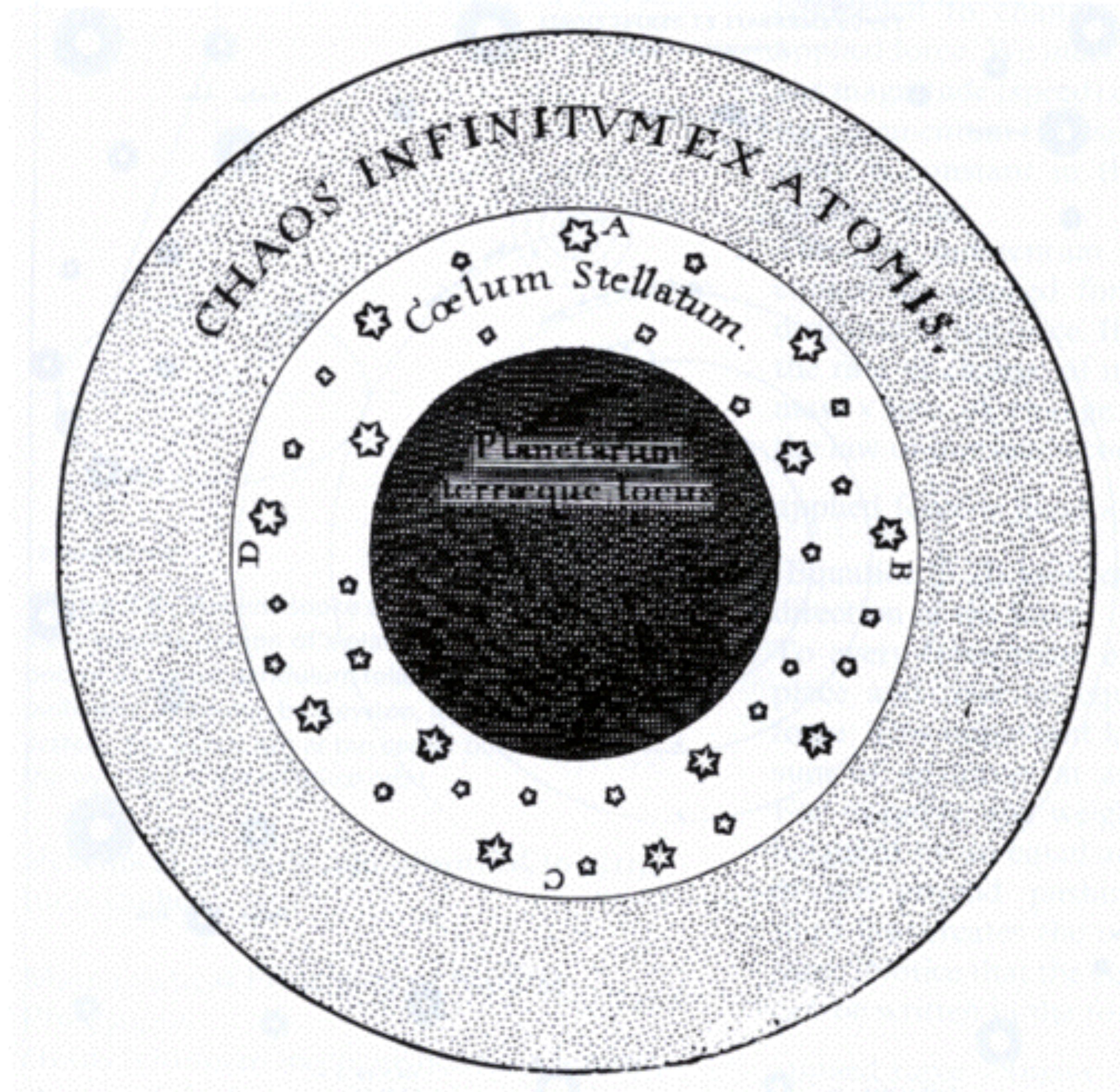
	Aristotelian	Stoic	Epicurean
Spatial Extent	Finite	Indefinite	Infinite
Center	Geocentric	Geocentric — later — Milky Way-centric	No center
Edge	Hard	Mushy	None
	Ancient/Mideval	Victorian	Modern

Aristotelean universe

Aristotle argued that the universe had to be finite so that the dome of the sky could rise and set every day - it couldn't go infinitely fast around the fixed earth.

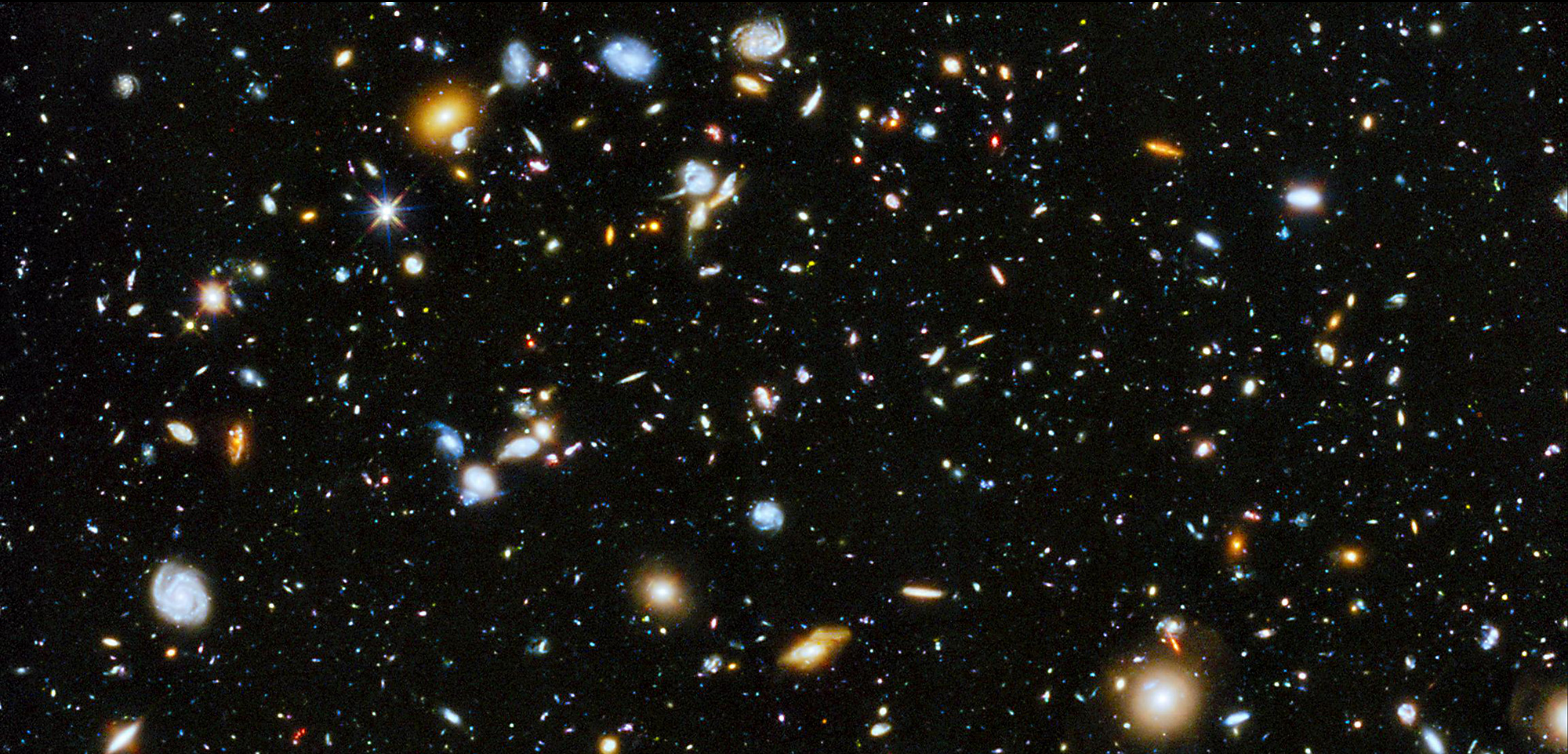


Stoic universe



Earth at the center surrounded by a finite volume of stars that trails off into an indefinite void.

Epicurean Universe



Hubble Ultra Deep Field

- **Aristotelean Cosmology**

- Geocentrism required by Plato's school; later perfected by Ptolemy
- Most successful, long-running cosmology in history - default picture of all early cultures
- Required the Scientific Revolution (early 1600s) to disavow

- **Stoic Cosmology**

- Standard from mid 1600s into the 1920s
- Scientifically well-grounded

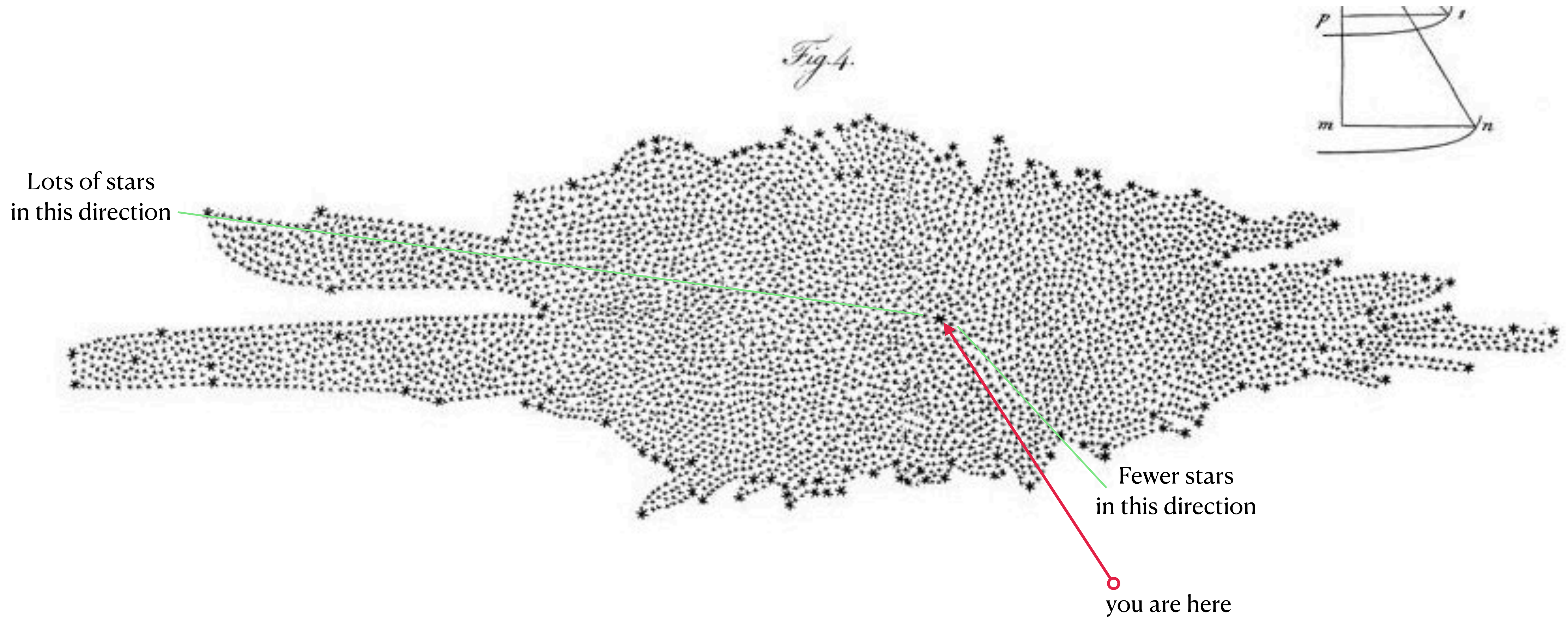
- **Epicurean Cosmology**

- Big Bang the standard cosmology since Hubble (1929)
- Hot Big Bang standard since the discovery of the Cosmic Microwave Background (Penzias & Wilson 1964; Peebles & Dicke 1964).

The Milky Way Map of William Herschel (1785)

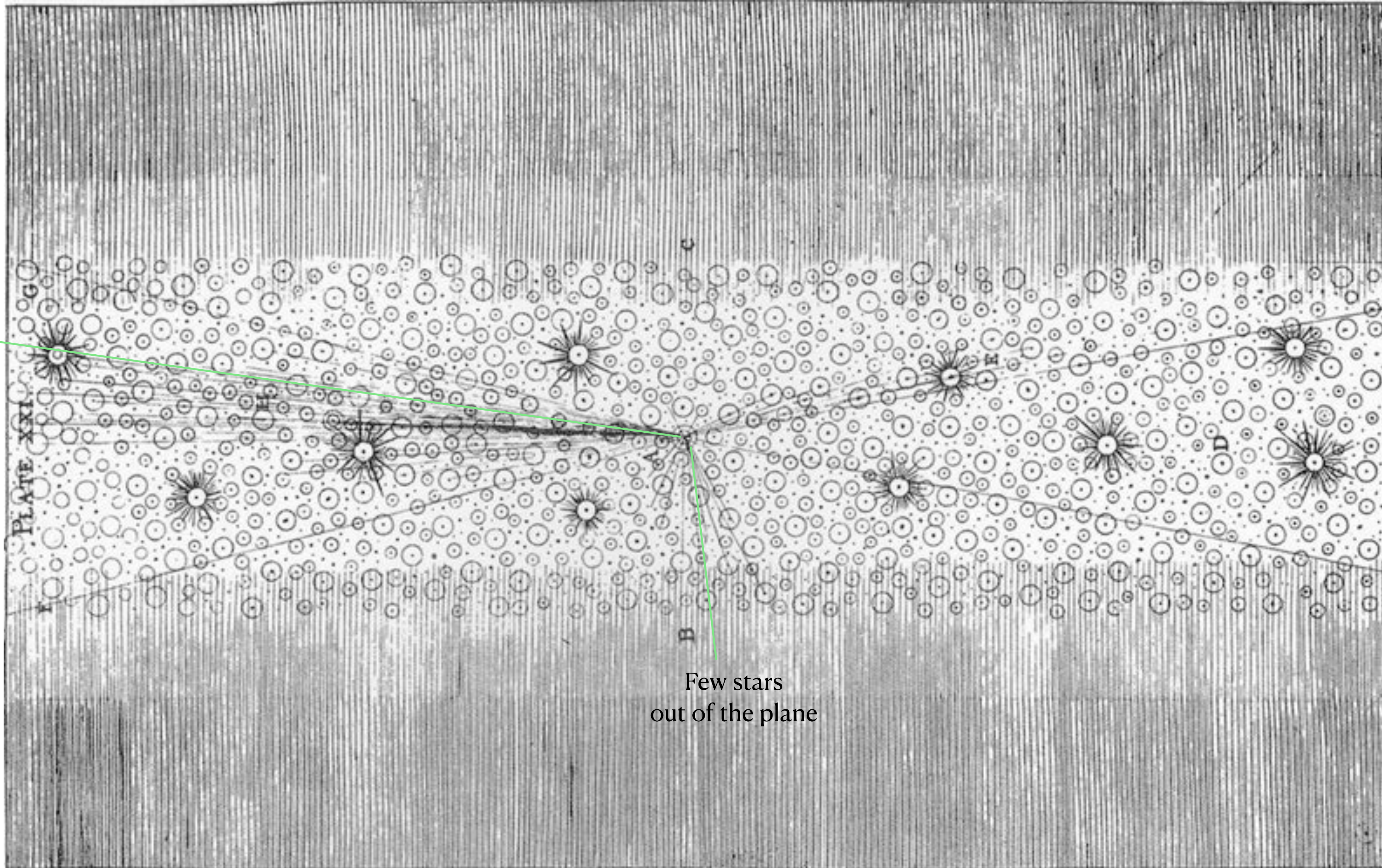
The sun is near the center of a thin, oblong collection of stars.

Follow-up work produced largely consistent results into the early 20th century



Victorian Universe

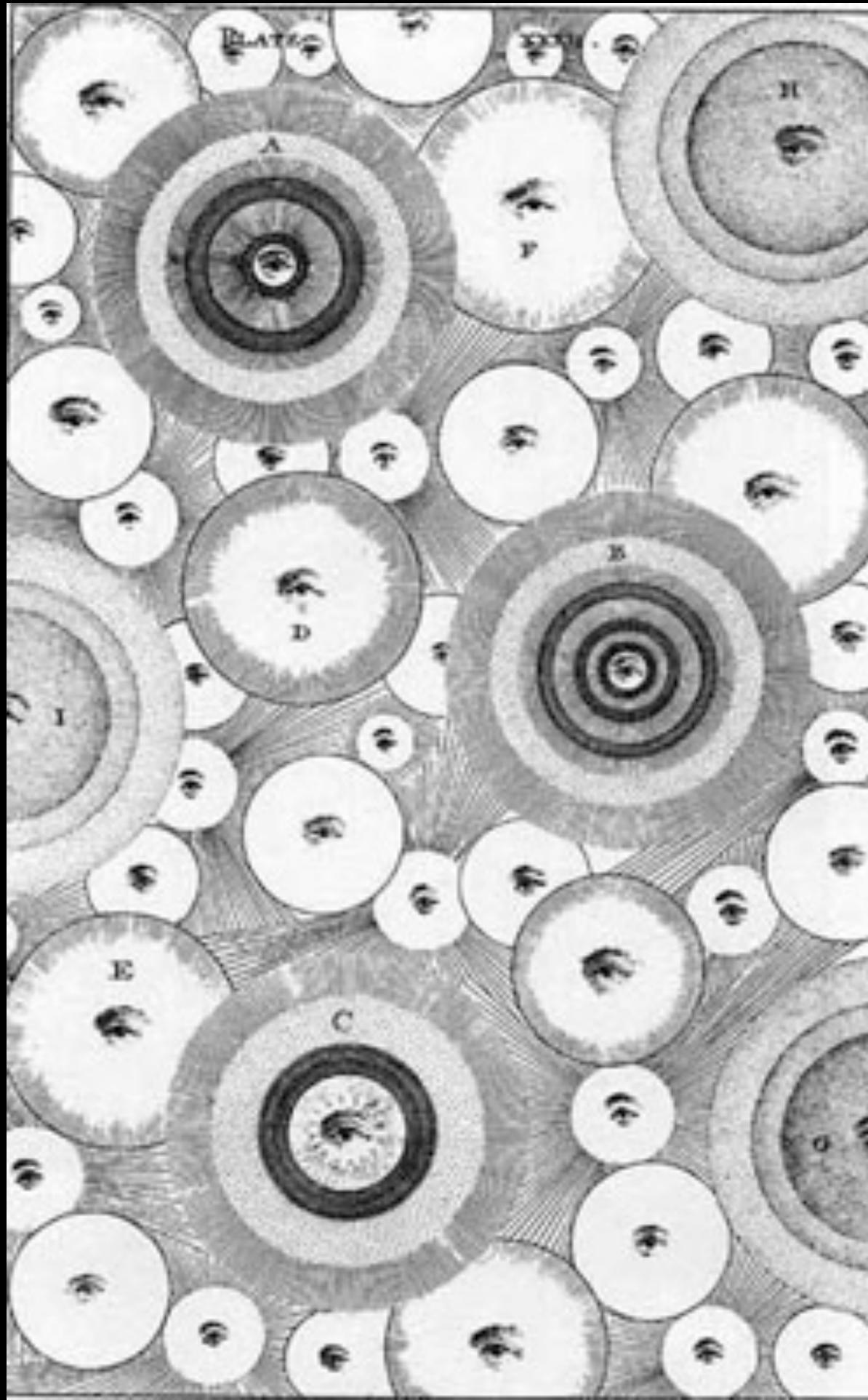
Stoic-like with a vast Milky Way embedded in an indefinite void



Lots of stars
in the plane

Herschel's map
imagined edge-
on

Few stars
out of the plane



“No competent thinker, with the whole of the available evidence before him, can now, it is safe to say, maintain any single nebula to be a star system of coordinate rank with the Milky Way. A practical certainty has been attained that the entire contents, stellar and nebular, of the sphere belong to one mighty aggregation” [i.e., the Milky Way]

- Agnes Mary Clerke (1890)

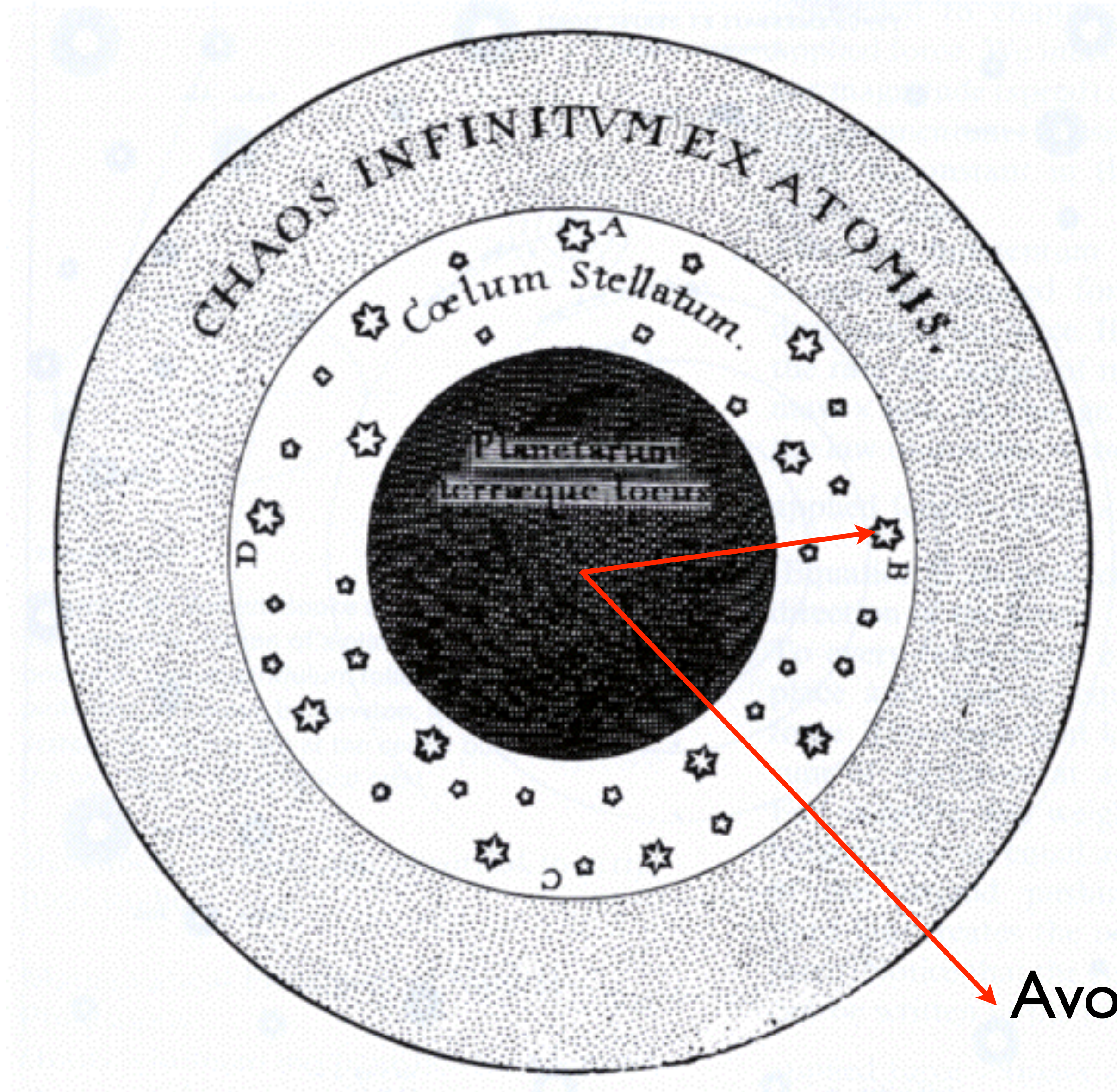
Olber's paradox: why is the sky dark at night?



If the universe is infinite in extent, eventually every line of sight should intersect the surface of a star. Surface brightness is distance independent in a Euclidean geometry, so the whole sky should be as bright as the surface of a star!



Stoic universe



Avoids Olber's Paradox.

Earth at the center surrounded by a finite volume of stars that trails off into an indefinite void.

- **Aristotelean Cosmology**

- Universe finite
- Satisfies Olber's Paradox

- **Stoic Cosmology**

- Universe indefinite, but contents finite
- Satisfies Olber's Paradox

- **Epicurean Cosmology**

- Universe infinite
- **Flunks** Olber's Paradox

Curtis-Shapley Debate (the "Great Debate" - 1920)

Shapley



Curtis



The Milky Way is
big; we are not near
the center

Other nebulae are
clouds of gas within
the Milky Way

The Milky Way is
small; we happen to
be near the center

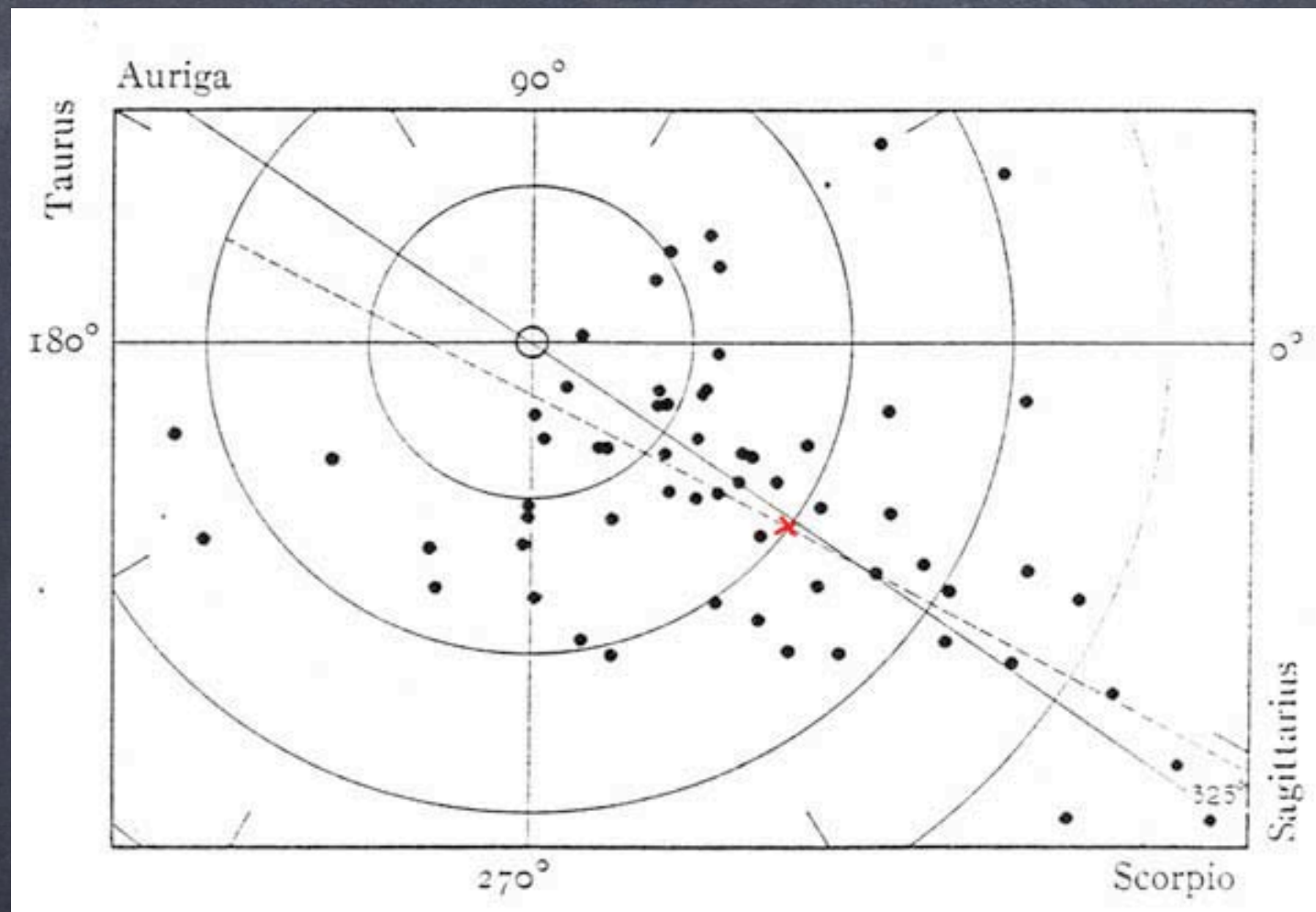
The spiral nebulae are
"island universes"
comparable to the Milky
Way

Shapley

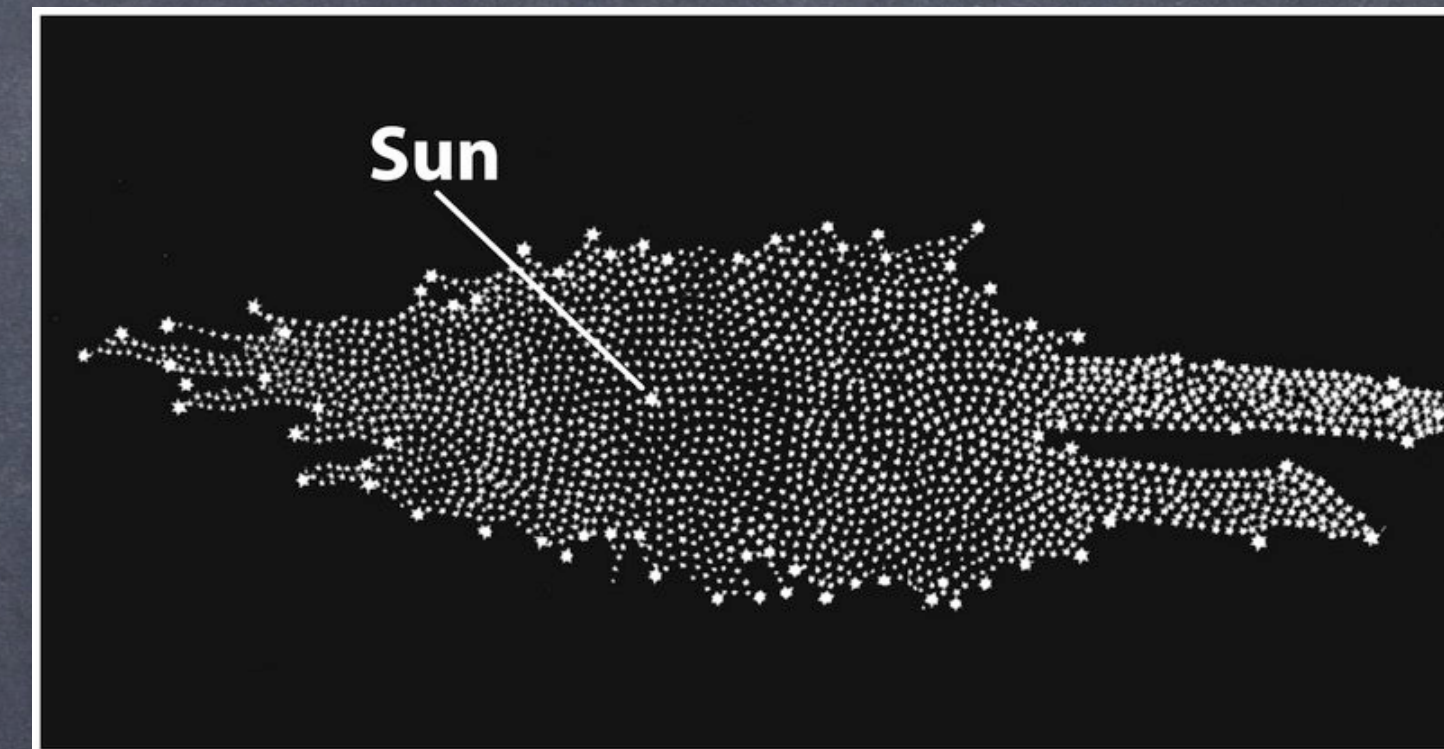


Size of Milky Way

Curtis



Globular clusters
not centered on
sun's location



We've counted the
stars; this is what it
looks like

Shapley



Nature of Spiral Nebulae

Some nebulae
appear to rotate
(van Maanen)

Nova-based distance
placed M31 in Milky Way

Curtis



“Island universes”
have dust lanes

M31 had lots of
novae; strange for
one little patch of
the Milky Way

Shapley



- SHAPLEY

- ✗ • Spiral nebulae are small gas clouds contained within the Milky Way
- ✓ • Milky Way big; we're not at its center

Curtis

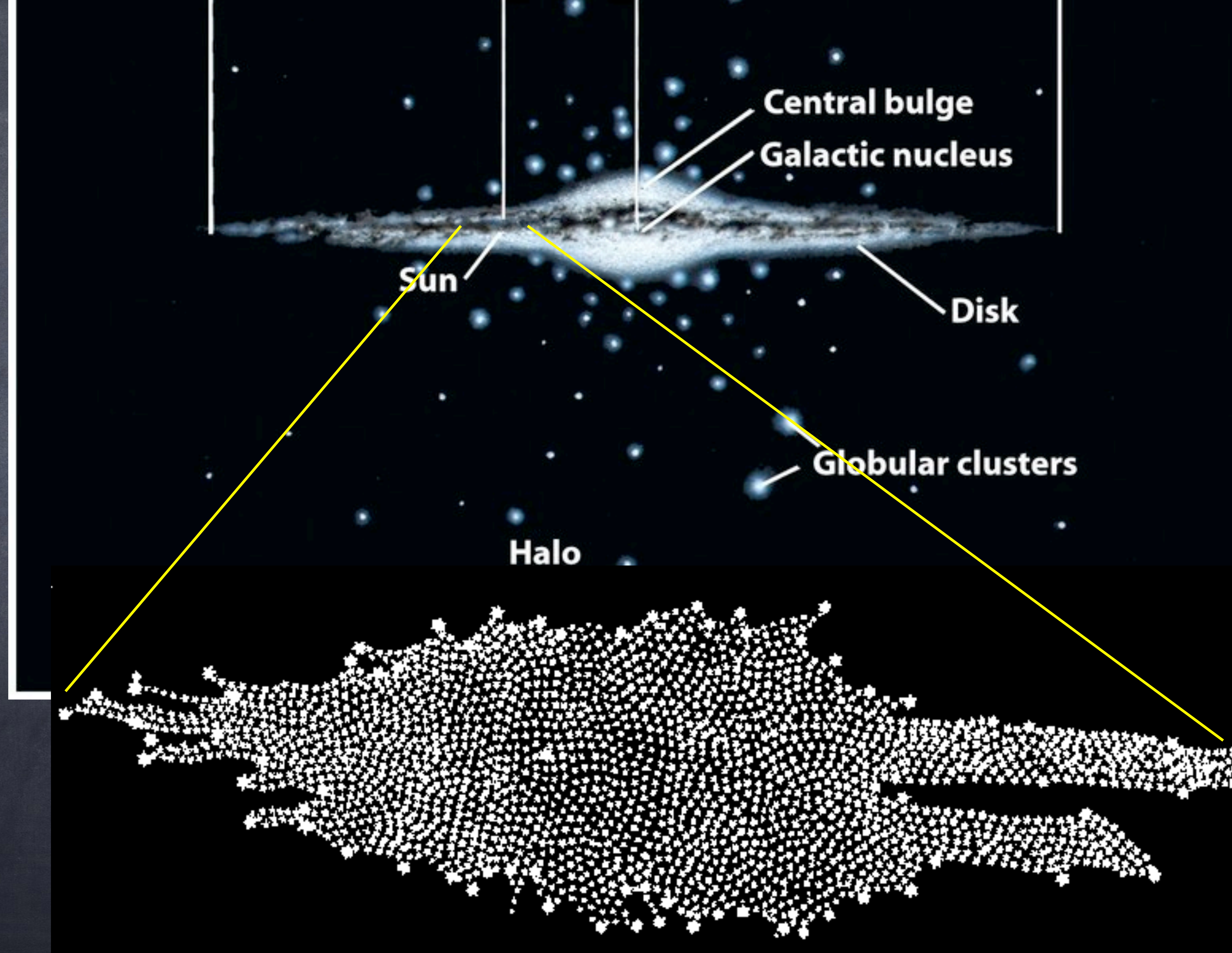


- CURTIS

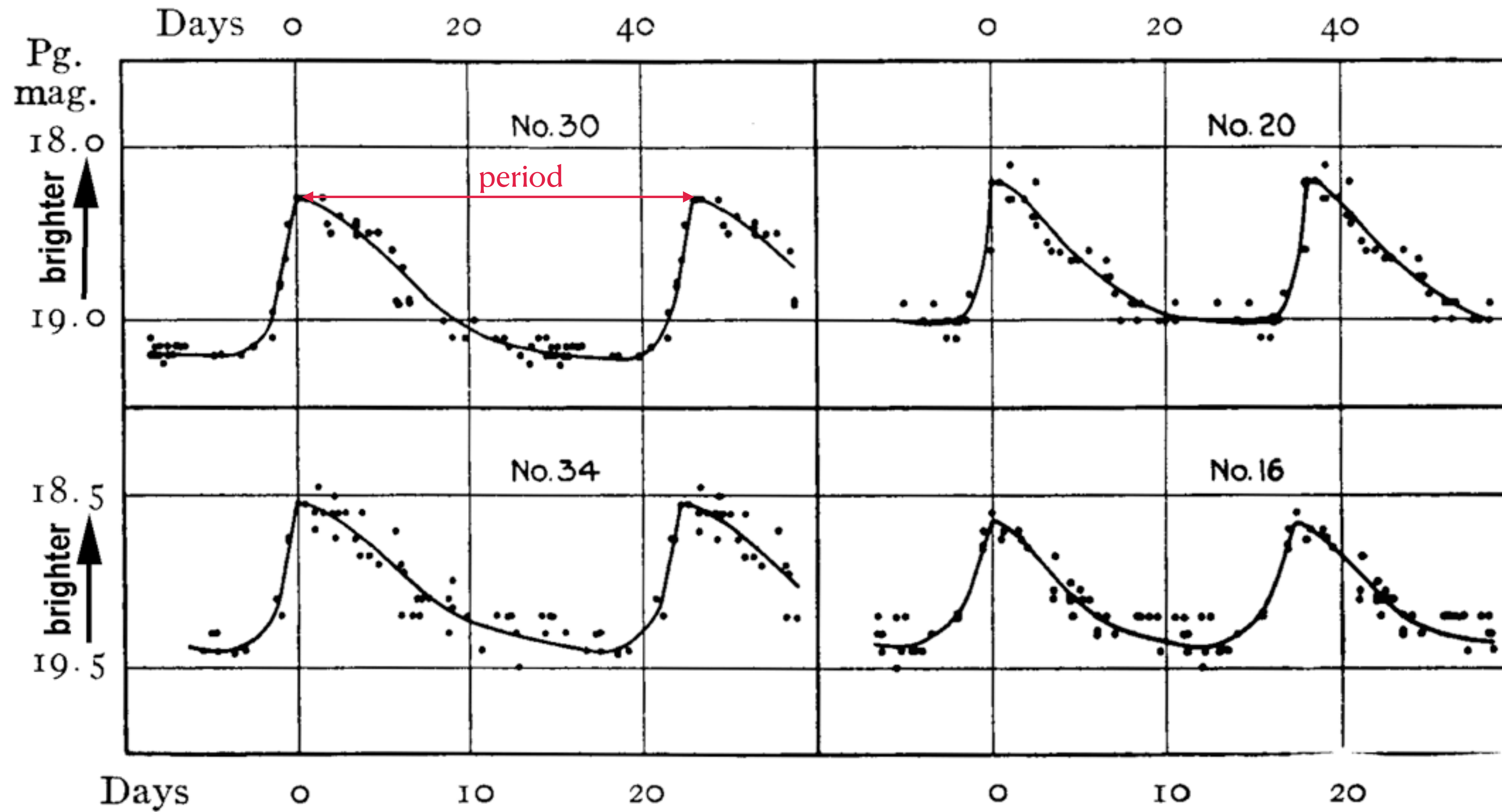
- ✓ • Spiral nebulae are external galaxies of coordinate rank to our own Milky Way
- ✗ • Milky Way small; we're near its center

The Milky Way mapped by Herschel was limited by obscuration from interstellar dust. It is just our local patch of the Milky Way, so Shapley had that part right.

By the end of the decade, Hubble had demonstrated that spiral nebulae were external galaxies far outside the Milky Way, so Curtis had that part right.

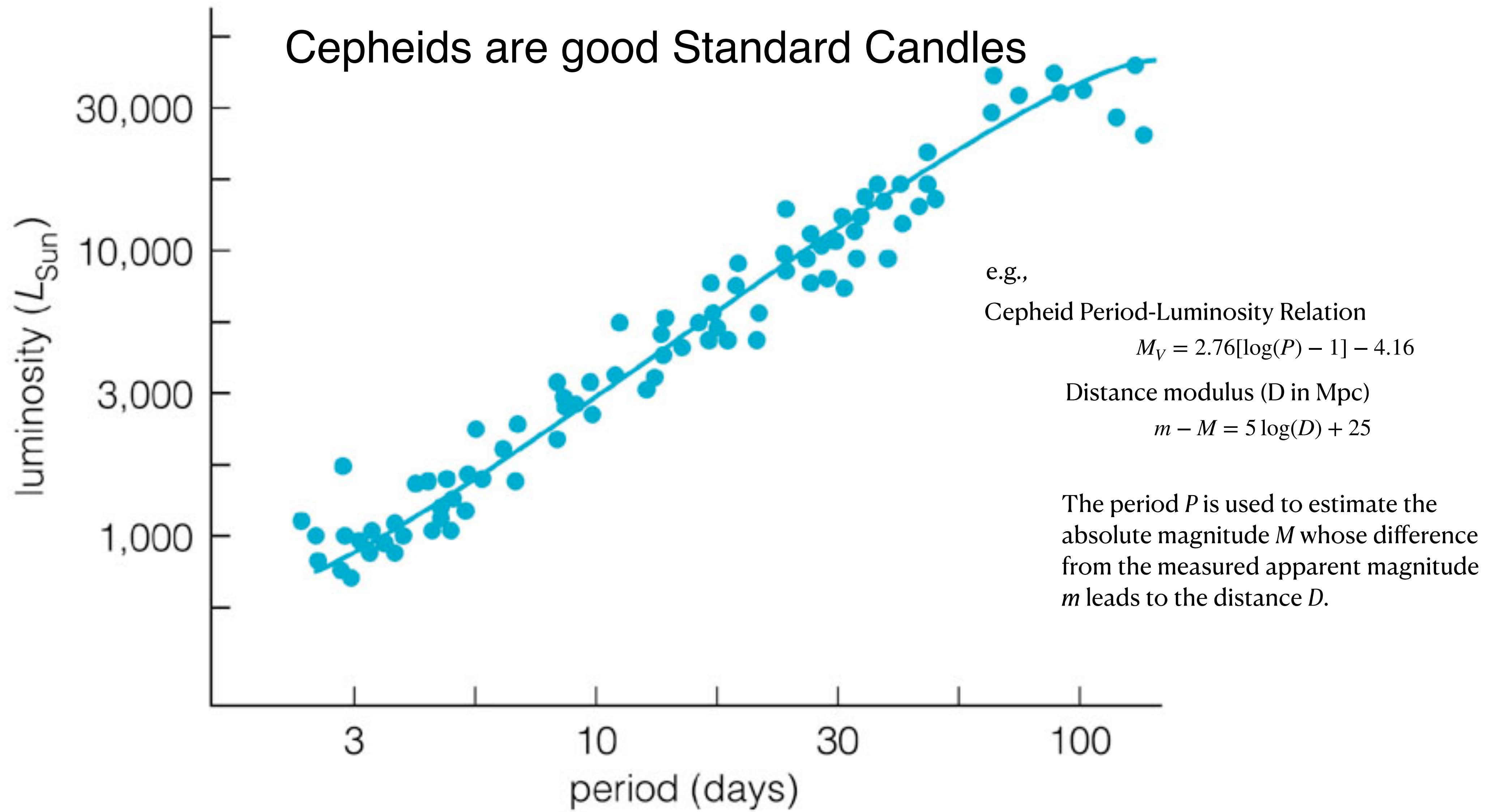


Cepheid Variable Stars



The light curves of several *Cepheid variable stars*.

Cepheids are good Standard Candles

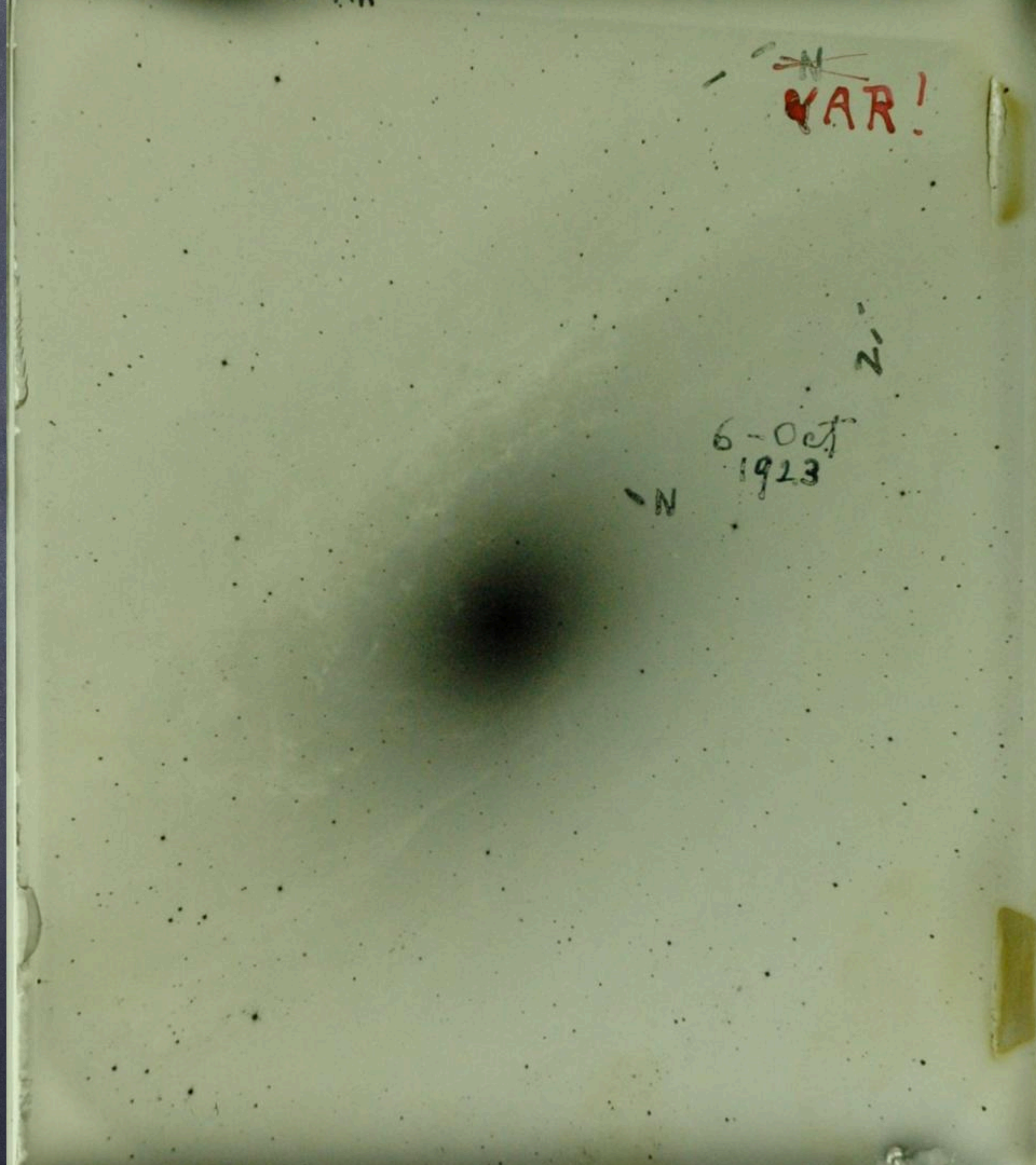


Cepheid variable stars with longer periods have greater luminosities: measuring the period tells us the luminosity, which can be combined with the inverse square law to infer a distance.

M31 - Andromeda

Hubble discovered Cepheids in Andromeda, demonstrating that it had to be far outside the Milky Way and comparable to it in size.

Hubble

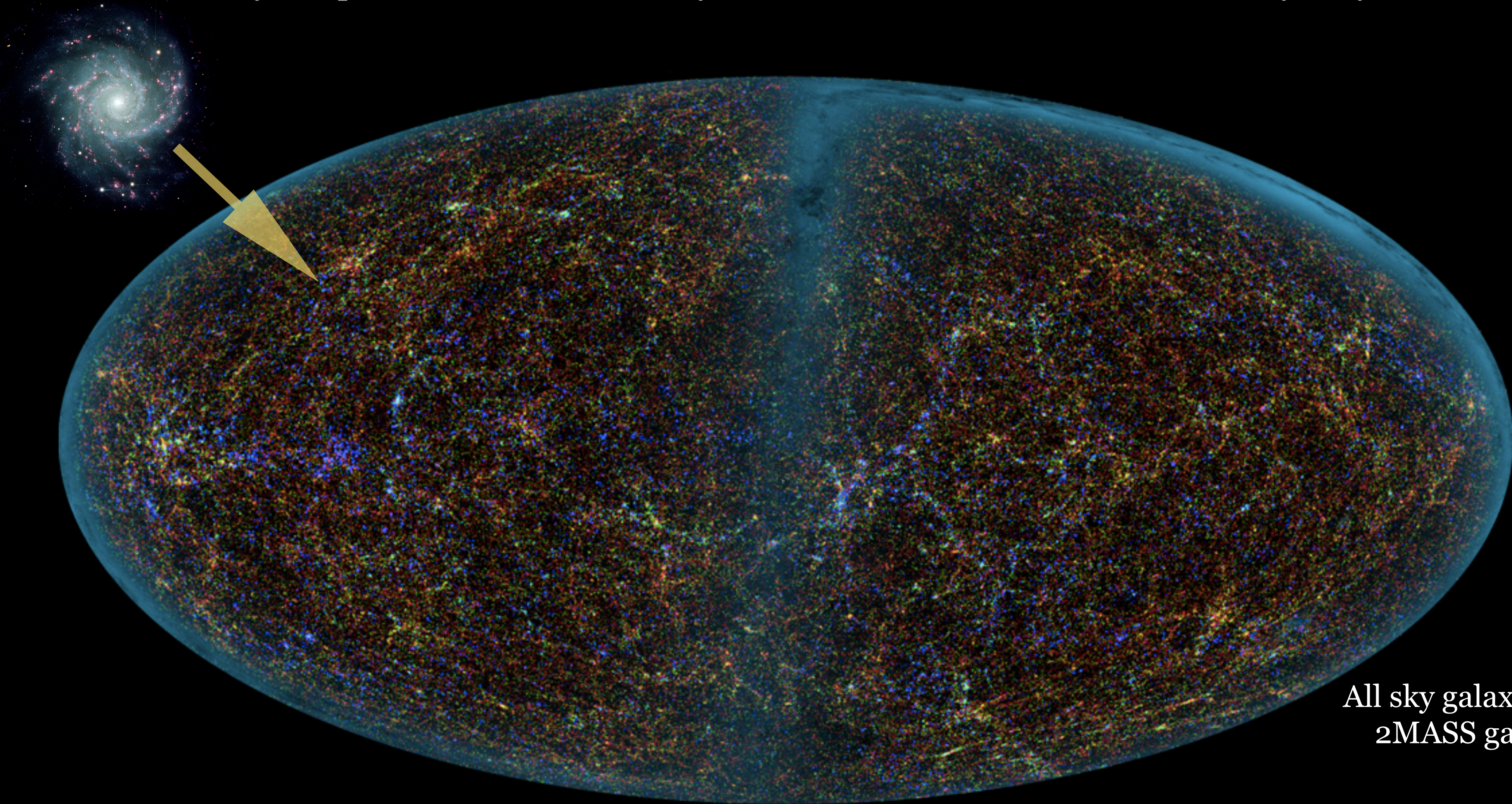


Mount Wilson
Observatory
100" (2.5m)
Hooker
telescope
(1917)



Galaxies are the building blocks of the universe

Every dot pictured here is “a star system of coordinate rank with the Milky Way”



All sky galaxy distribution
2MASS galaxy survey

The color-coding corresponds to redshift: redder galaxies are more distant.
The distribution of galaxies is structured into enormous filaments and walls surrounding giant voids.