The Universe: What We Know and What we Don't

Fundamental Physics

- Cosmology
- Elementary Particle Physics

Cosmology

Study of the universe
at the largest scale

- How big is the universe?
- Where did the universe come from?
- What is the fate of the universe?
- Are there other universes? How many?
- What is dark matter?
- What is dark energy?

Elementary Particle Physics

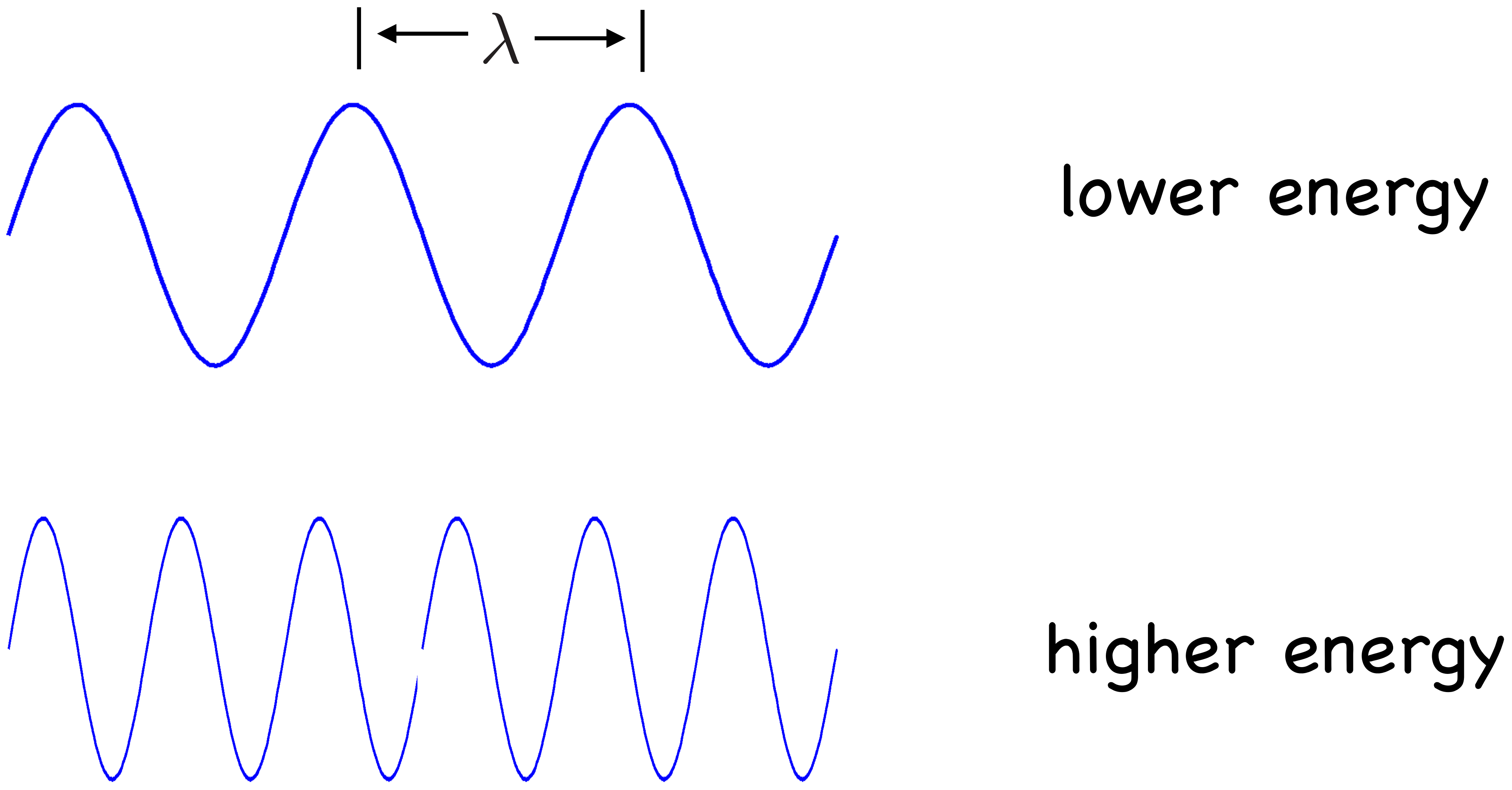
Study of the small scale structure of the universe

- What are the basic building blocks?
- How do they interact with one another?
- Is there a smallest amount of space and time?
- Is there a theory of everything?

Particle-Wave Duality

Energy inversely proportional to wavelength

$$E \propto \frac{1}{\lambda}$$



Study of small distances requires high energy probes

Large Hadron Collider

Energy scale

$$10^3 \text{ GeV}$$

Distance scale

$$10^{-19} \text{ m}$$

Temperature

$$10^{16} \text{ K}$$

Big Bang

14 billion years ago the universe was much denser and hotter than today

Has been expanding and cooling ever since

To know the state of the universe at earlier and earlier times, need to know physics at higher and higher energy scales (smaller and smaller distances)

10^{16} K → 10^{-12} s after Big Bang

What we Know

- Physics down to a distance scale of

$$10^{-19}\ \mathrm{m}$$

- Physics down to a time of

$$10^{-12}\ \mathrm{s}$$ after the Big Bang

How big is the universe?

How big is the universe?

We don't know

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- At least about 100 times larger than the visible universe

How big is the universe?

We don't know

- At least about 100 times larger than the visible universe
- Could be infinite

Steady State Universe

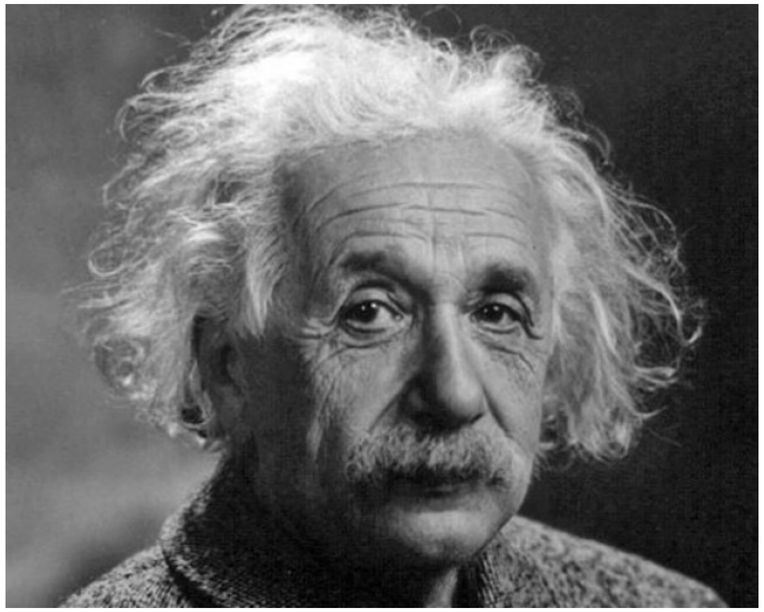
Pre 20th century

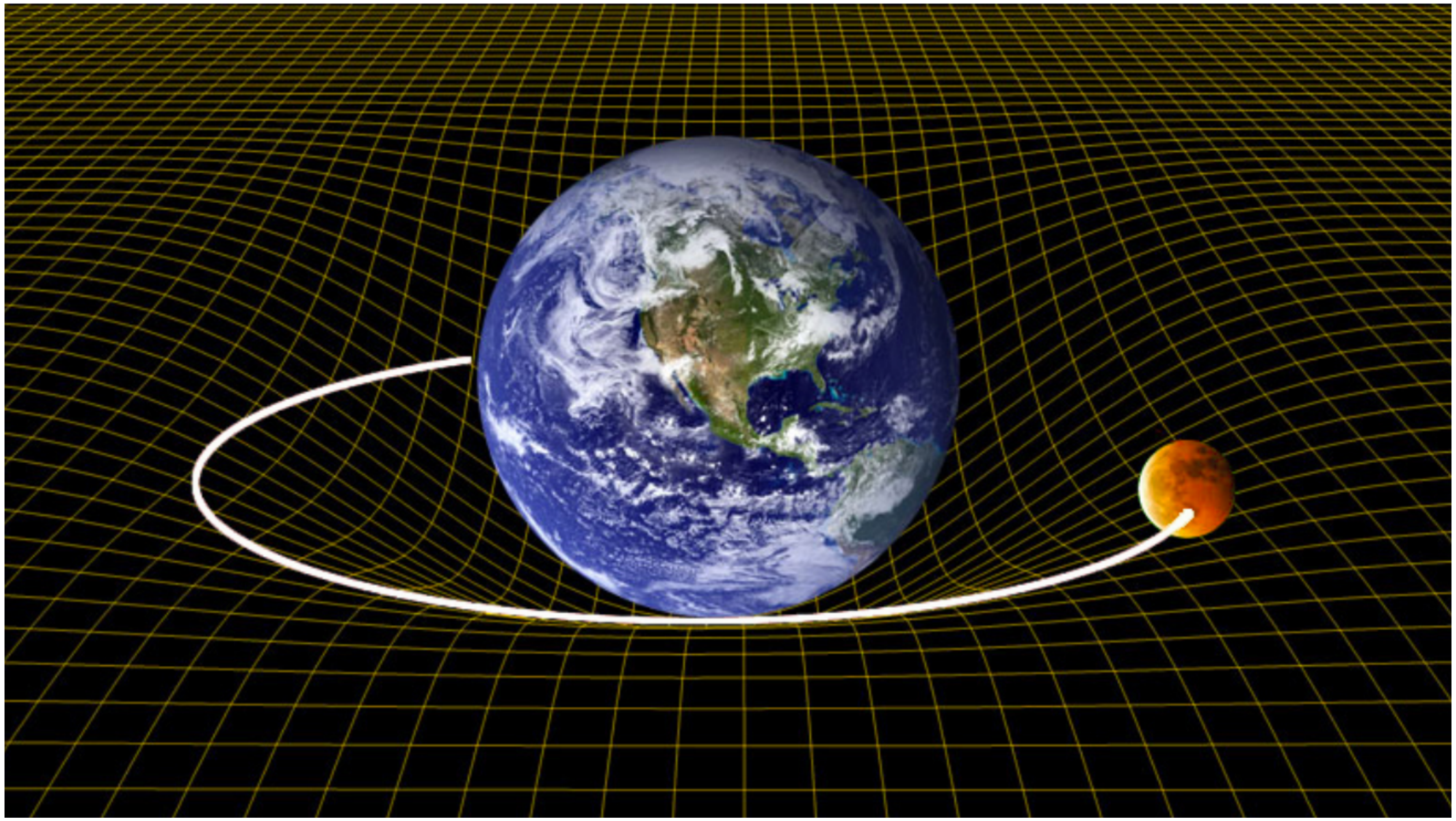
- Stars fixed points in space
- Universe unchanging

General Relativity

Eistein 1915

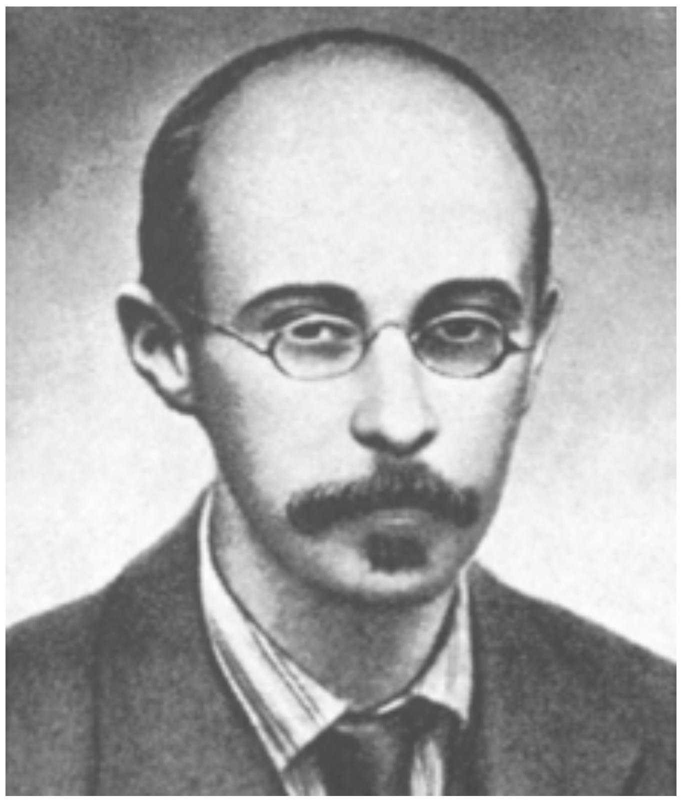
- Gravity due to curvature of space-time





Friedman Equation

Alexander Friedman 1922



Applied general relativity
to the whole universe

$$\left(\frac{v}{r}\right)^2 \sim \text{ energy density}$$

What is energy density due to ?

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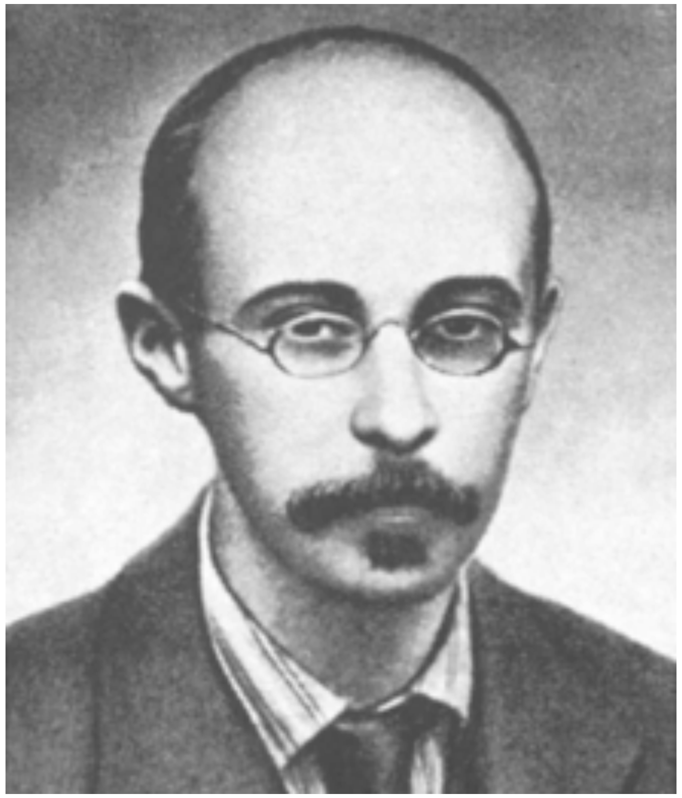

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$$E = mc^2$$

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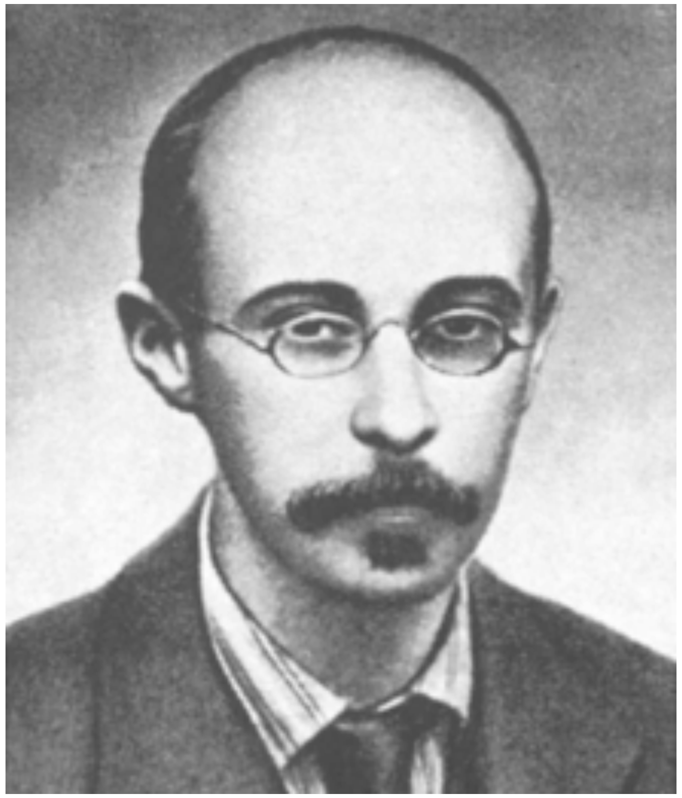

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about one hydrogen atom per cubic meter

$$1 \text{ GeV } / \ m^3$$

Cosmological Constant

fudge factor

$$\left(\frac{v}{r}\right)^2 = \frac{8\pi G}{3}\rho_m - \Lambda$$

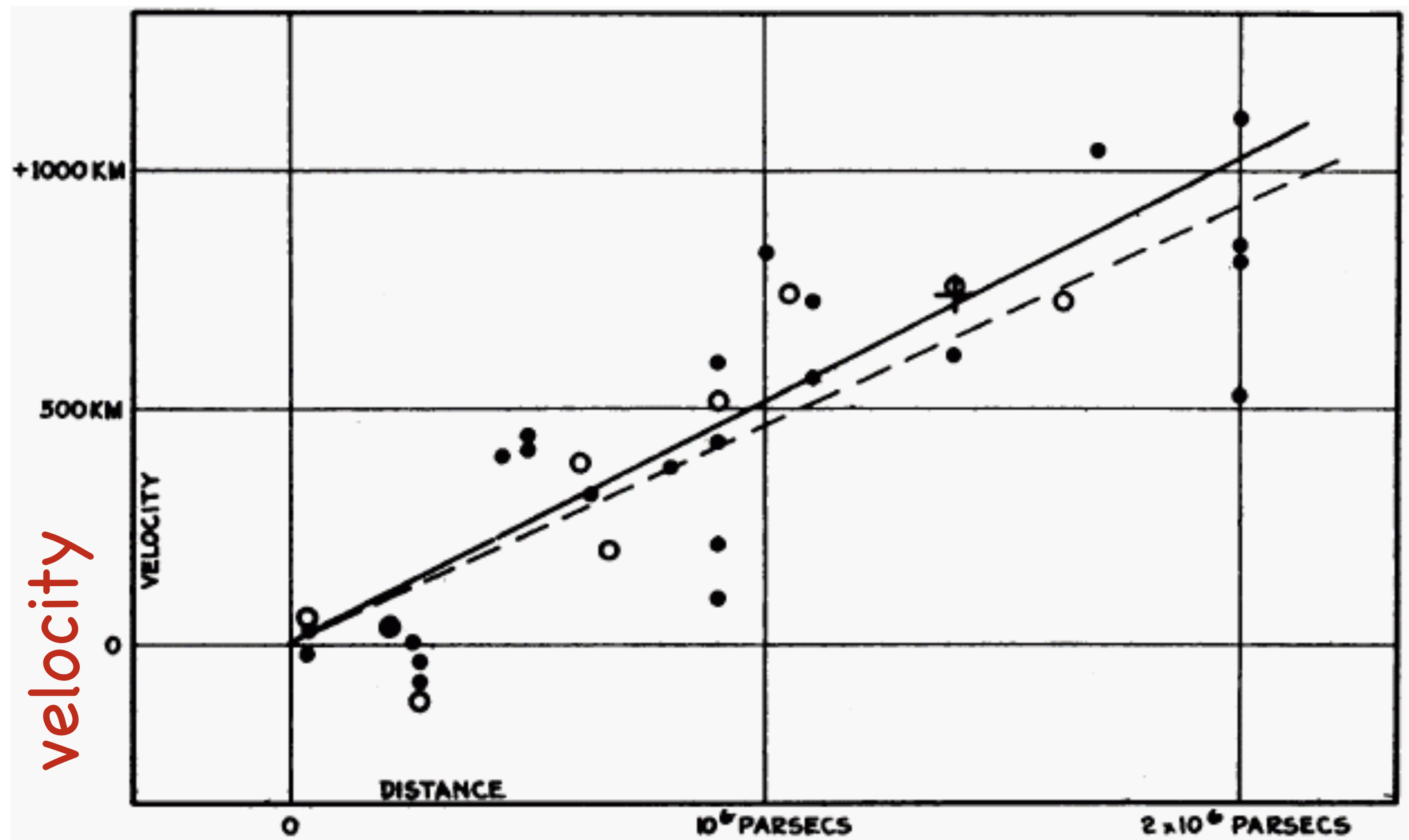
matter energy density

Prevents the universe from expanding (or contracting)

Hubble Expansion

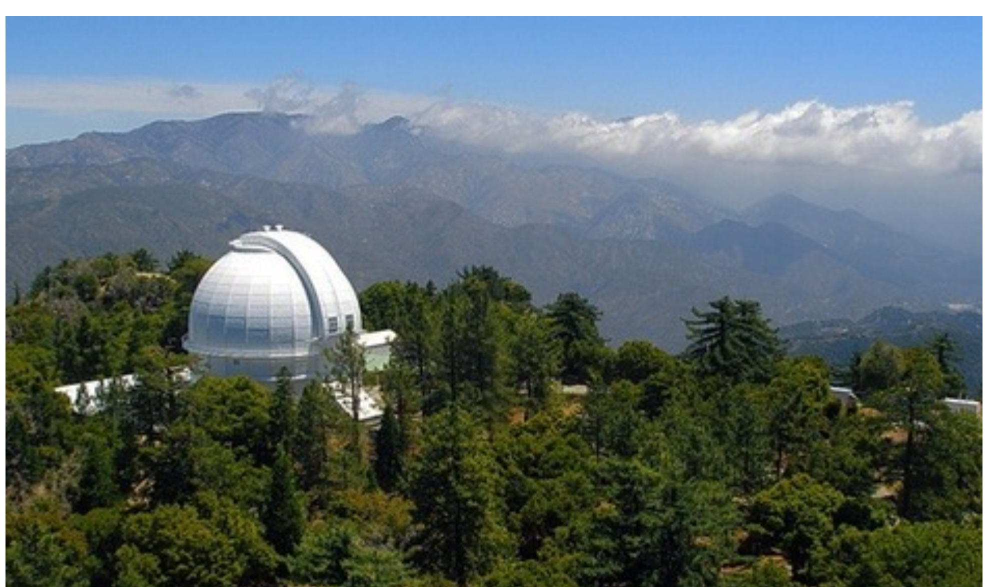
Hubble 1927

The universe is expanding

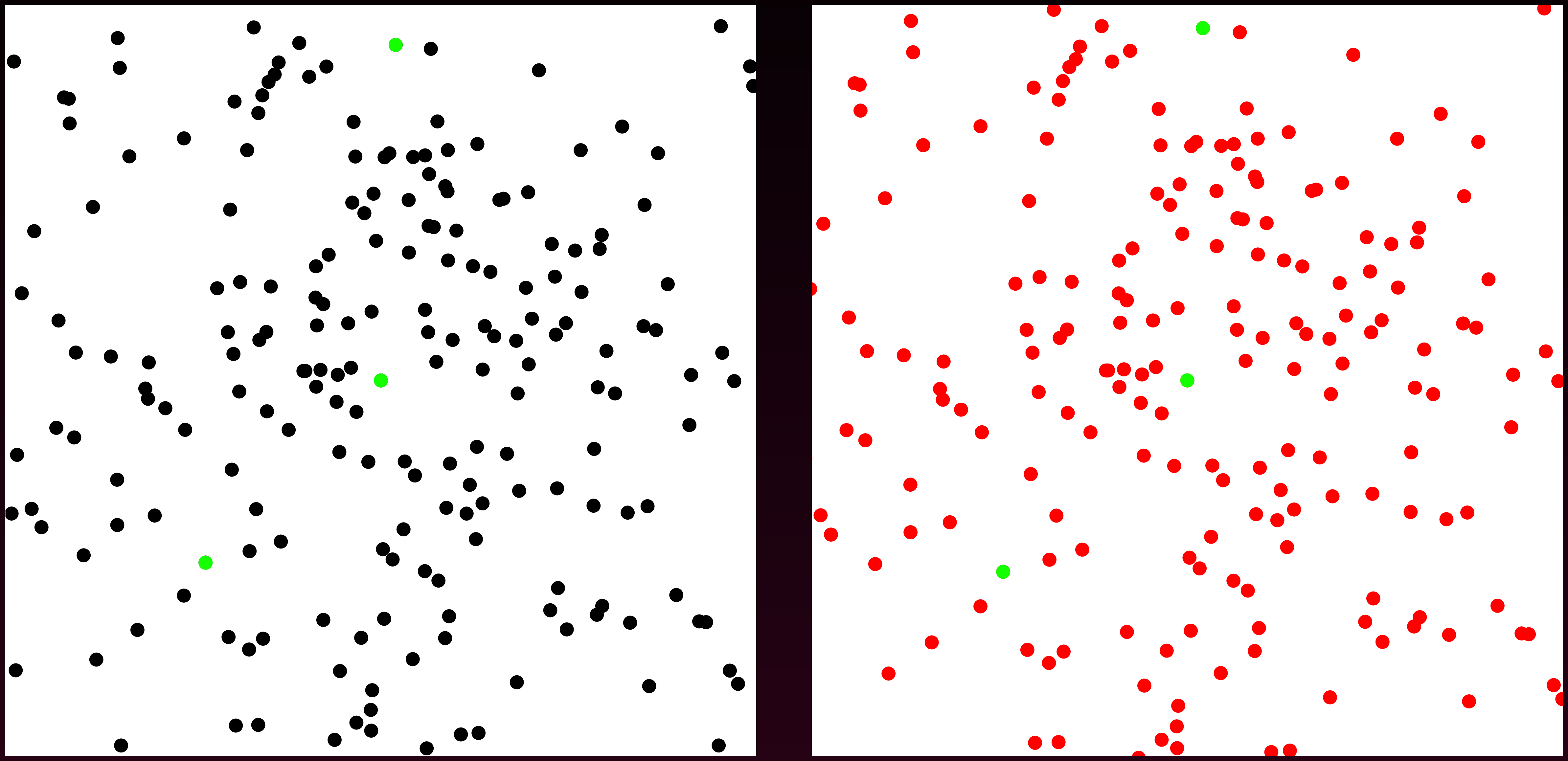


velocity

distance



An Expanding Universe

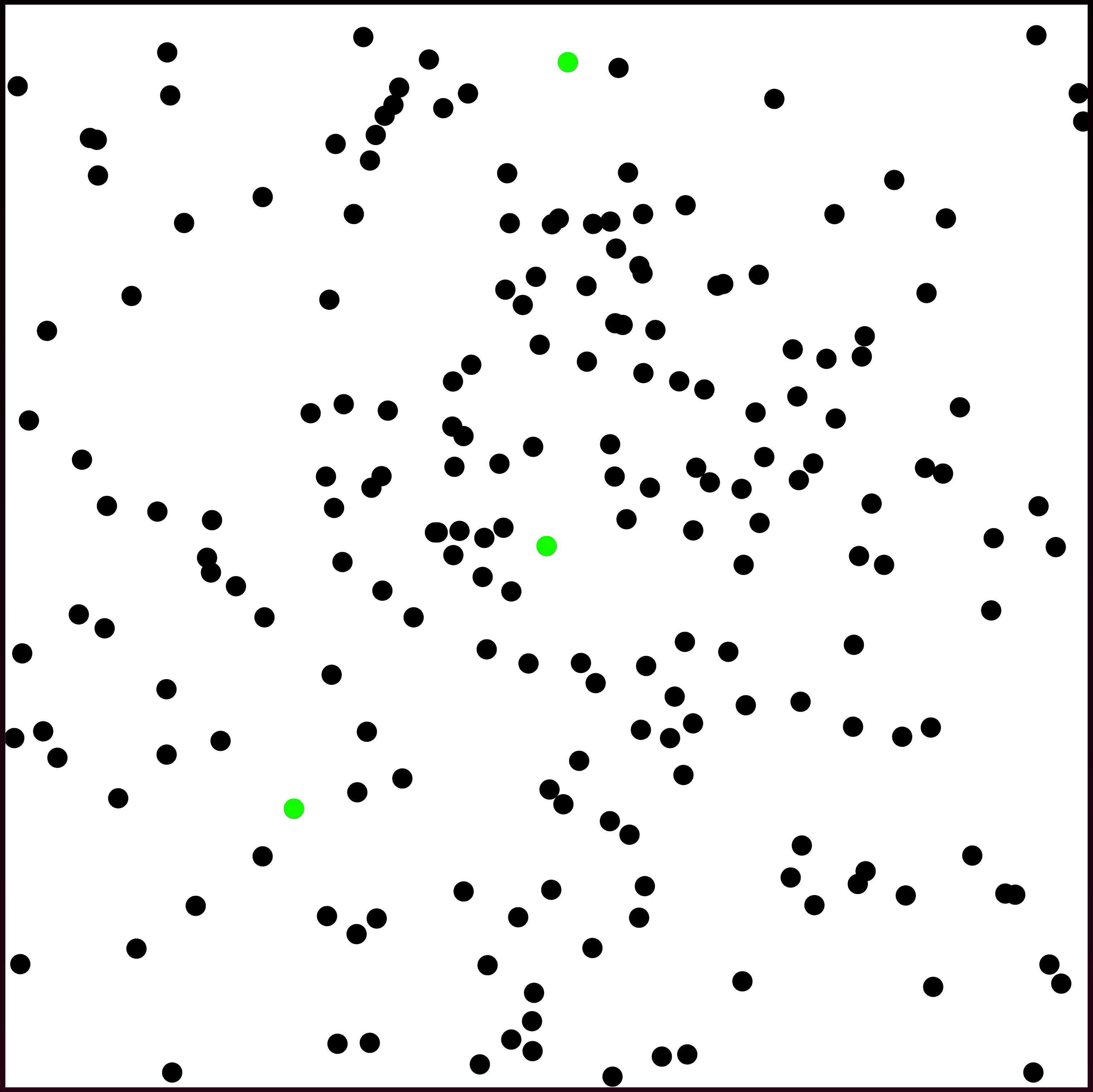


original

expanded by 5%

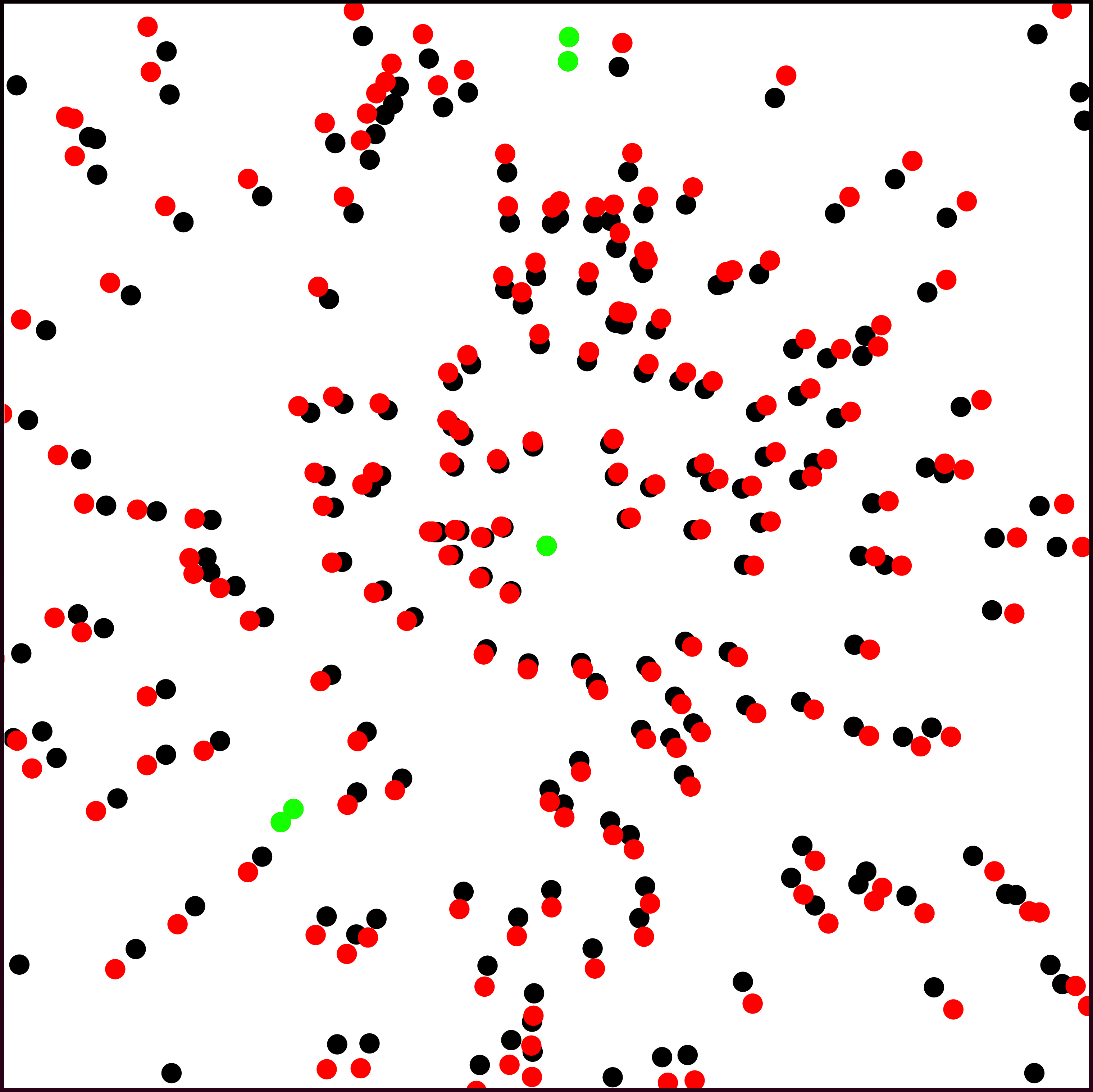
each dot represents a galaxy in the Universe

An Expanding Universe



"velocity" is proportional to distance: Hubble's Law!

An Expanding Universe



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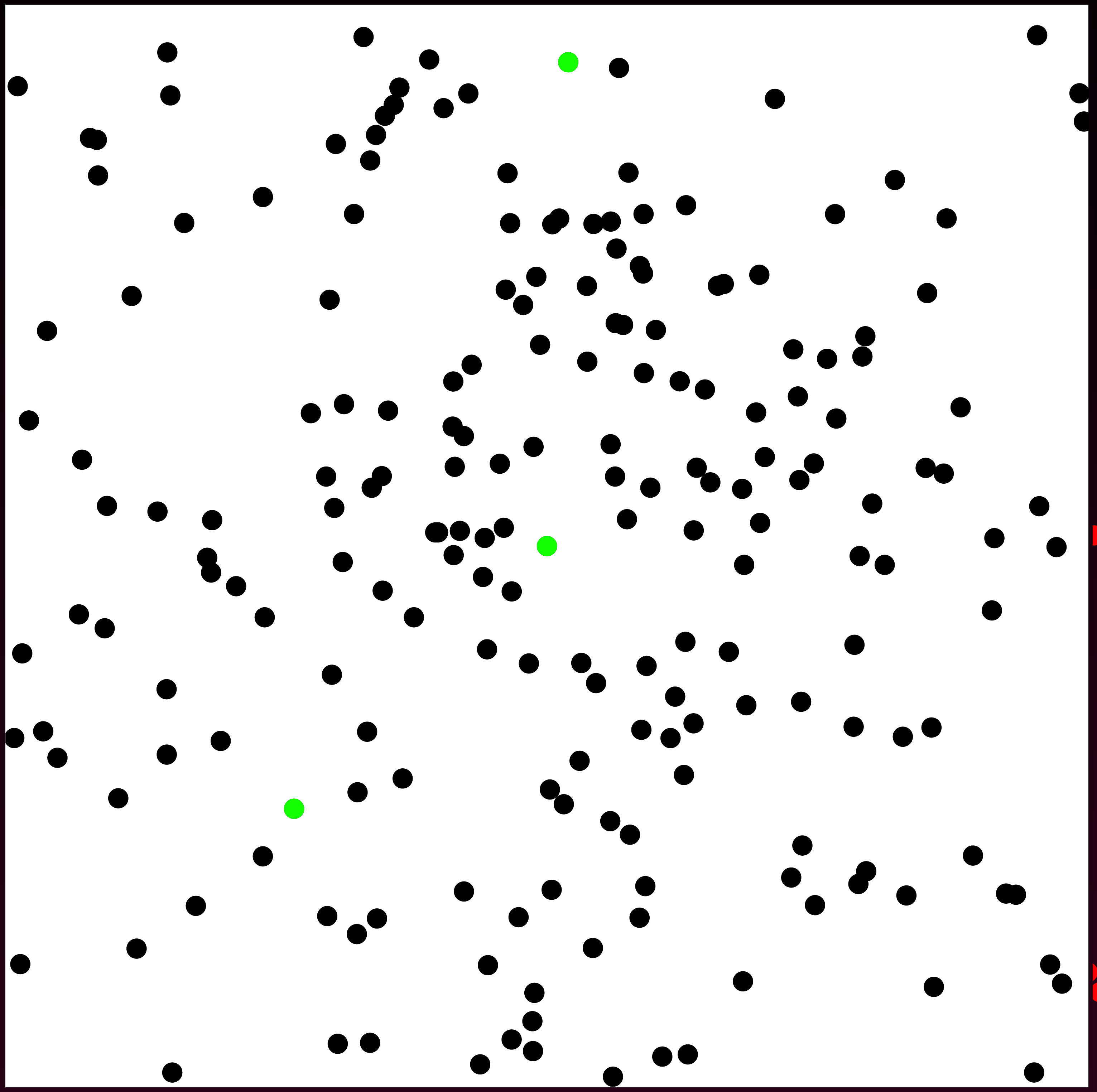
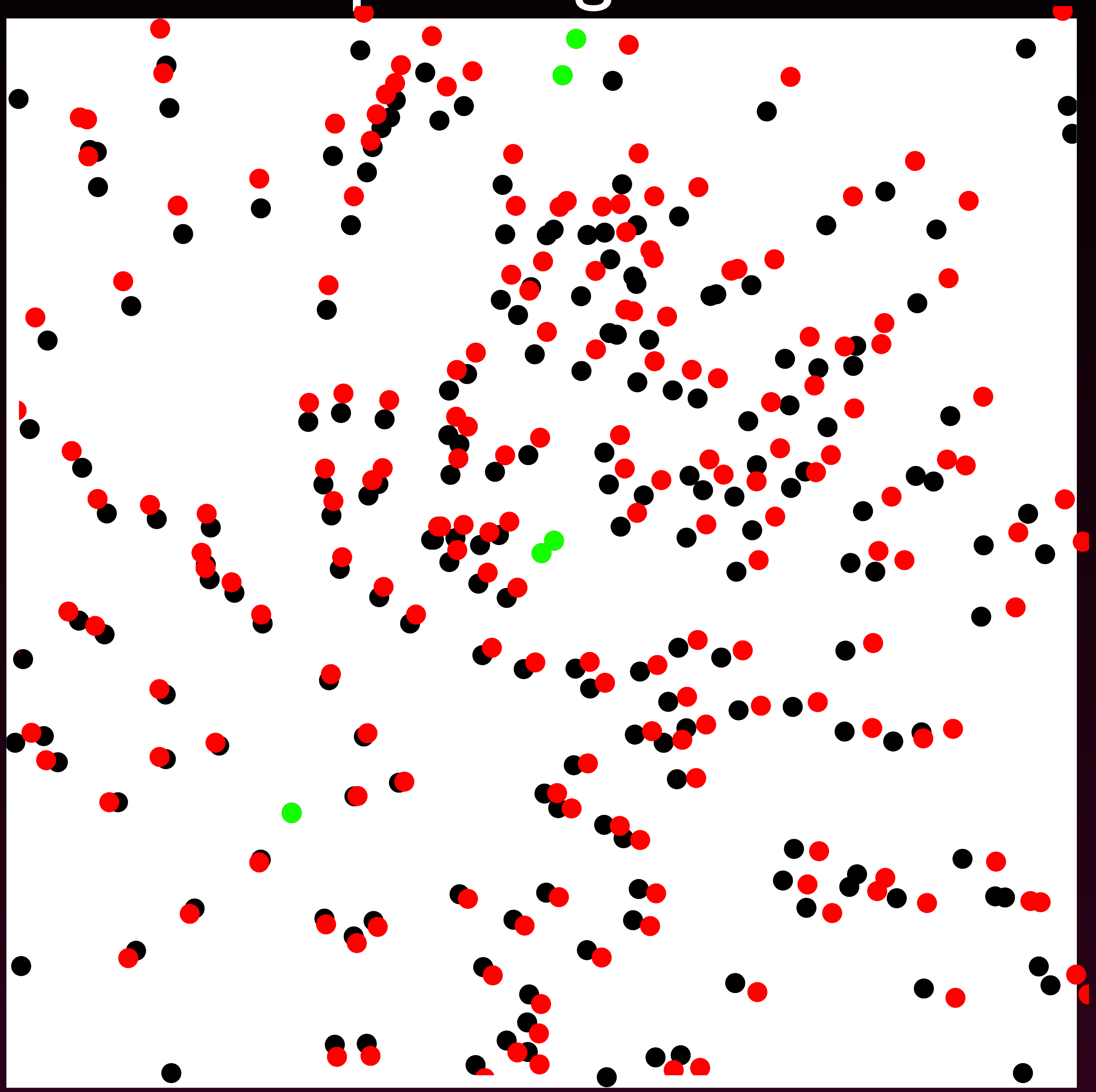


everyone sees the same relationship: Hubble's Law is universal!

An Expanding Universe



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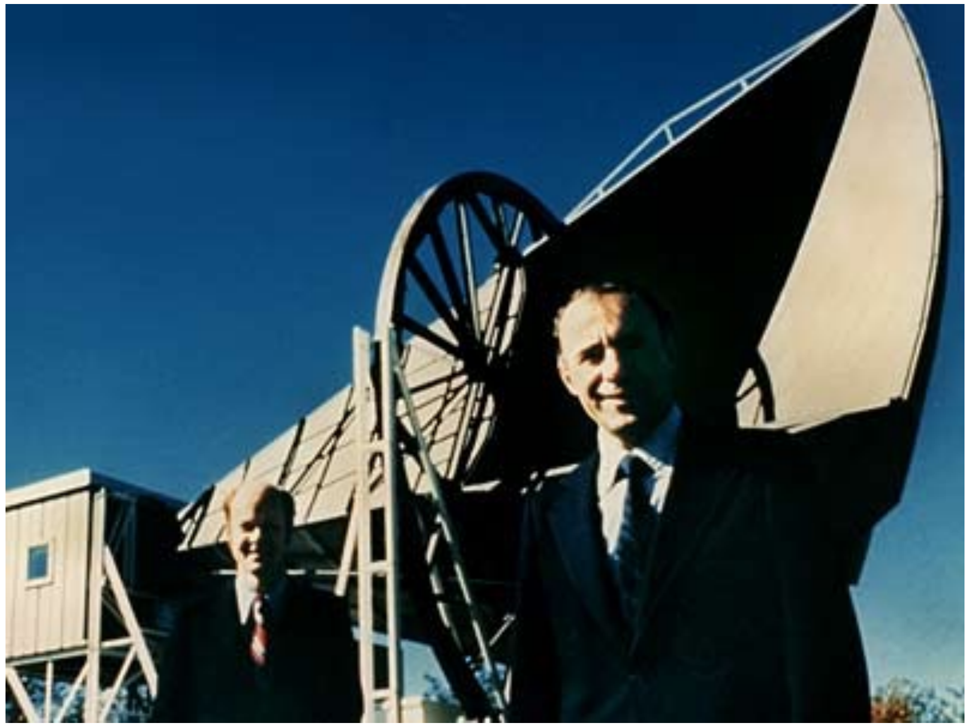
Cosmic Microwave Background Radiation

Penzias and Wilson 1965



Remnant radiation (photons) left over from 380,000 years after the Big Bang

Cooled from 3000 K to 2.7 K

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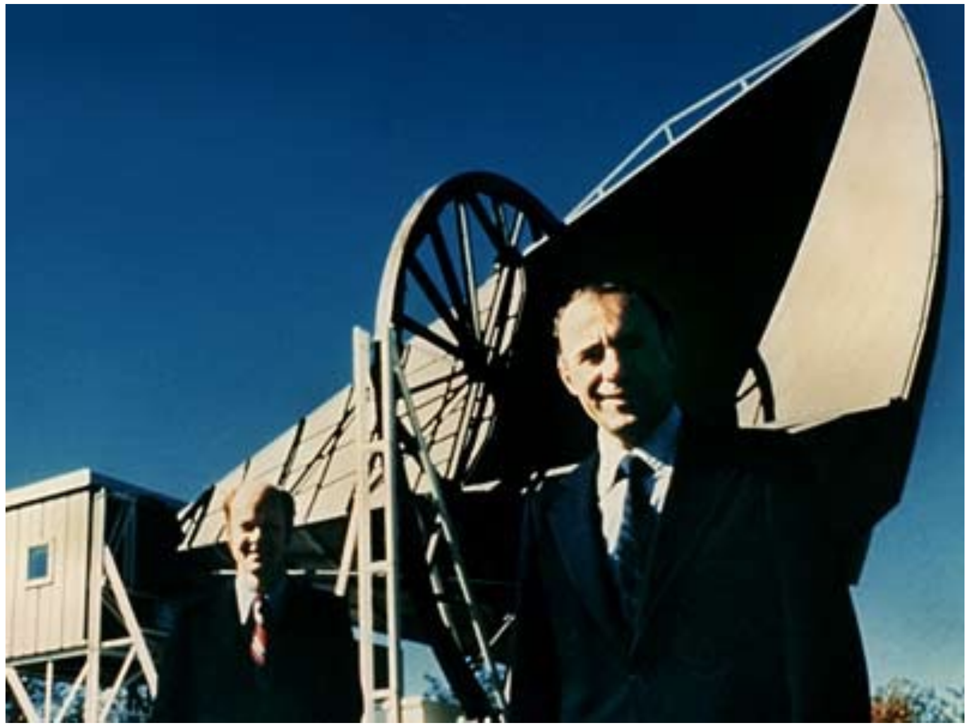

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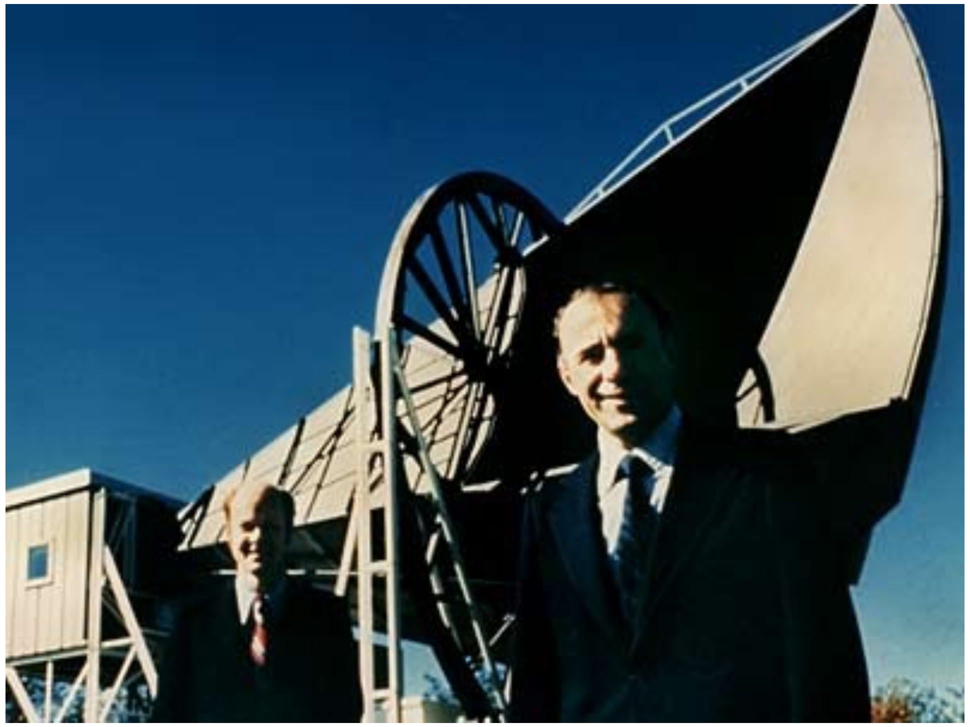

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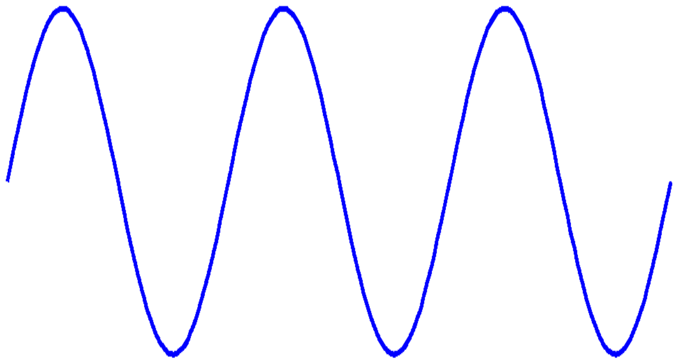

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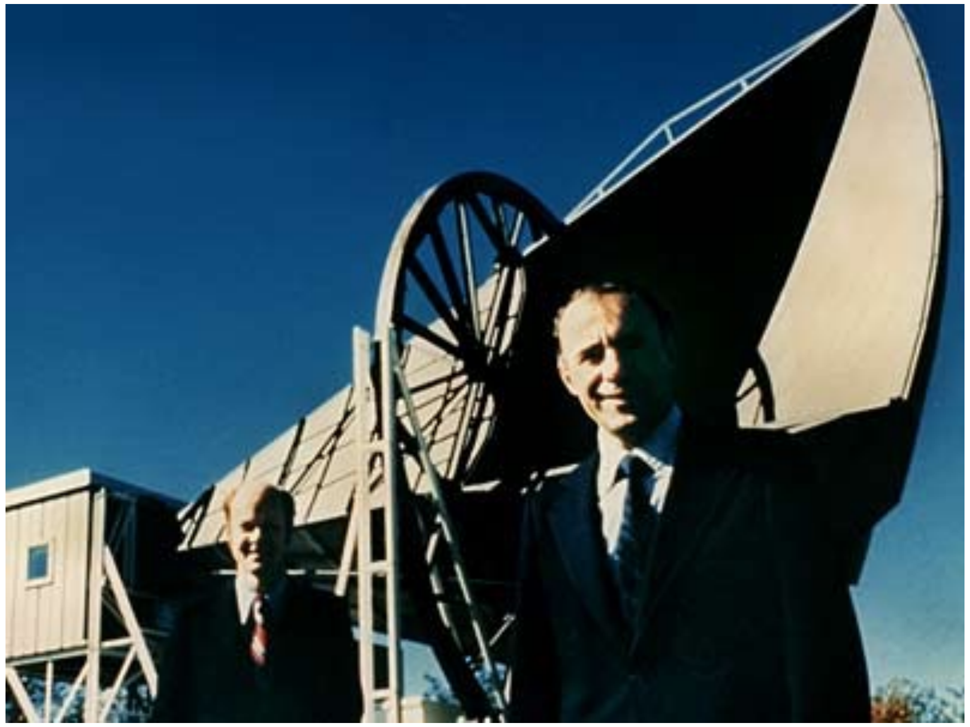

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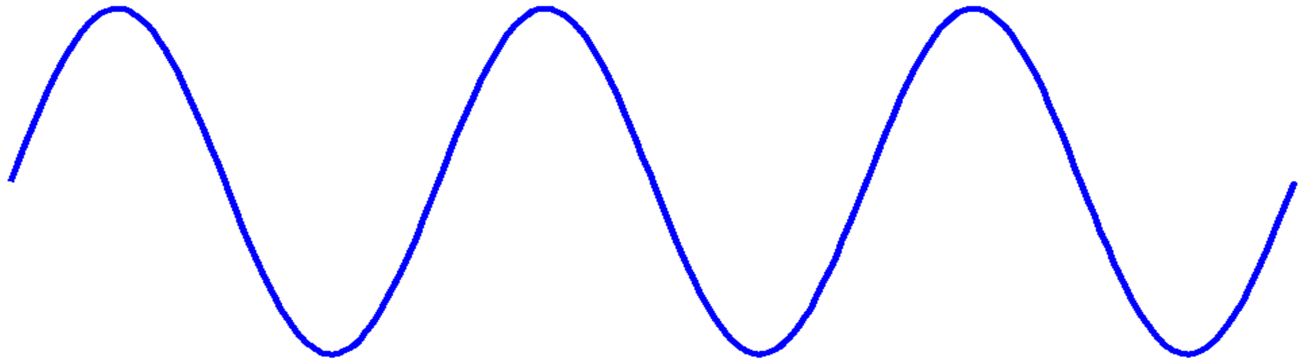


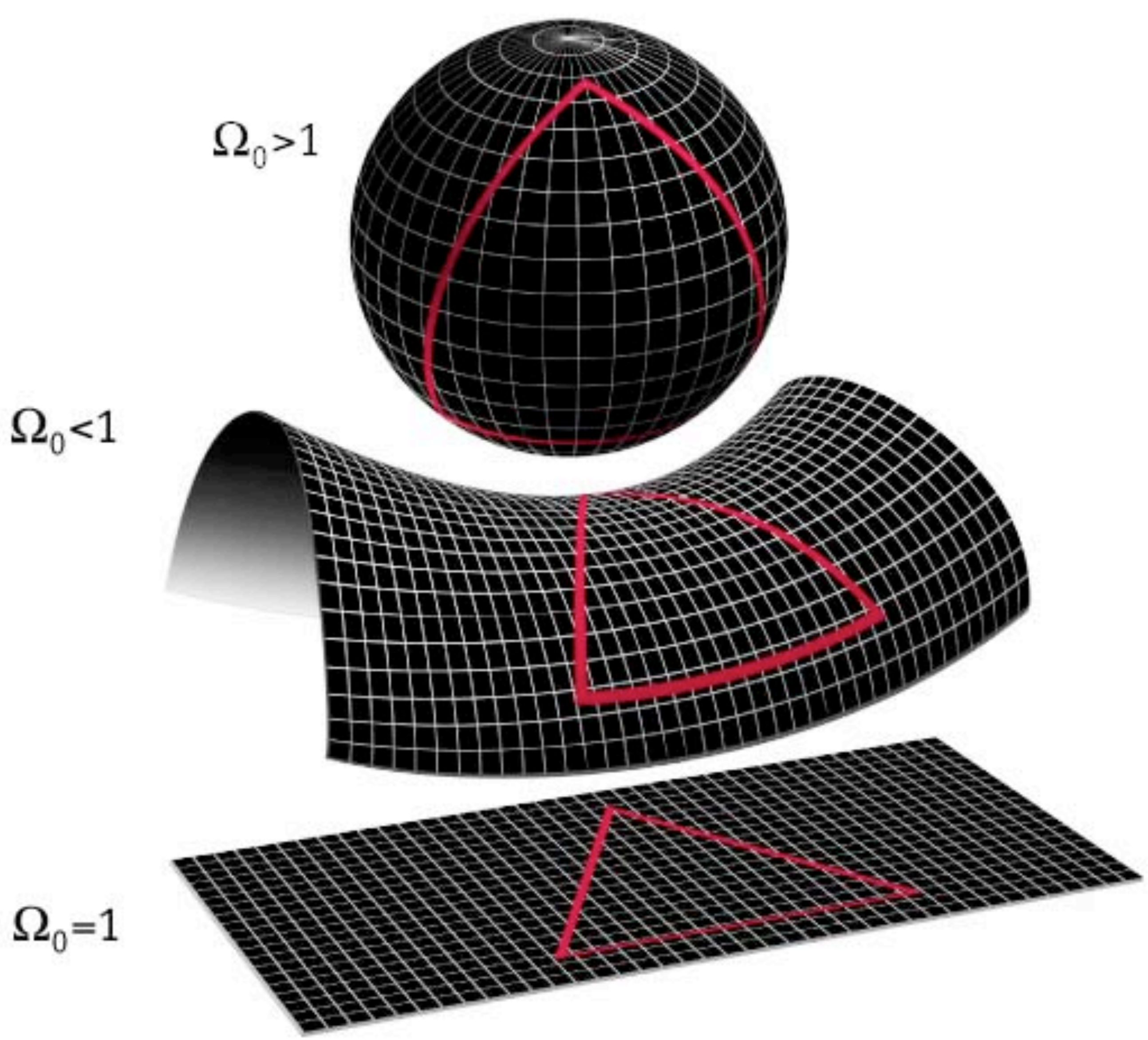
Something Wrong

$$H_0^2 = \left(\frac{v}{r}\right)^2 = \frac{8\pi G}{3}\,\rho_m$$

$$H_0^2 \,/\, H_0^2 = \frac{8\pi G}{3}\,\rho_m \,/\, H_0^2 = \Omega_m$$

$$\Omega_m = 0.05$$

Curvature



positive curvature

negative curvature

zero curvature (flat)

$$\Omega_K = -\frac{Kc^2}{R^2} \, / \, H_0^2$$

Cosmology in 1970

$$1 = \Omega_m + \Omega_K$$

0.05 0.95

- Expansion dominated by negative curvature
- Relatively small R

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Dark Matter

Cosmology in 1970

$$1 = \Omega_m + \Omega_K$$

0.05 0.95

- Expansion dominated by negative curvature
- Relatively small R

This is wrong

Dark Matter

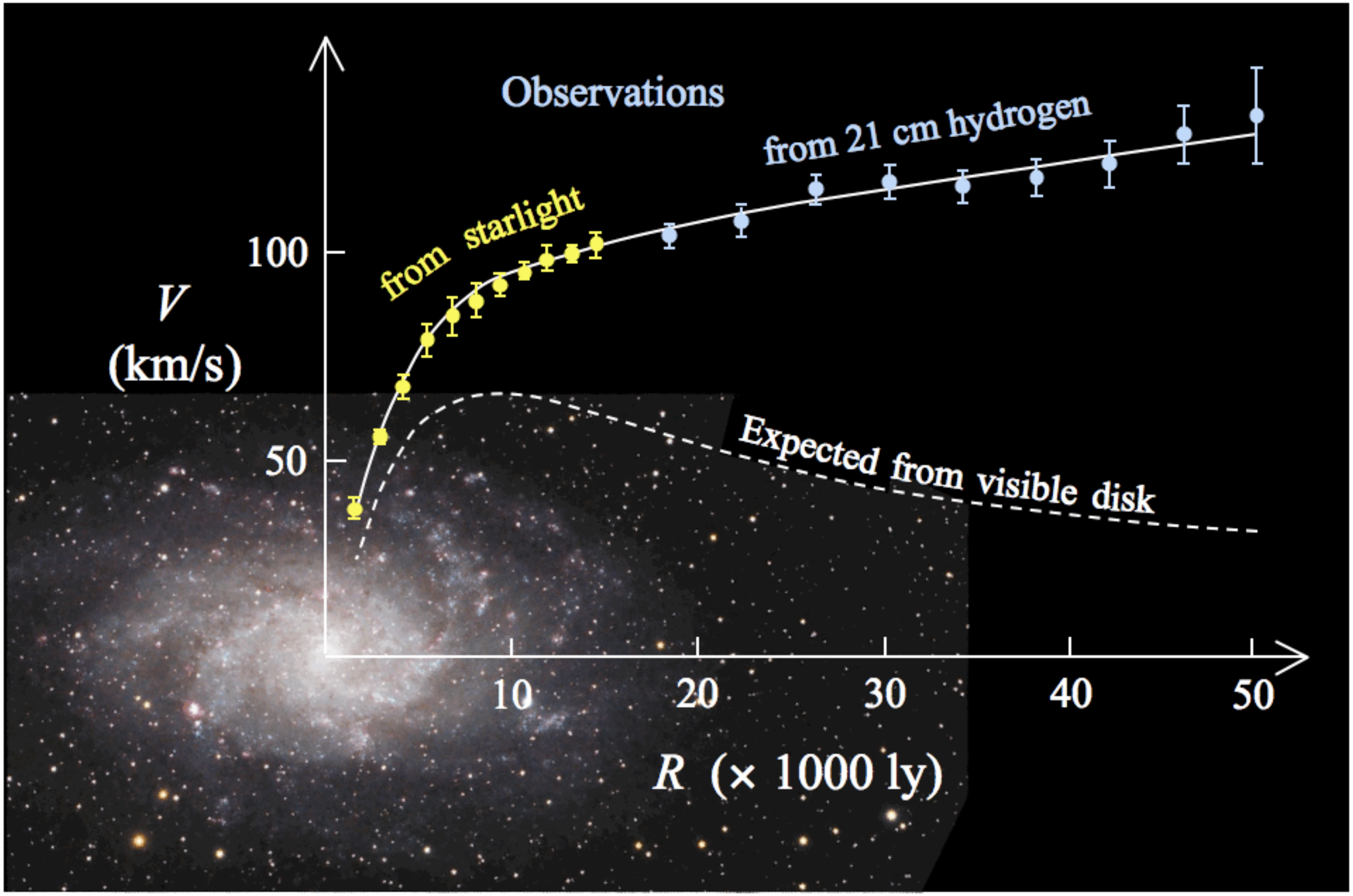
Dark Energy

Dark Matter

About 80% of the matter
in the universe is dark

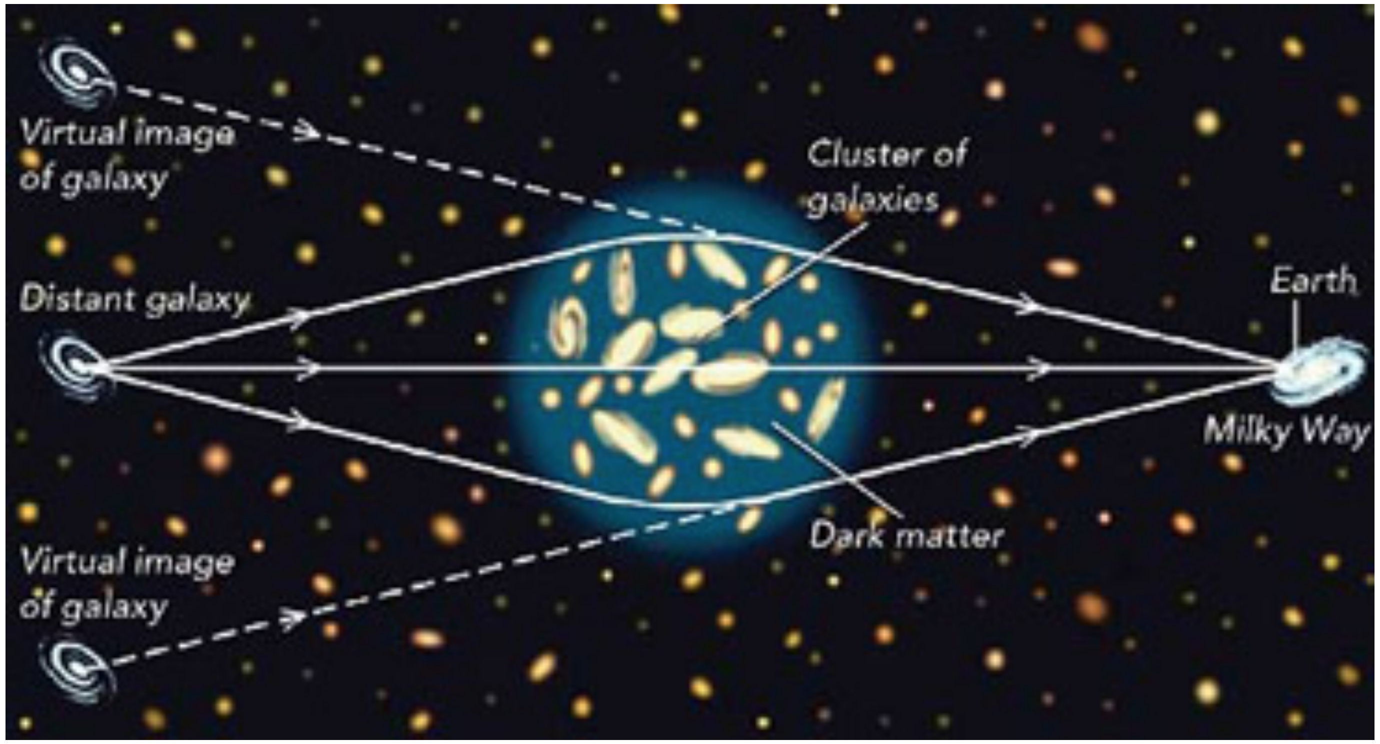
Evidence for Dark Matter (1)

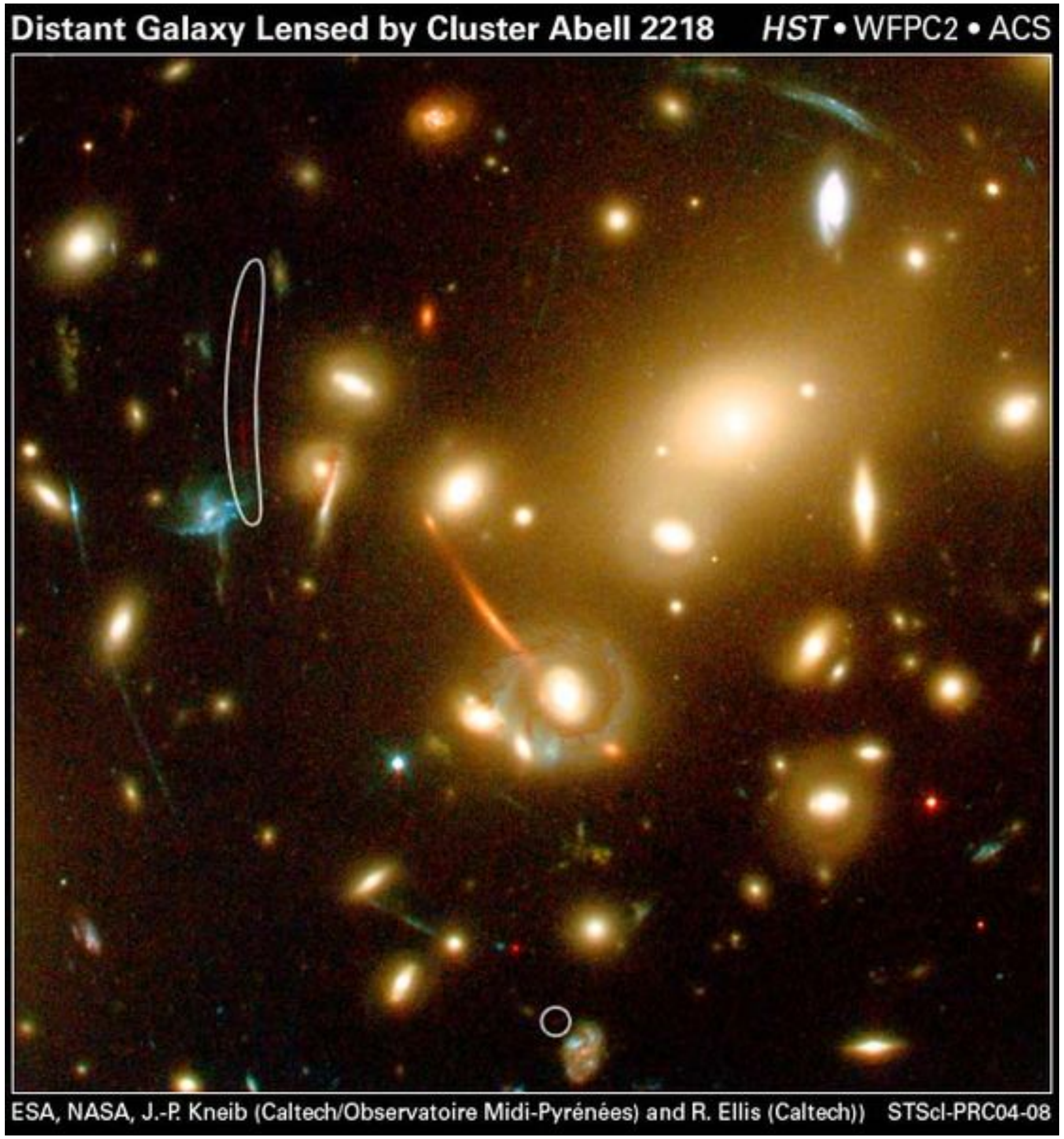
Rotational curve of galaxy



Evidence for Dark Matter (2)

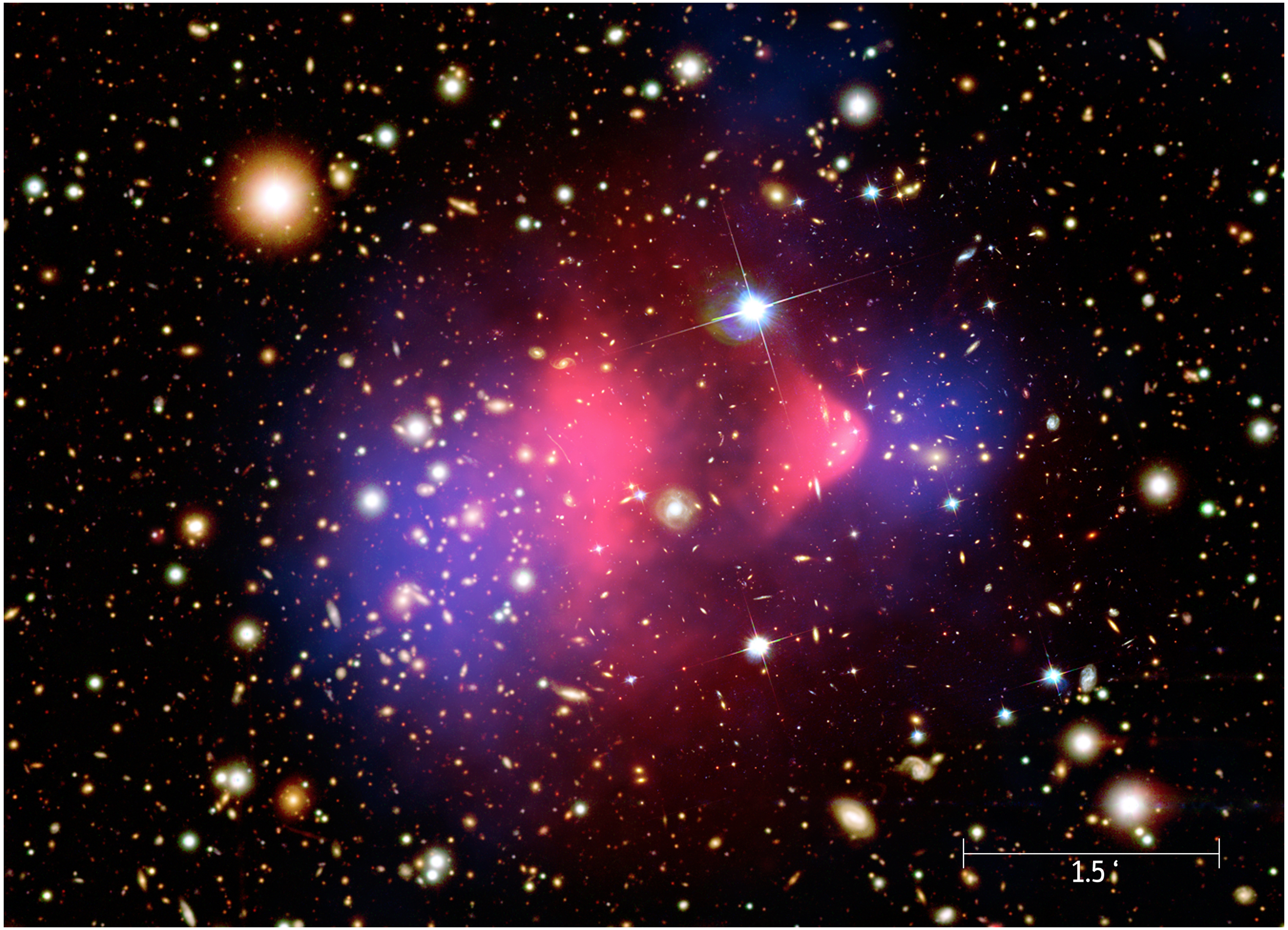
Gravitational lensing



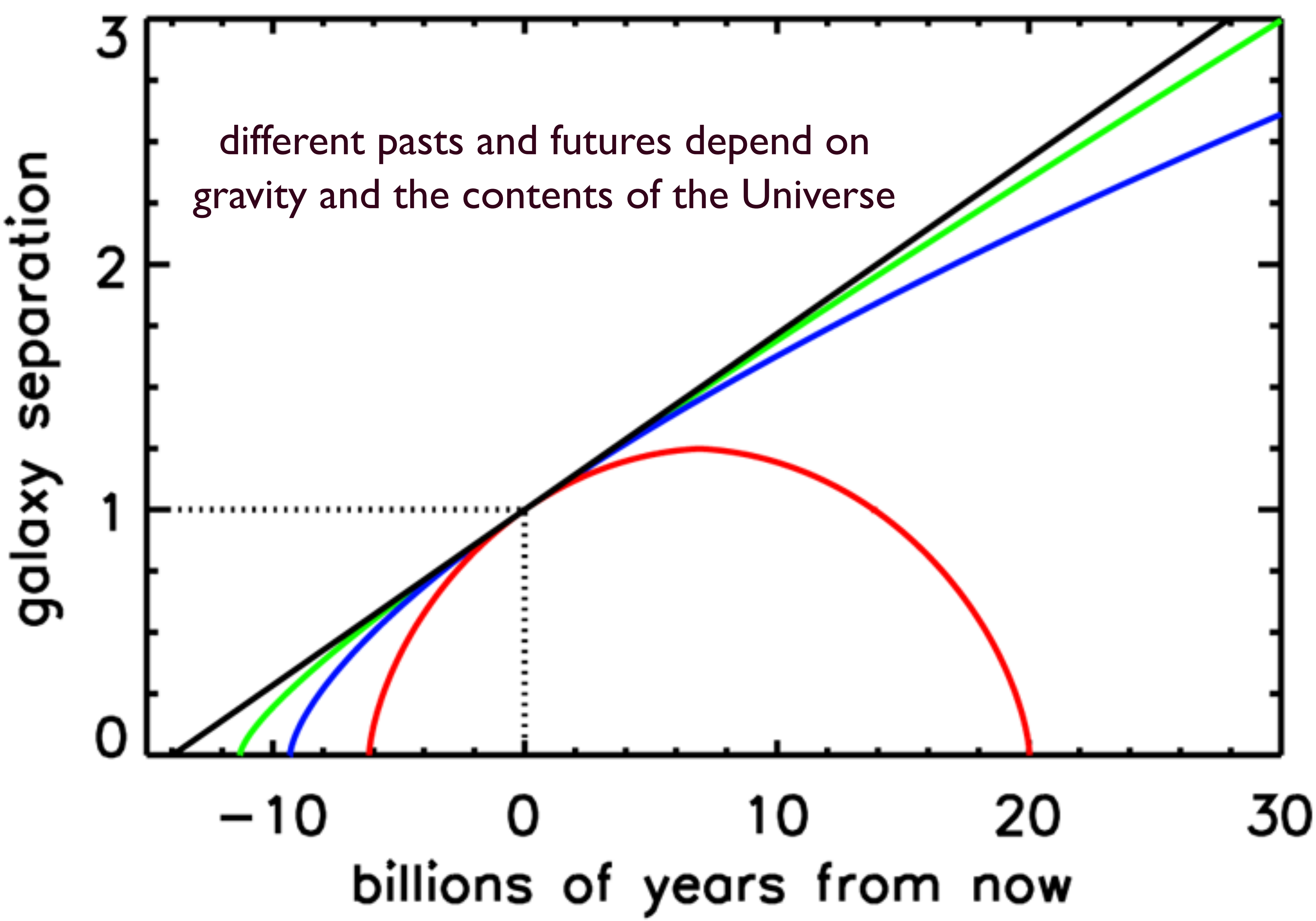


Evidence for Dark Matter (3)

Bullet Cluster

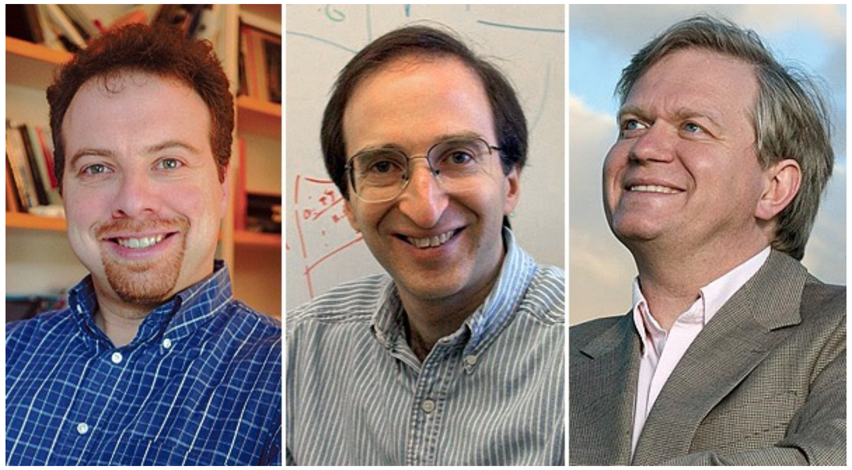


Evolution of the Universe

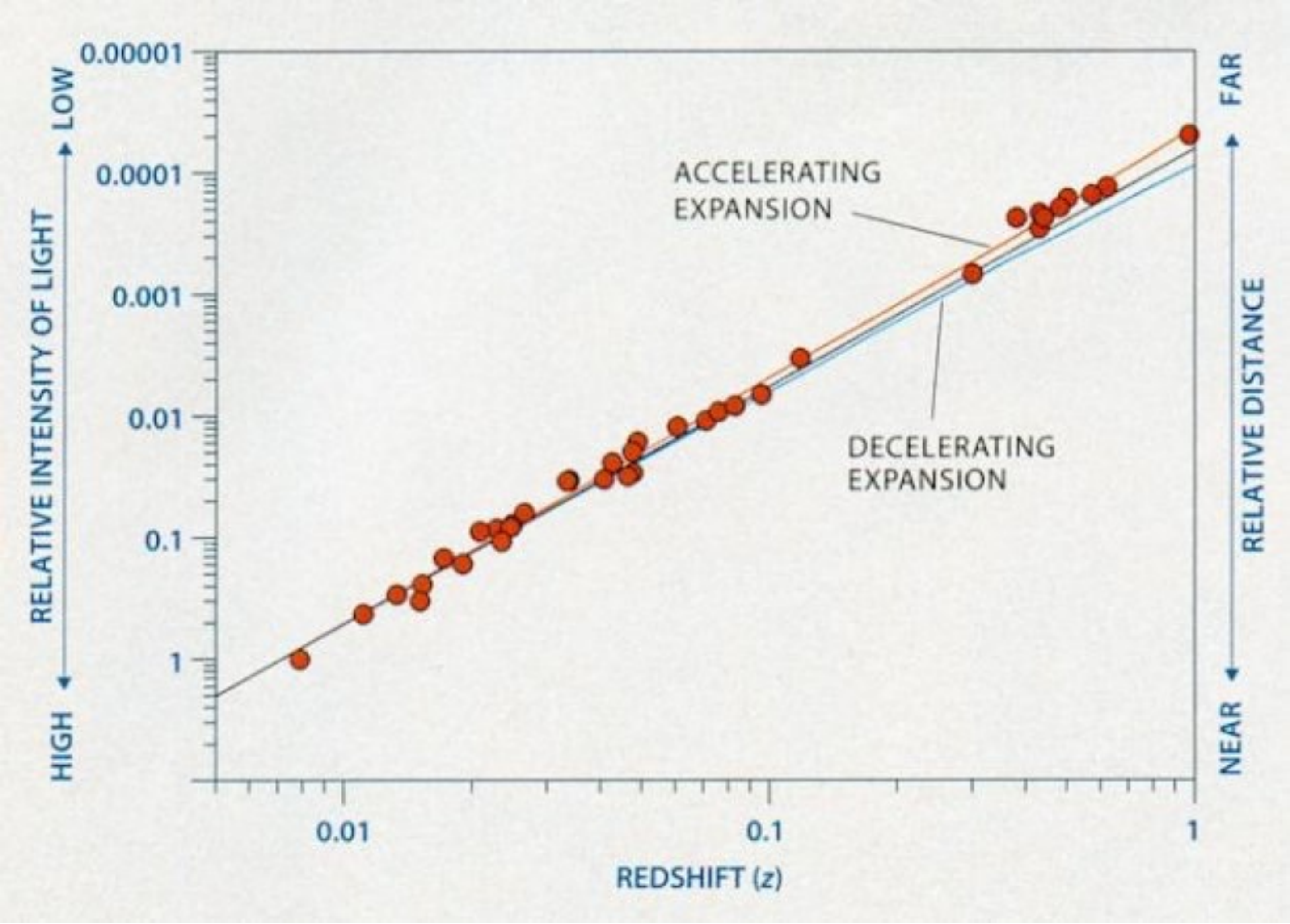


Dark Energy

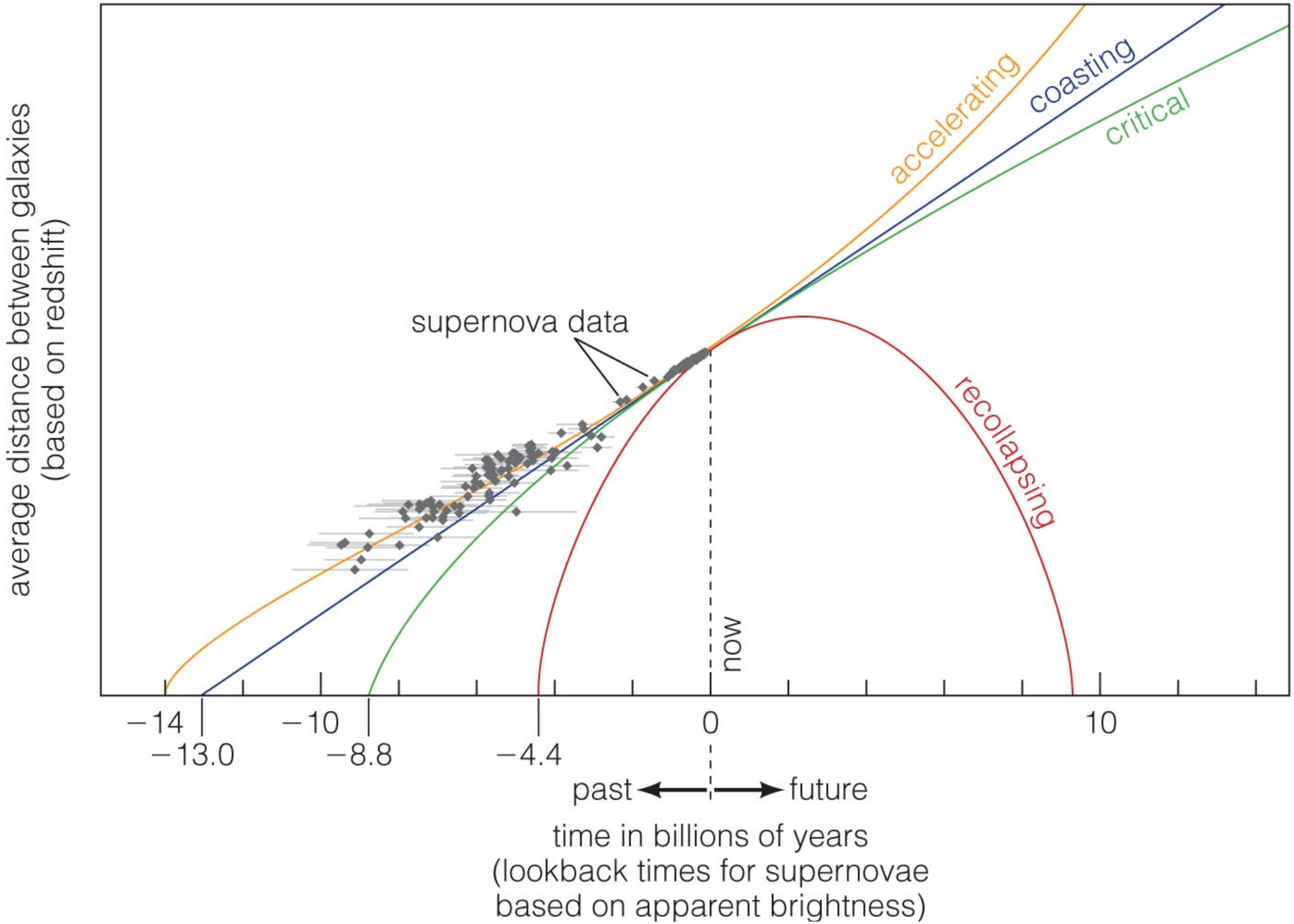
Riess, Perlmutter, Schmidt 1998



Type Ia supernova



Accelerated Expansion of Universe



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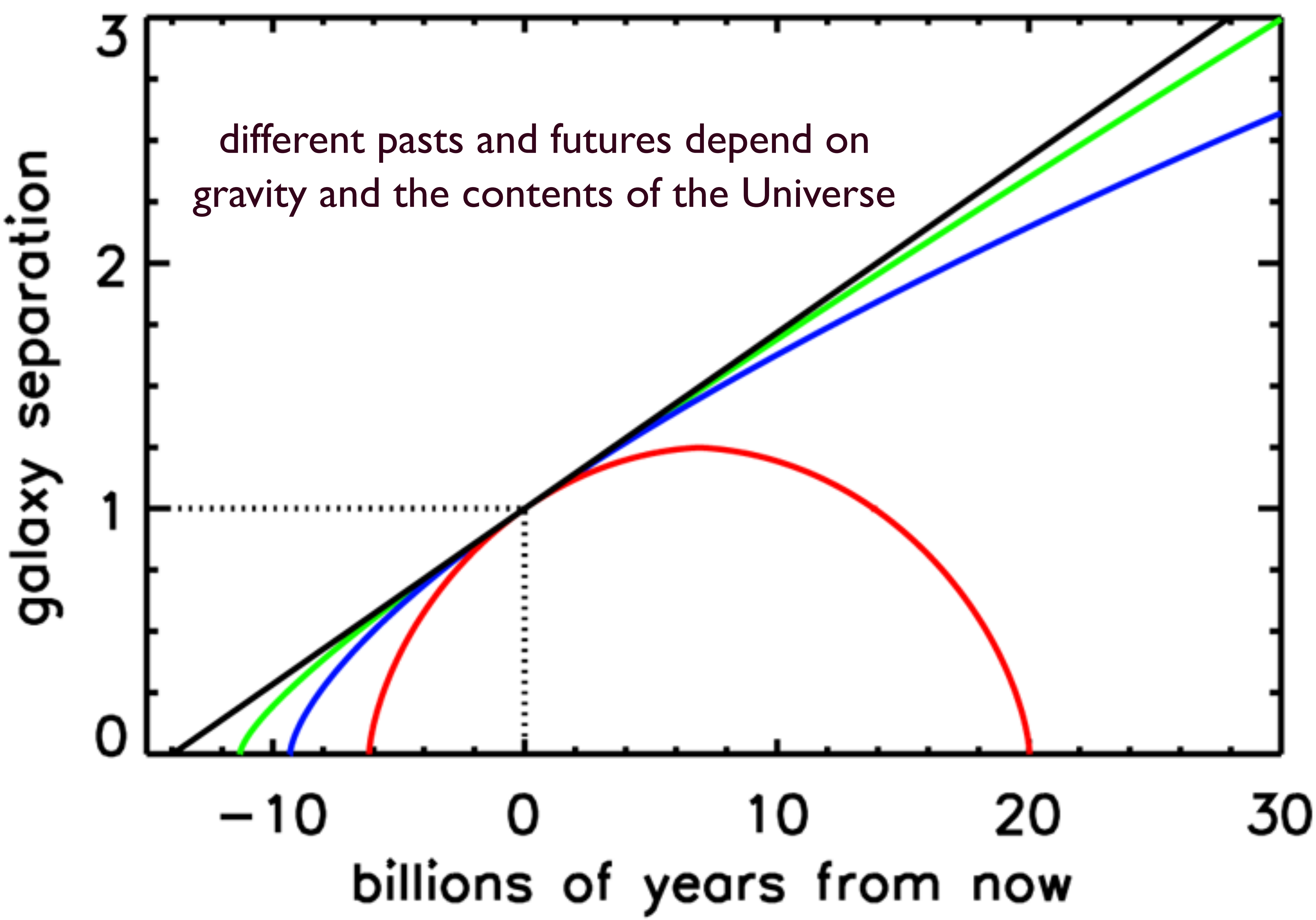

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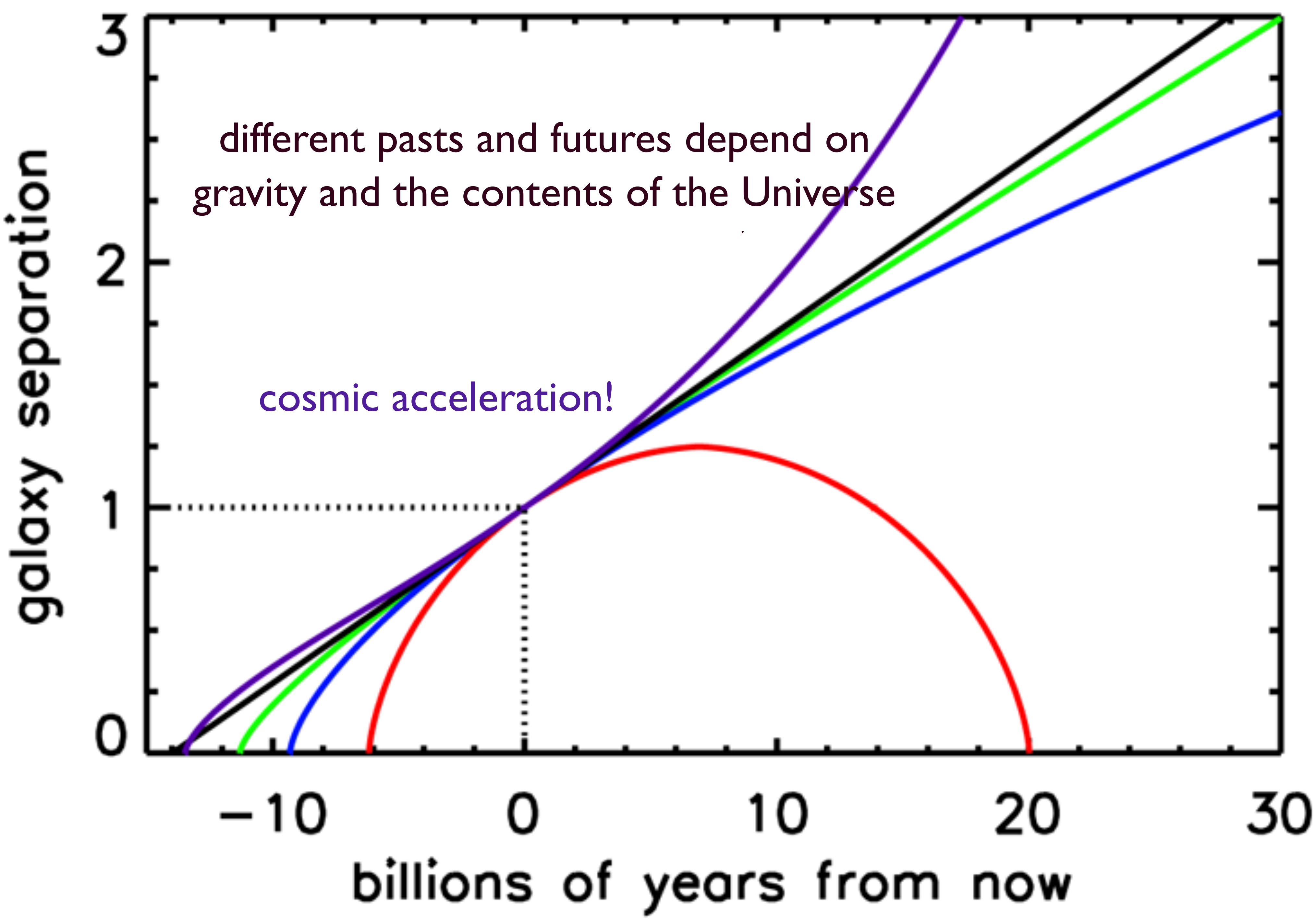

Cosmology in 2017

$$1 \;=\; \Omega_m \;+\; \Omega_{dm} \;+\; \Omega_\Lambda \;+\; \Omega_K$$

$$0.05 \qquad 0.25 \qquad 0.7 \qquad \approx 0$$

- Dark Energy largest contribution to expansion
- Universe is nearly or completely flat

Cosmology in 2017

$$1 = \Omega_m + \Omega_{dm} + \Omega_\Lambda + \Omega_K$$

$$0.05 \qquad 0.25 \qquad 0.7 \qquad \approx 0$$

- Dark Energy largest contribution to expansion
- Universe is nearly or completely flat

How big is the universe?

Vacuum Energy

- Dark energy is the energy of vacuum
- It has a fixed energy density that doesn't change as the universe expands

Ω_Λ is constant

20 Billion Years from Now

$$\Omega_m = \frac{8\pi G}{3}\rho_m \sim \frac{1}{a^3} \qquad \Omega_{dm} = \frac{8\pi G}{3}\rho_{dm} \sim \frac{1}{a^3}$$

$$\Omega_\Lambda = \frac{8\pi G}{3}\rho_\Lambda$$ constant

$$1 = \Omega_m + \Omega_{dm} + \Omega_\Lambda + \Omega_K$$

$$\approx 0 \qquad 0.01 \qquad 0.99 \qquad \approx 0$$

Expansion completely dominated by Dark Energy

Exponential Expansion

Far in the future

$$\Omega_{dm} = \Omega_m = 0 \qquad \Omega_\Lambda = 1$$

$$\left(\frac{v}{r}\right)^2 = \frac{8\pi G}{3}\rho_\Lambda = \Lambda$$

$$\left(\frac{v}{r}\right) = \sqrt{\Lambda} \qquad v = \frac{dr}{dt} = \sqrt{\Lambda}\, r$$

Exponential Expansion

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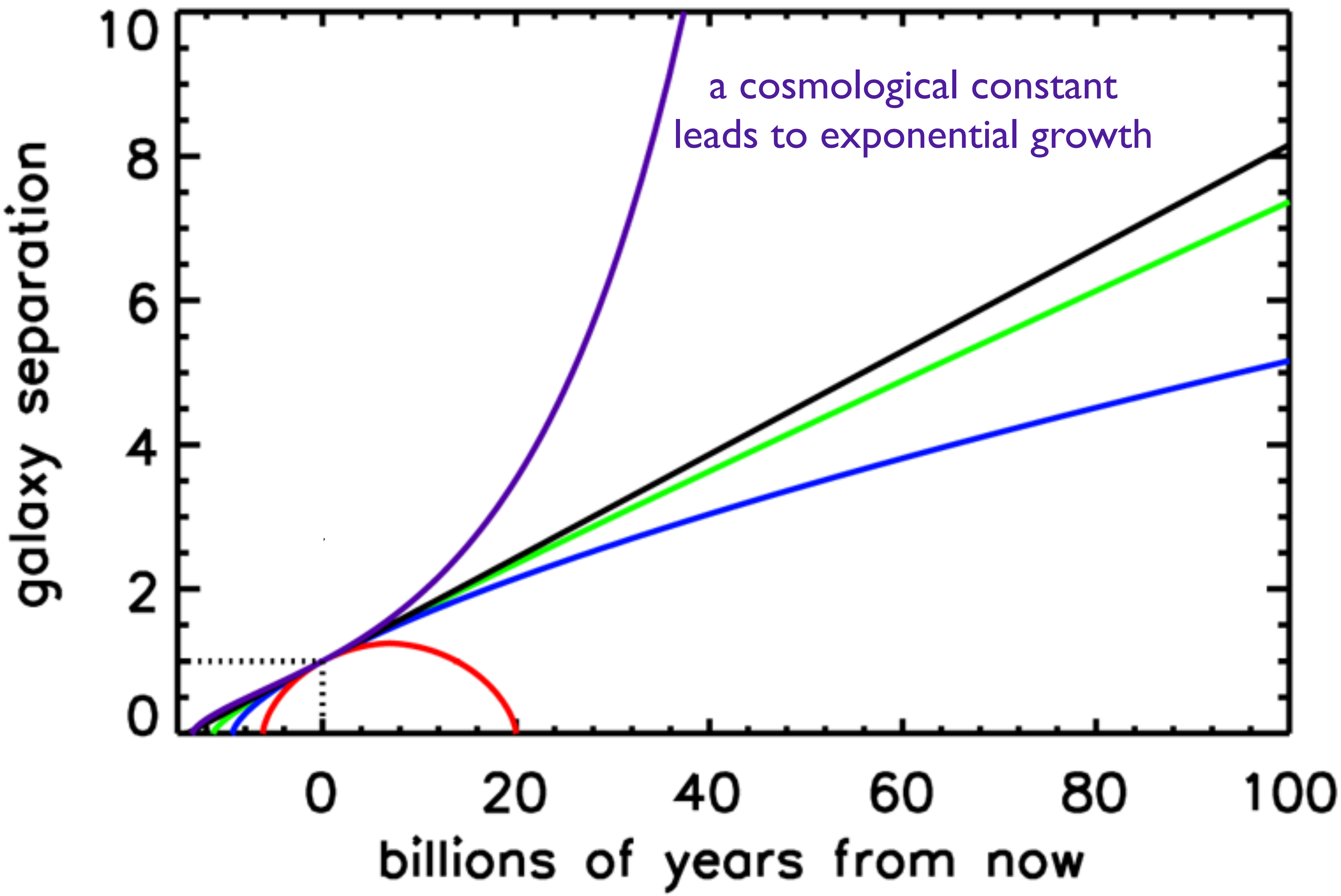
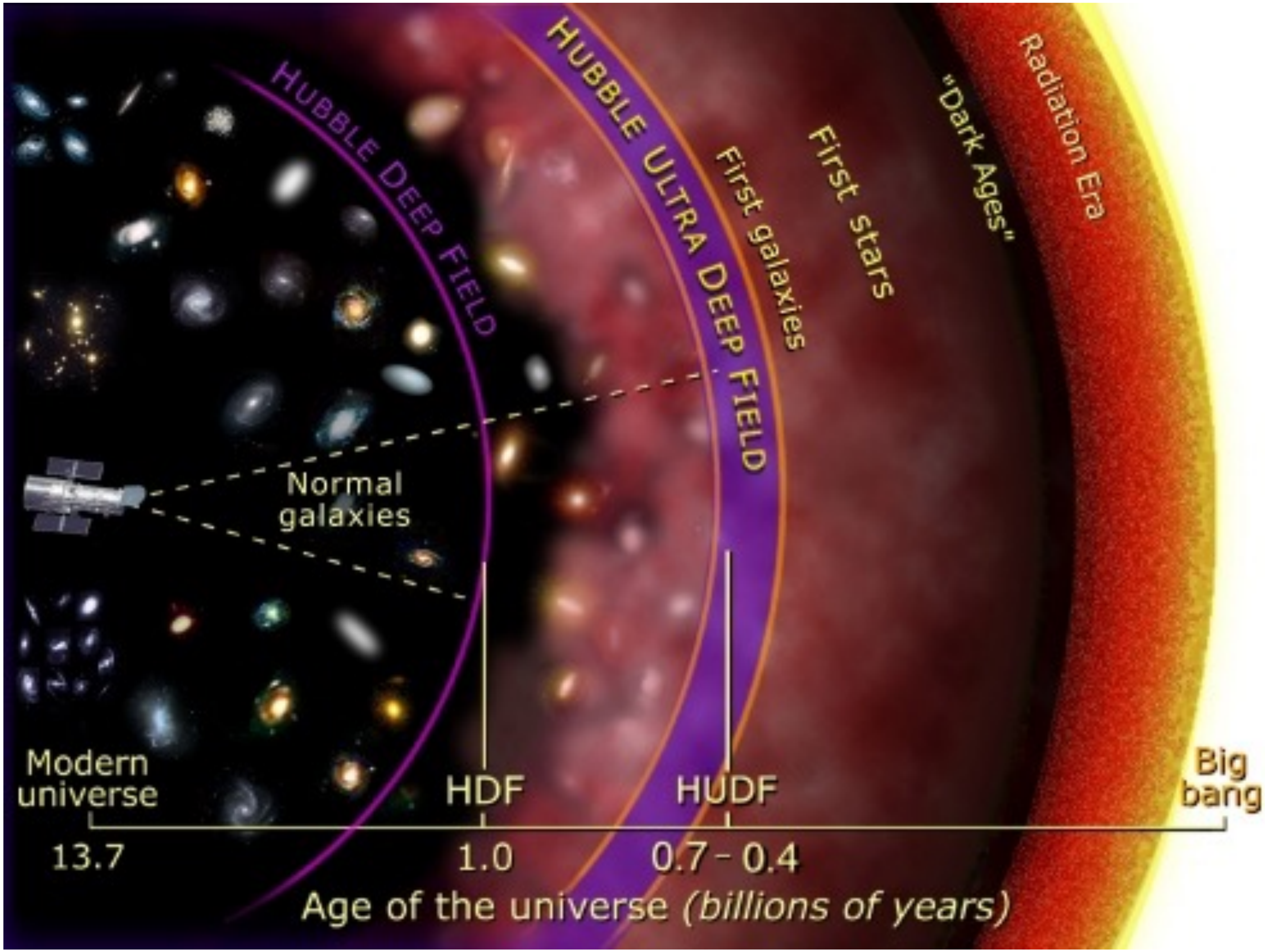
$$r \sim e^{\sqrt{\Lambda}\, t}$$

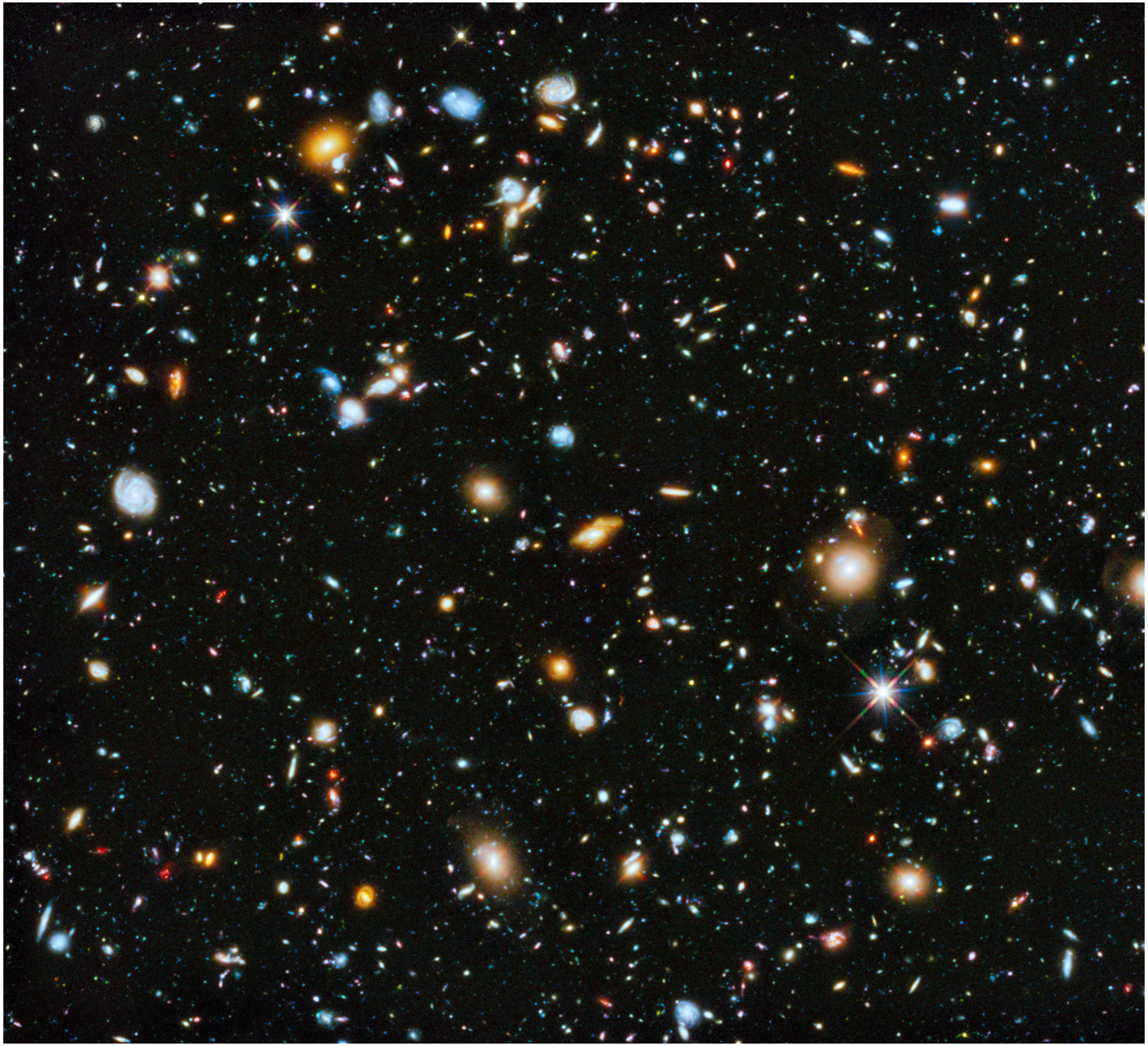
The Future of the Universe



w Far Back Can We See?



Hubble Deep Field



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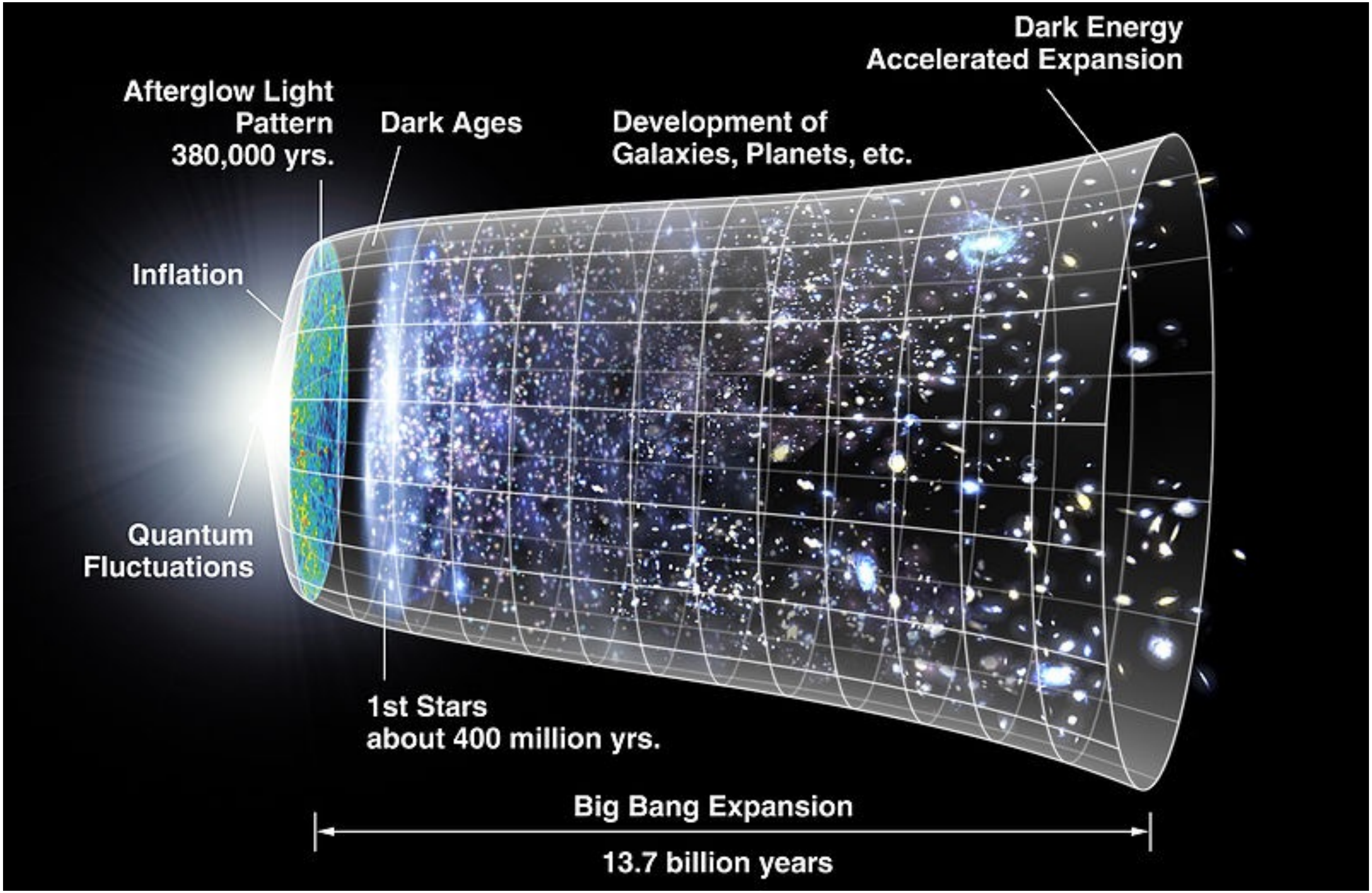
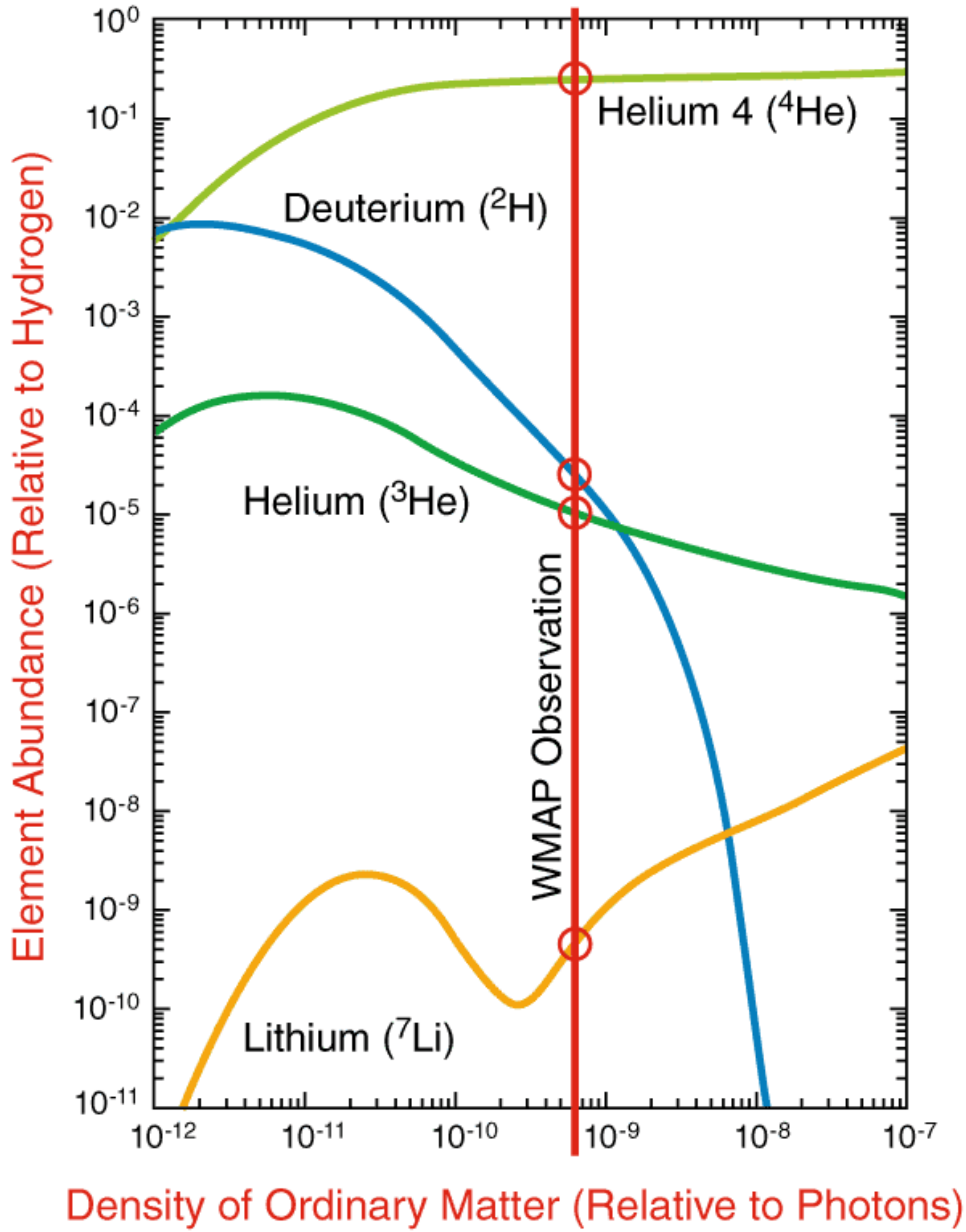


Abundance of Light Nuclei



What Happened Before Recombination

10^{-12} s	10^{16} K	limit of our knowledge of physics
10^{-6} s	10^{12} K	protons and neutrons form
1 s	10^{10} K	matter anti-matter annihilate
10 s	10^{10} K	photon dominance (e^+e^- annihilation)
3 min	10^{9} K	nucleosynthesis
4×10^{5} y	3000 K	atoms form (CMB from this era)

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What happened before 10^{-12} s?

Problems with Simple Big Bang Theory

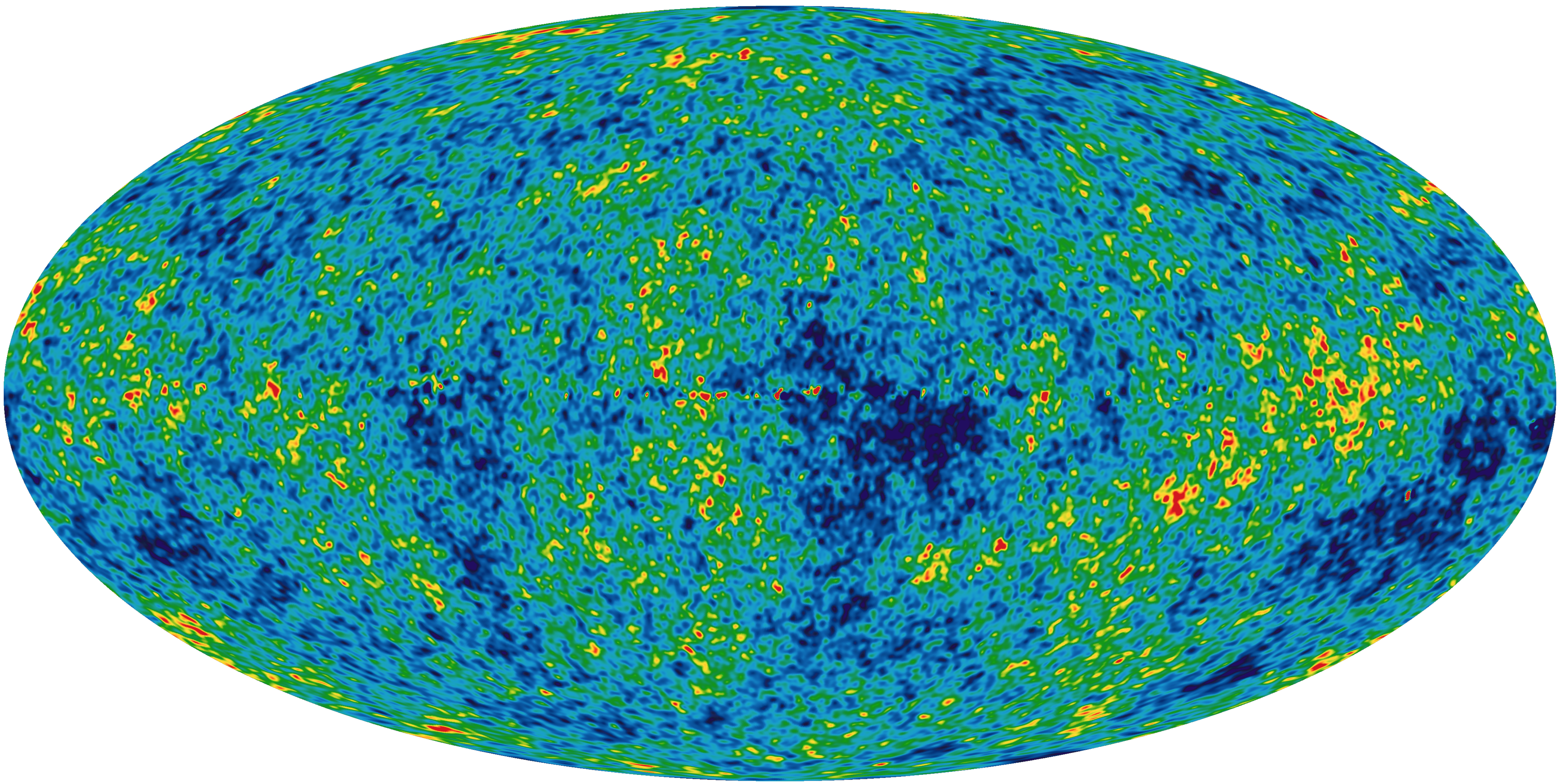
1) Where are magnetic monopoles?

2) Why is the universe so flat?

3) Why are distant parts of the universe in thermal equilibrium? The horizon problem?

CMB

2.7 K microwave photons streaming to us from there
recombination era 380,000 years after the Big Bang



non-uniformities 1 part in 10^5

Inflation

- Around 10^{-32} s universe increased in size by more than 10^{26}
- Doubling time 10^{-34} s

Current doubling time 10^{10} years

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What was driving the exponential expansion?

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Vacuum energy

Cosmological constant

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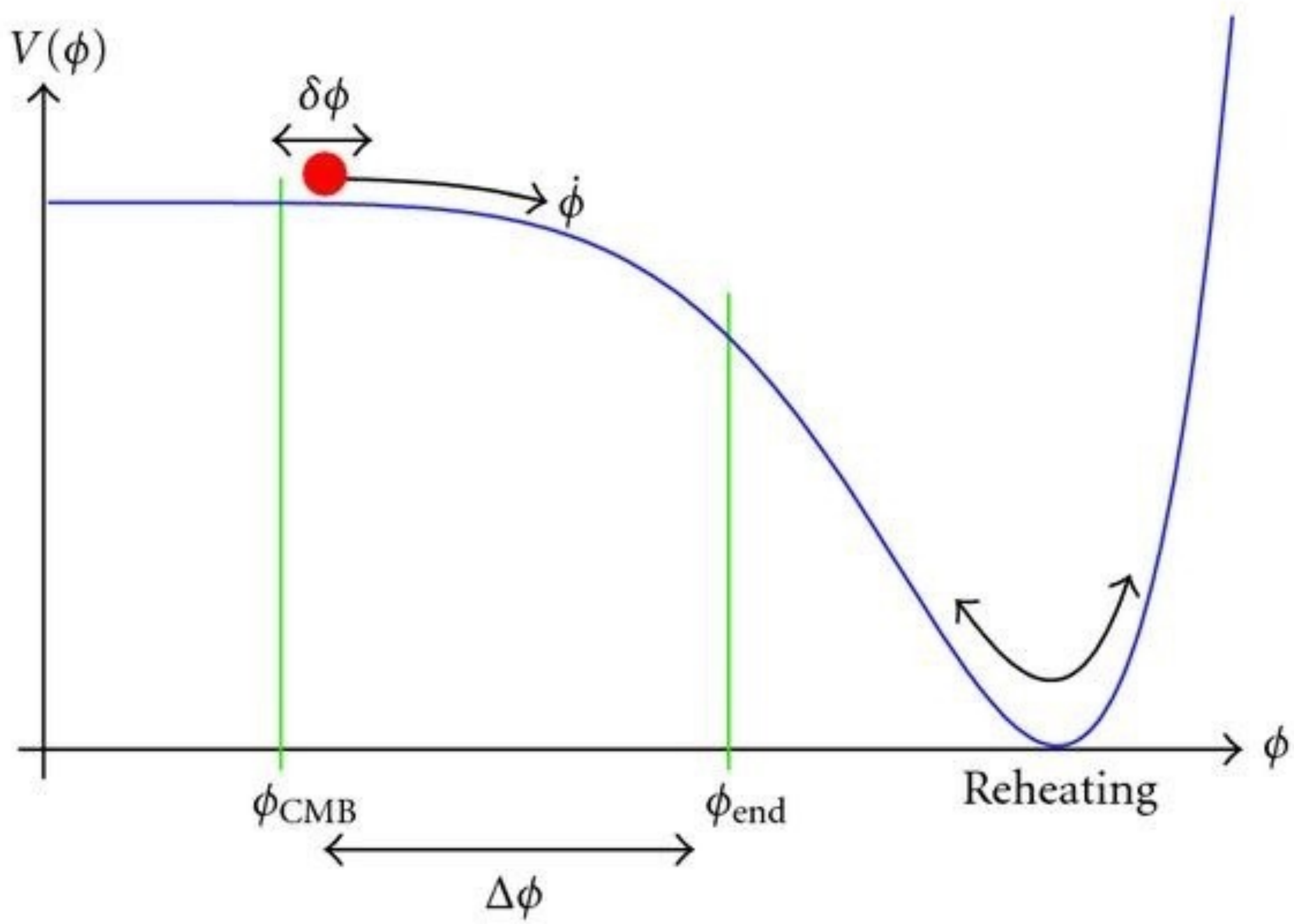

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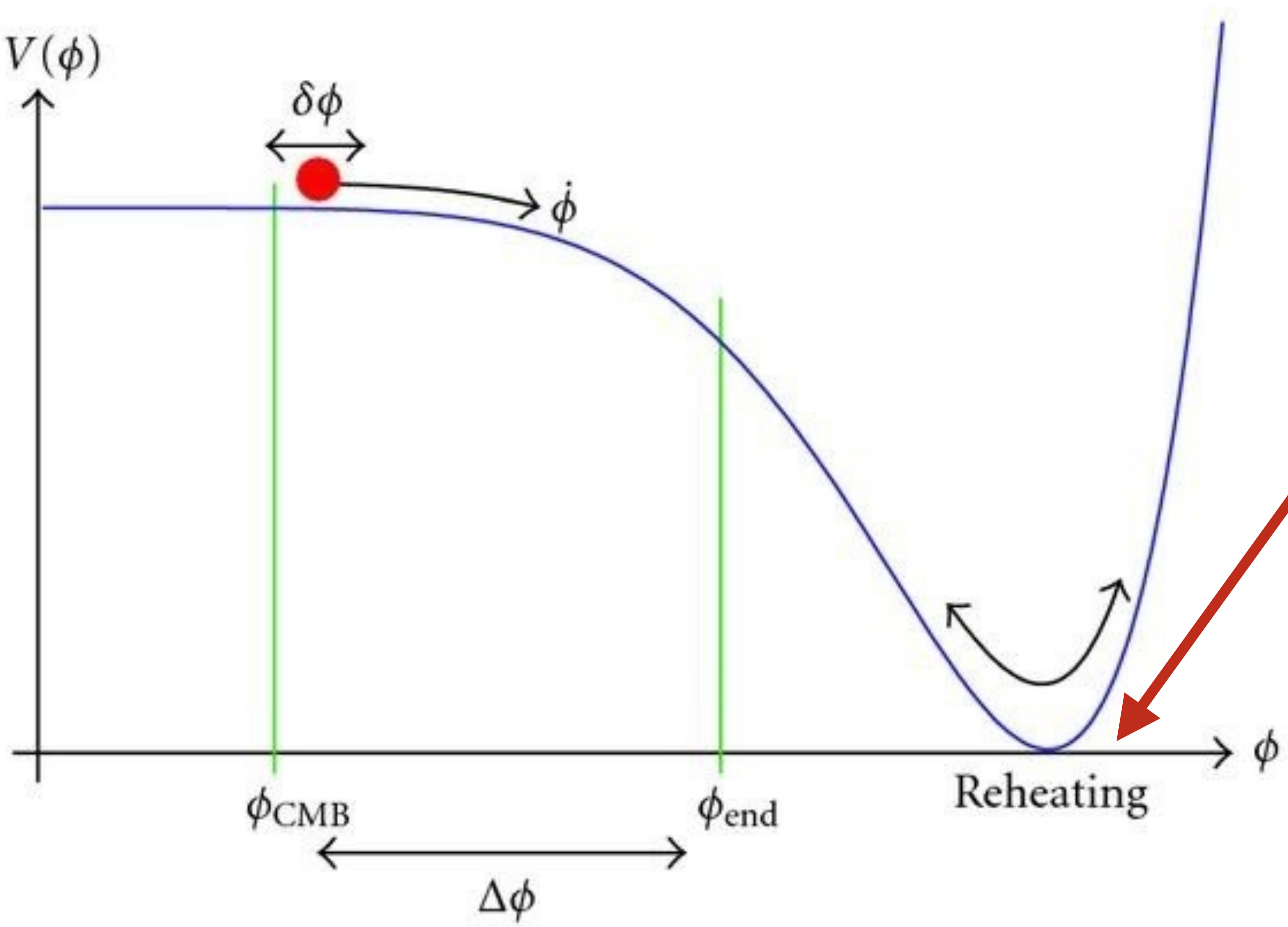

not exactly zero

Current doubling time 10^{10} years

What was driving the exponential expansion?

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Cosmological constant

Planck Scale

Planck's constant (quantum mechanics): $\hbar$

Speed of light (special relativity): c

Universal gravitation constant: G

$$m_{Pl} = \sqrt{\frac{\hbar c}{G}} = 0.02 \text{ mg}$$

$$E_{Pl} = m_{Pl} c^2 = \sqrt{\frac{\hbar c^5}{G}} = 10^{19} \text{ GeV}$$

$$l_{Pl} = \frac{\hbar}{m_{pl} c} = \sqrt{\frac{\hbar c}{G}} = 10^{-35} \text{ m}$$

$$t_{Pl} = \frac{l_{Pl}}{c} = \sqrt{\frac{G\hbar}{c^5}} = 10^{-43} \text{ s}$$

Cosmological Constant Problem

Natural value for Λ:

Planck energy in Planck cube

$$\frac{10^{19}\ \mathrm{GeV}}{(10^{-35}\ \mathrm{m})^3} = 10^{124}\ \mathrm{GeV/m^3}$$

Measured value for Λ: $1\ \mathrm{GeV/m^3}$

Off by 124 orders of magnitude!!!

Biggest mistake in all of physics!

Cosmological Constant Problem

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Limit of Cosmological Constant

Steven Weiberg 1987

- Calculated the upper limit of cosmological constant that would allow for us to be here.

- Larger values would cause the universe to expand to quickly for galaxies, stars, planets, life to evolve.

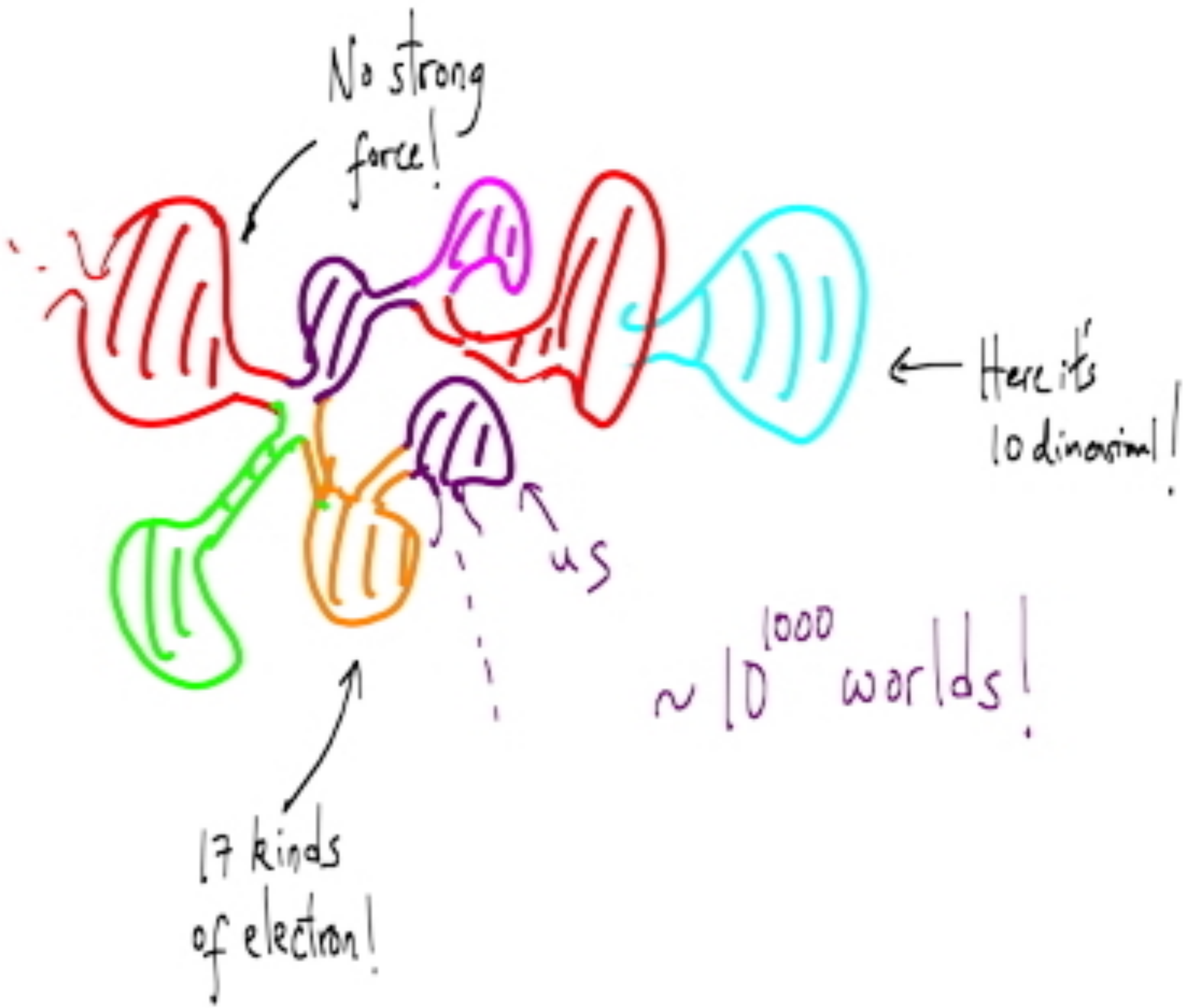
Calculated value in excellent agreement with the value measured in 1998

Anthropic Principle

- The universe is the way it is because we are here
  - Gives the appearance that the laws of physics are fine tuned for our existence.

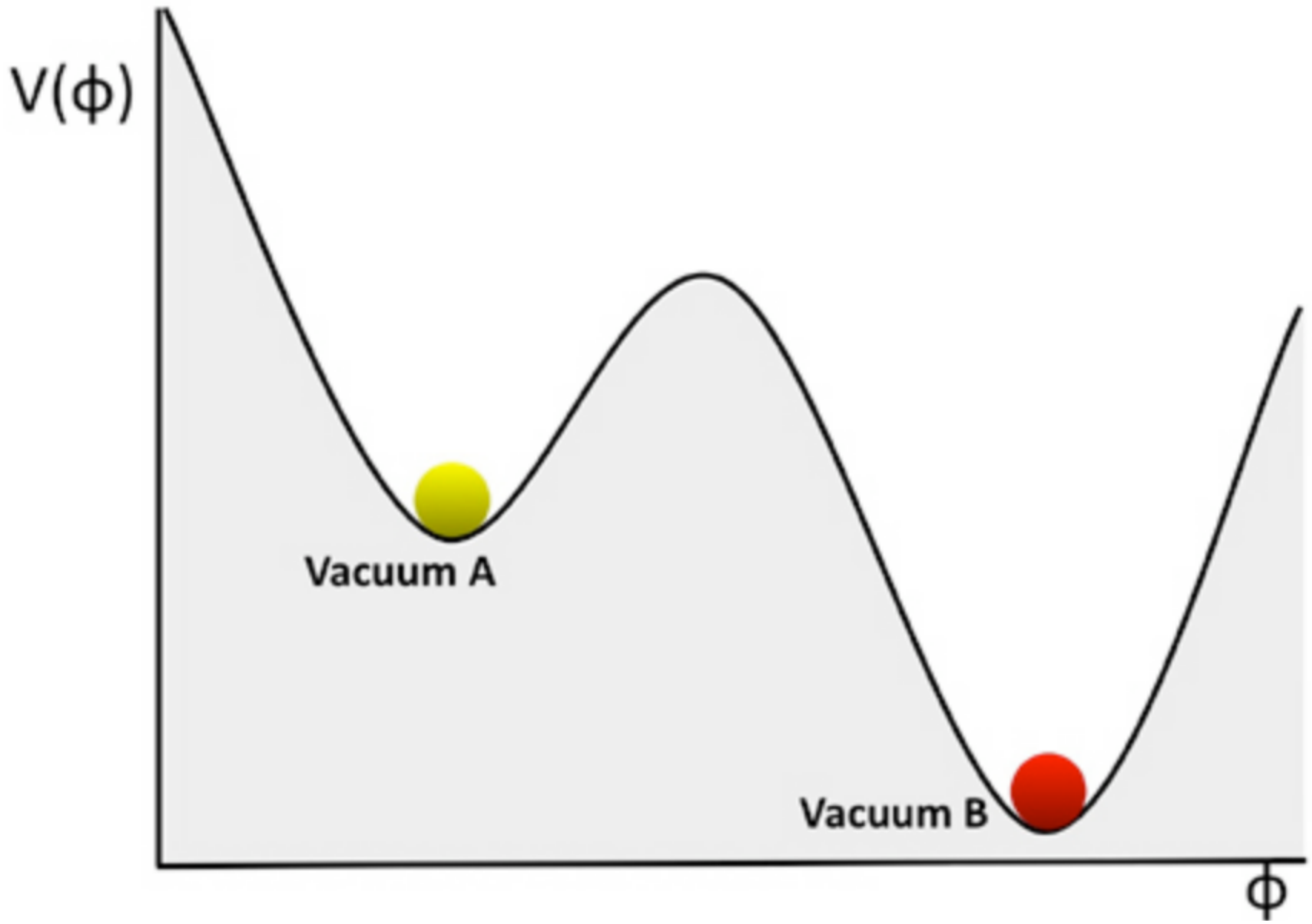
- We live in a Goldilocks universe. One of a huge number of universes in which we couldn't exist

Multiverse


No strong force!
Here it's 10 dimensional!
us
~10^{1000} worlds!
17 kinds of electron!

Multiverse

Vacuum energy different
in different universes



Outstanding Problems

- Why is the vacuum energy so small?
- What is the physics at 10^{-35} m?
- What is the quantum gravity?
- Is there any new physics between 10^{-19} m and 10^{-35} m?
- Why are the parameters of the universe so finely tuned?
- Why is there an excess of matter over antimatter?
- Are space and time fundamental?

To Learn More

Cornell Messenger Lectures

Nima Arkani-Hamed

Lenny Susskind