

Introduction to Astrophysics and Cosmology

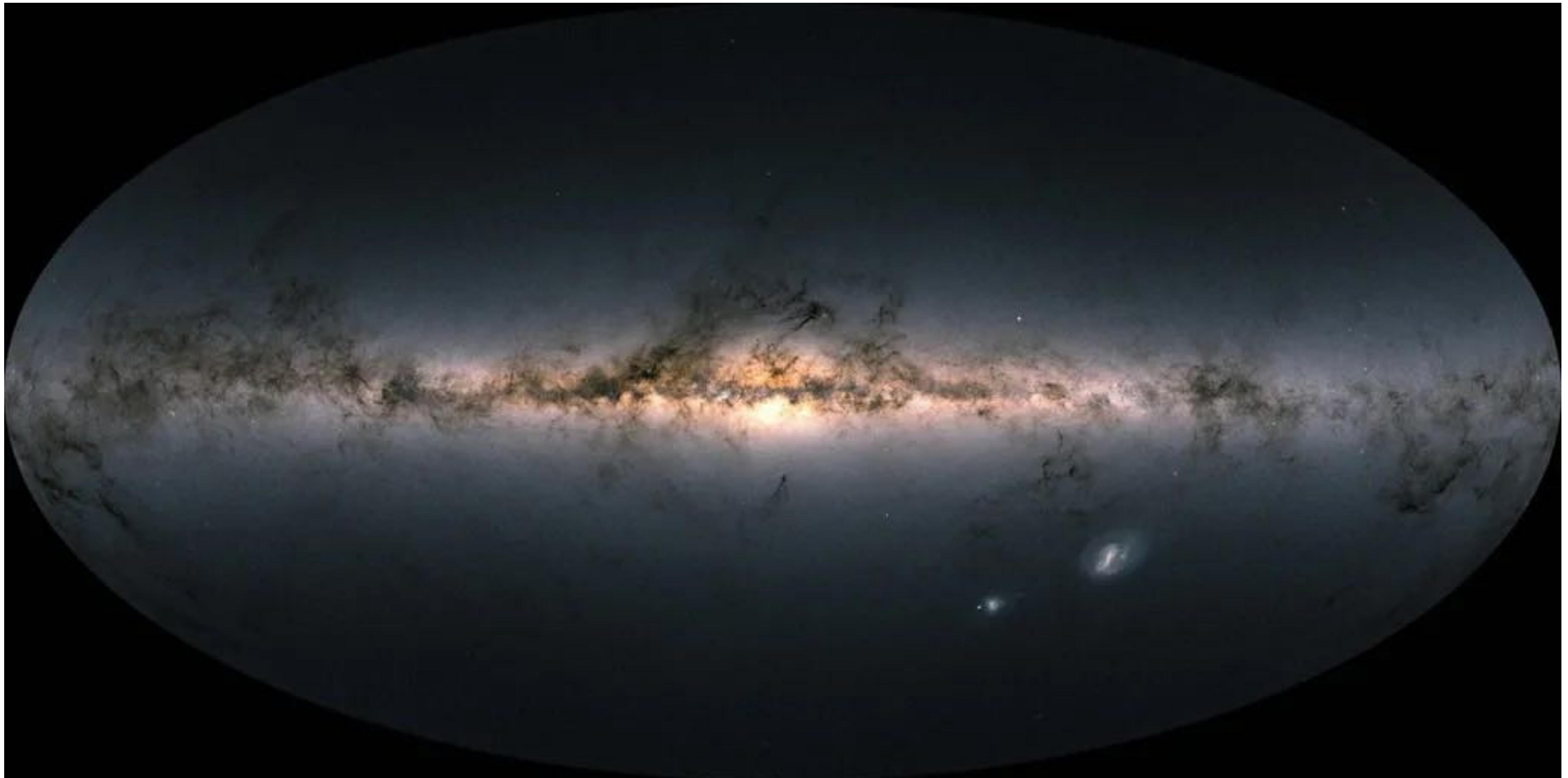
Extragalactic astrophysics

Helga Dénés 2024 S2 Yachay Tech

hdenes@yachaytech.edu.ec

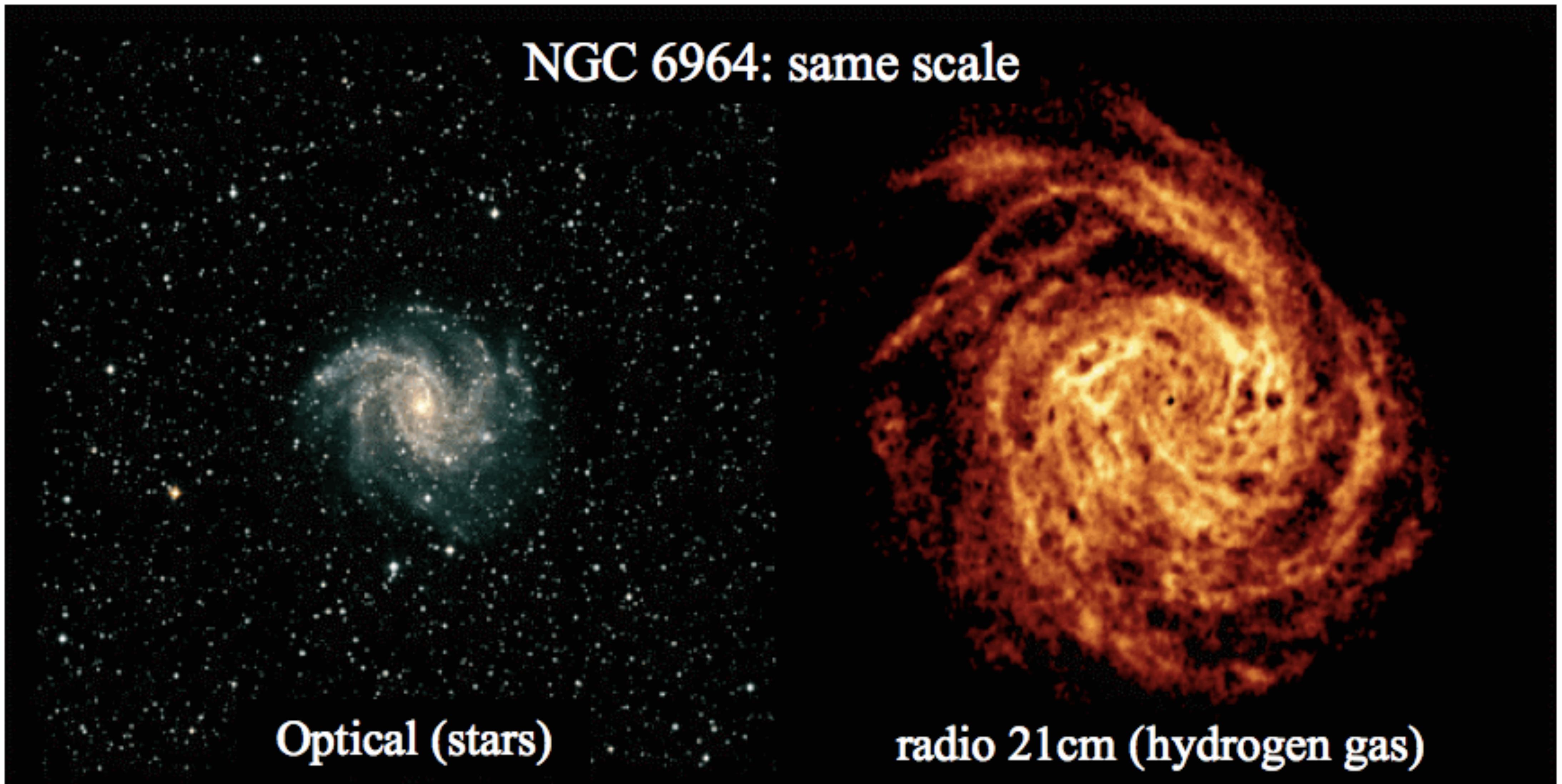
The Milky Way

Stars and dust in the Milky Way
The dust is part of the interstellar medium



A typical spiral galaxy

Face-on view of a spiral galaxy



What other type of galaxies are there?

What other type of galaxies are there?

- Galaxies were first classified in the 1920s depending on their appearances through optical telescopes. Some galaxies appear to have beautiful spiral structures. They are called *spiral galaxies*.
- On the other hand, many galaxies seem to have featureless elliptical shapes. They are known as *elliptical galaxies*.
- Apart from spiral and elliptical galaxies, there are some galaxies with irregular shapes which do not fit into either of these categories. They are simply called *irregular galaxies*.

Spiral galaxy M51



Elliptical galaxy NGC 1132

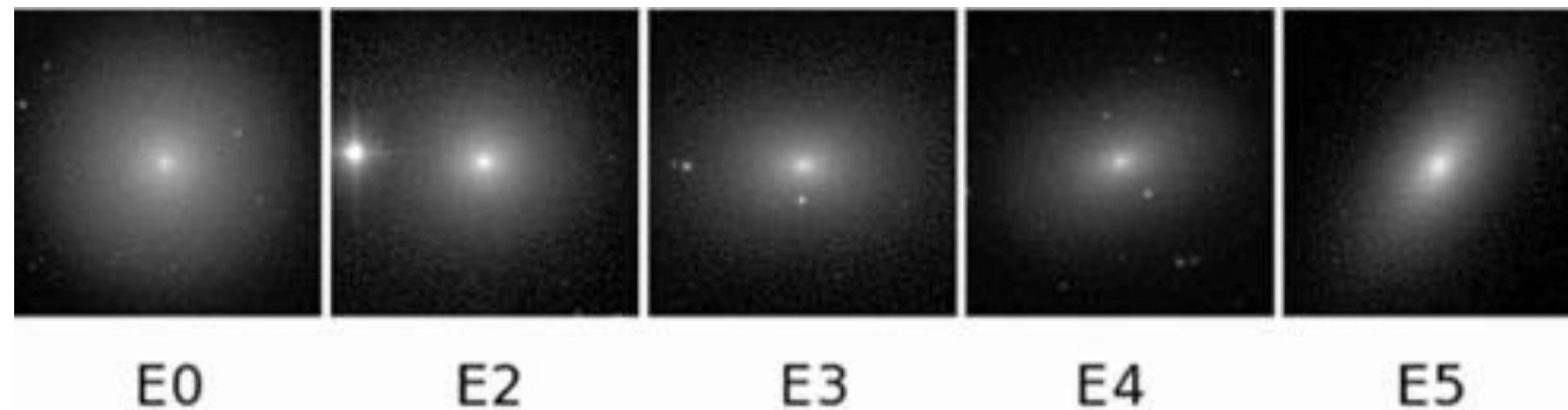


Irregular galaxy NGC 1427A



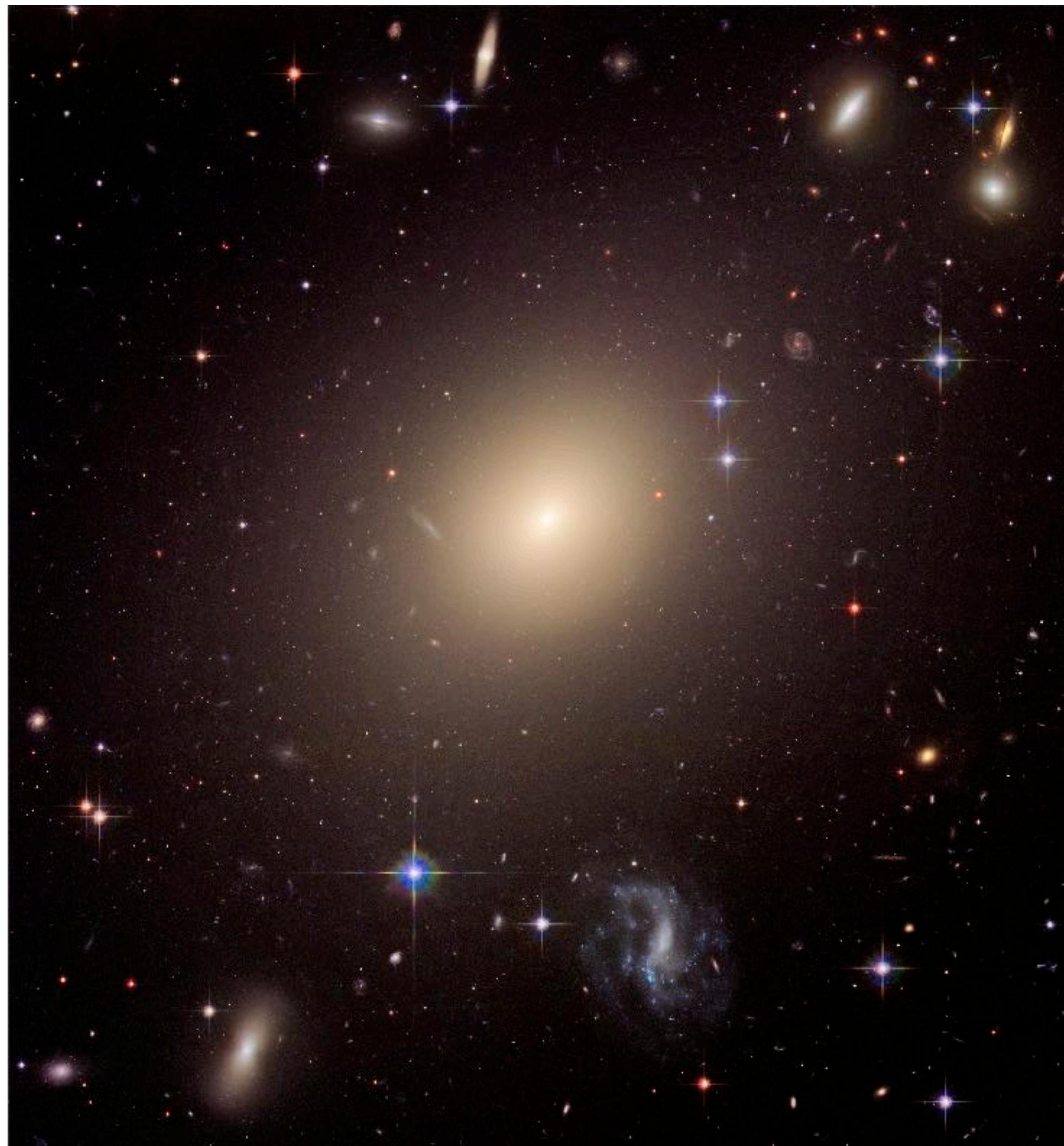
What other type of galaxies are there?

- Since all spiral galaxies are believed to be intrinsically shaped like circular disks, the apparent shape of a spiral galaxy in the sky gives an indication of its inclination with respect to the line of sight.
- On the other hand, different elliptical galaxies have different ellipticities, and their intrinsic ellipticities cannot be deduced easily from apparent shapes.
- For example, a highly flattened elliptical galaxy may appear fairly round in the sky if its short axis is turned towards us.
- Still elliptical galaxies are customarily classified according to their apparent shapes. The circular-looking elliptical galaxies are classified as E0. Then we go through a sequence of E1, E2, E3...in order of increasing ellipticity, ultimately ending with E7 which are fairly flattened elliptical galaxies.
- [Hubble](#) developed a famous scheme of classifying galaxies, in which E7 elliptical galaxies are taken to be similar to spiral galaxies with very closely wound spirals.

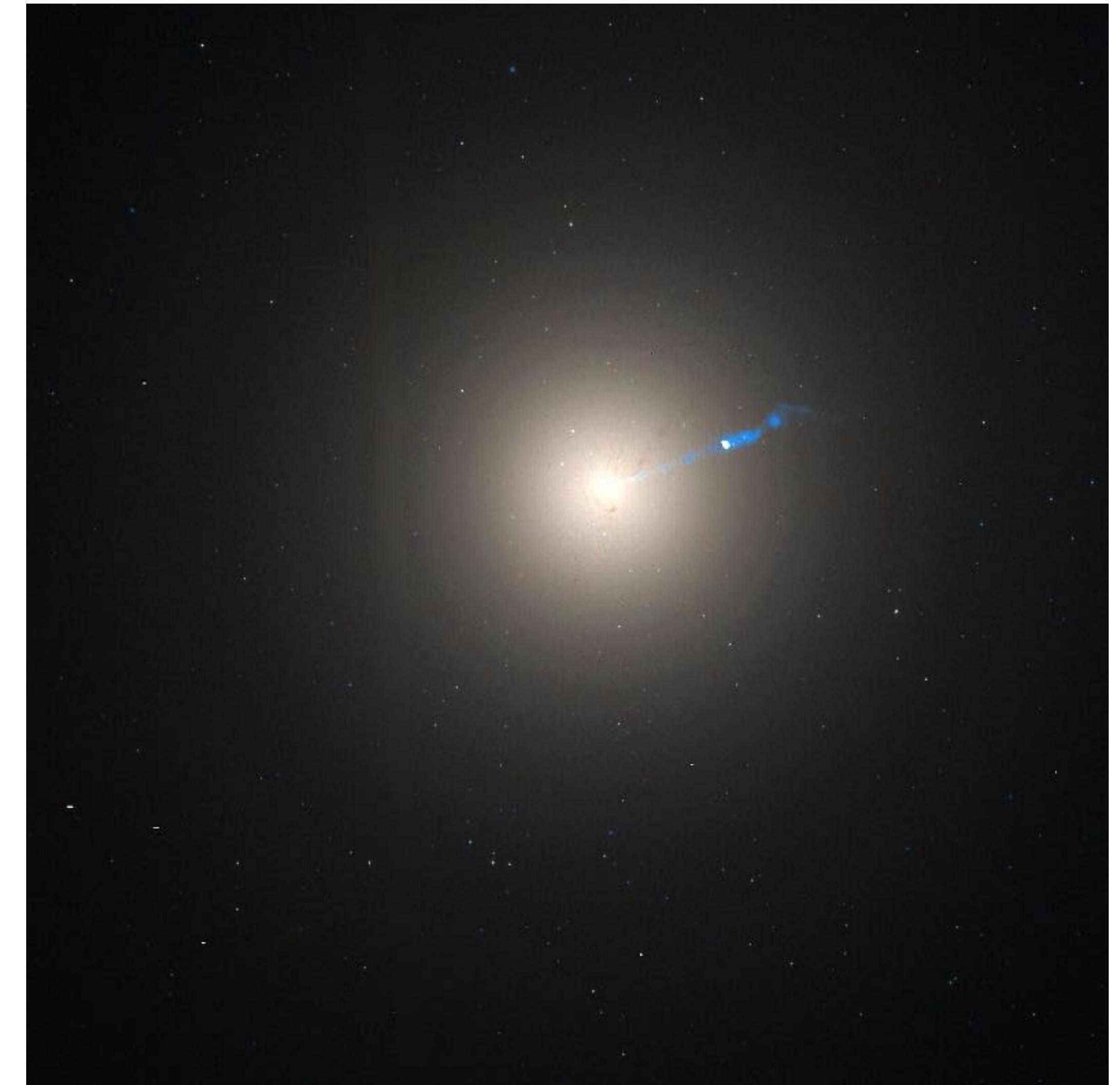


What other type of galaxies are there?

ESO 325-4

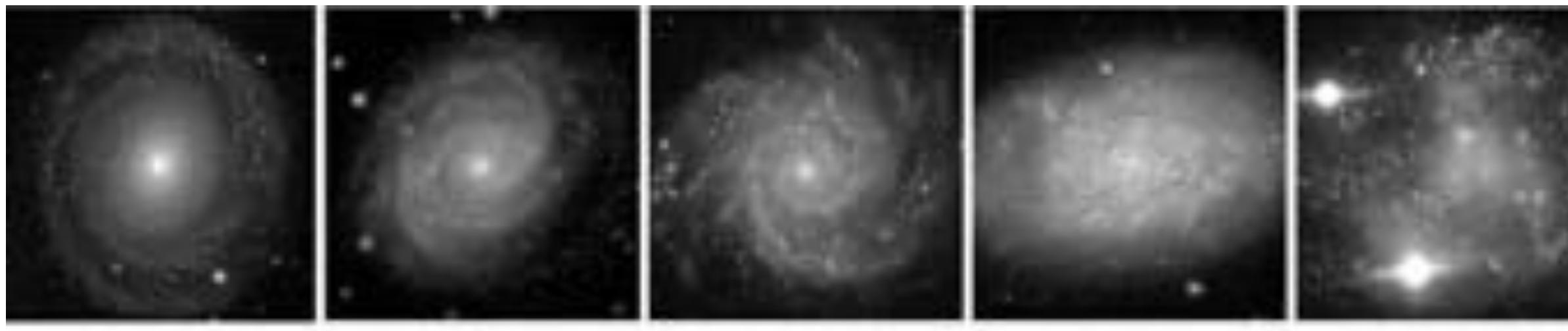


M 87



What other type of galaxies are there?

- There are some spiral galaxies with bars in the central regions, such as the galaxy shown in the [Figure](#).
- [Hubble](#) divided the spiral galaxies into ordinary spirals and barred spirals.
- Ordinary and barred spirals with very closely wound spirals are classified as S0 and SB0.
- Spiral galaxies with increasingly looser spiral structures are classified in the sequence Sa, Sb, Sc.
- Barred spirals are similarly classified in the sequence SBa, SBb, SBc.



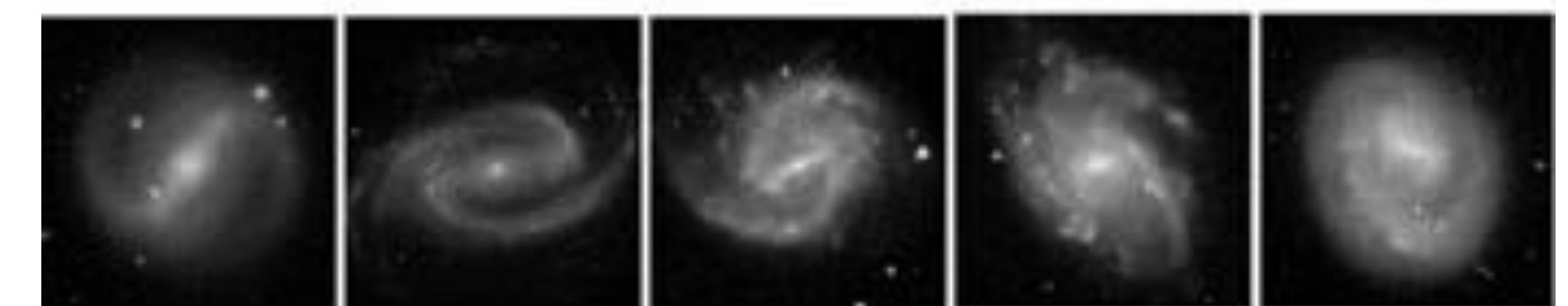
SAA

SAB

SAC

SAd

SAM



SBa

SBb

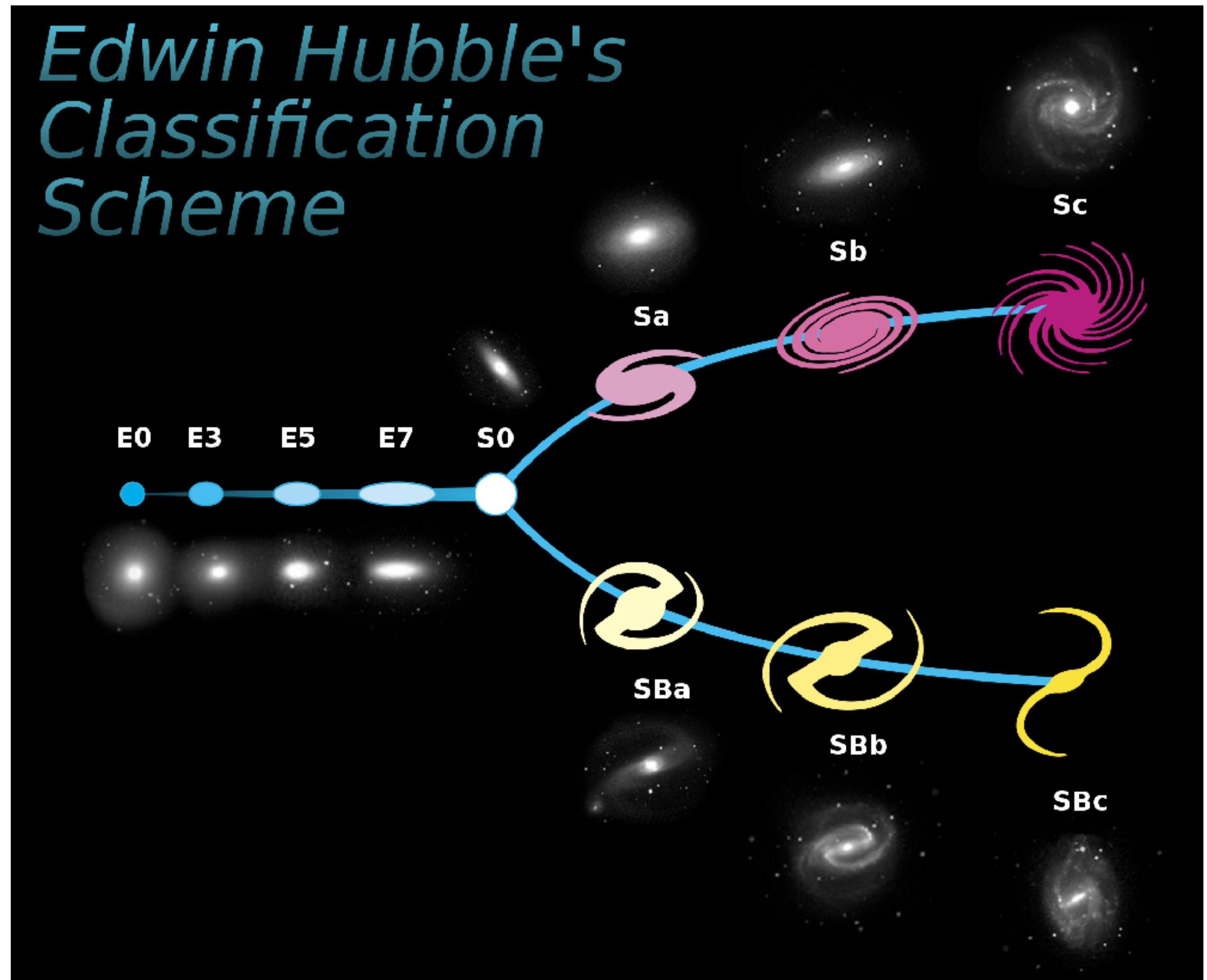
SBc

SBd

SBm

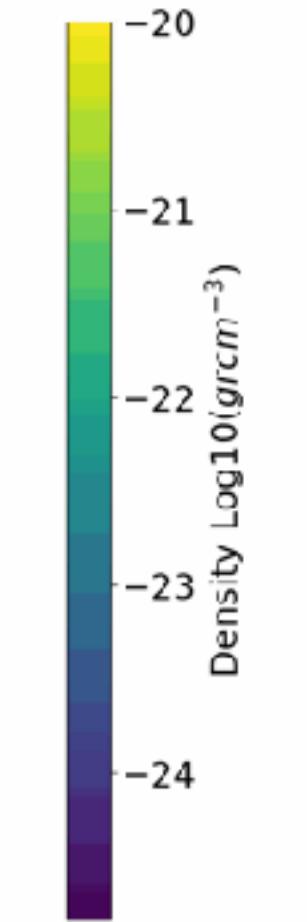
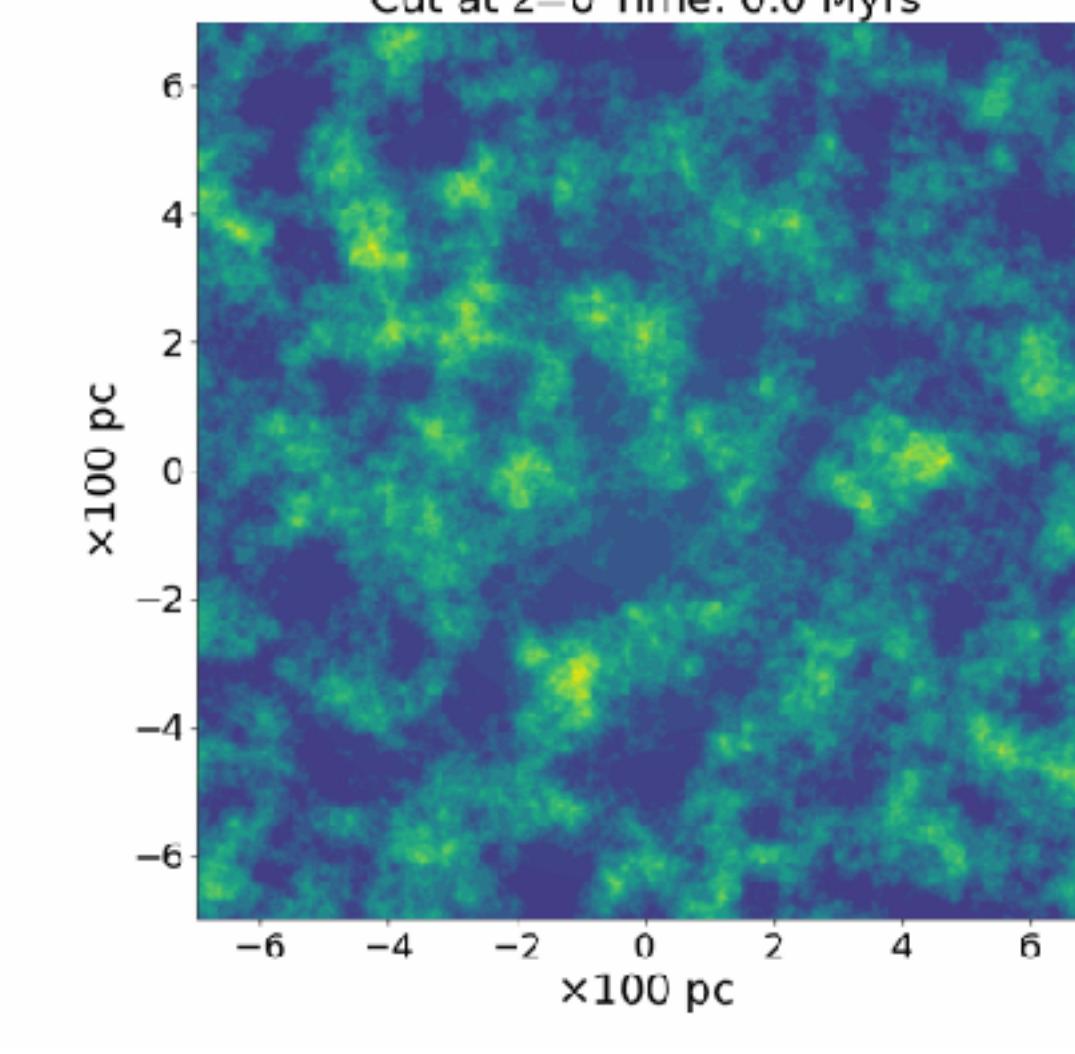
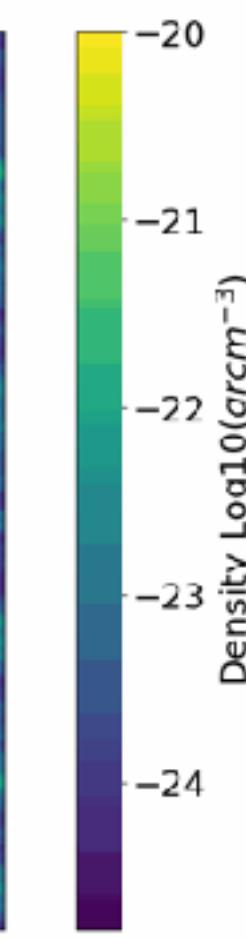
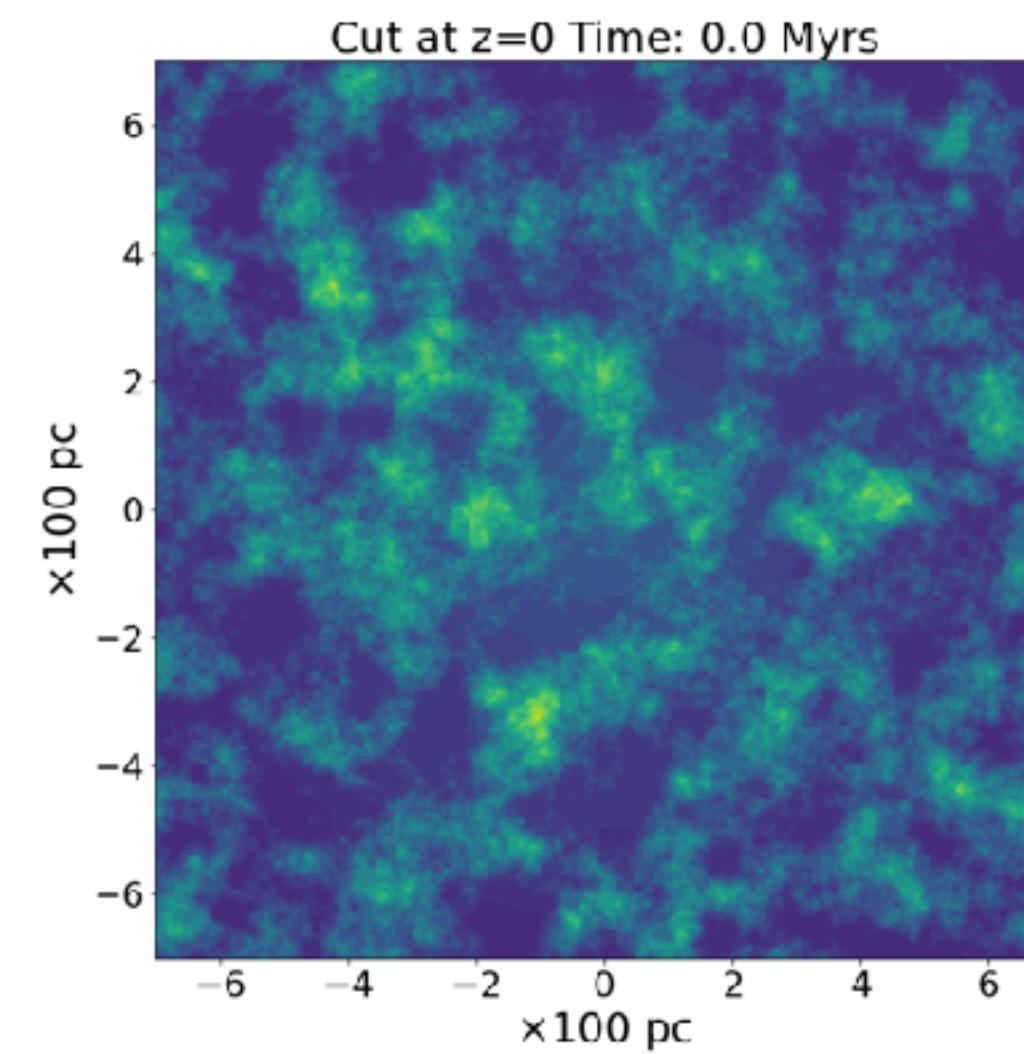
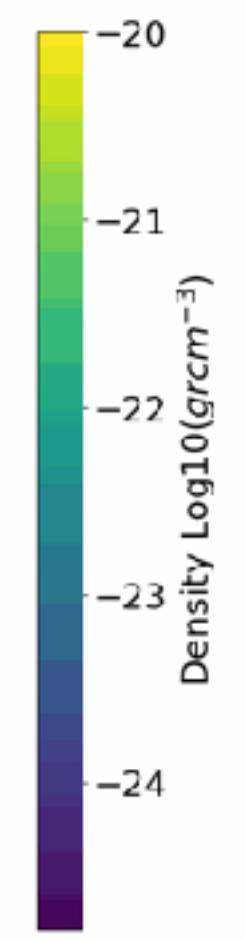
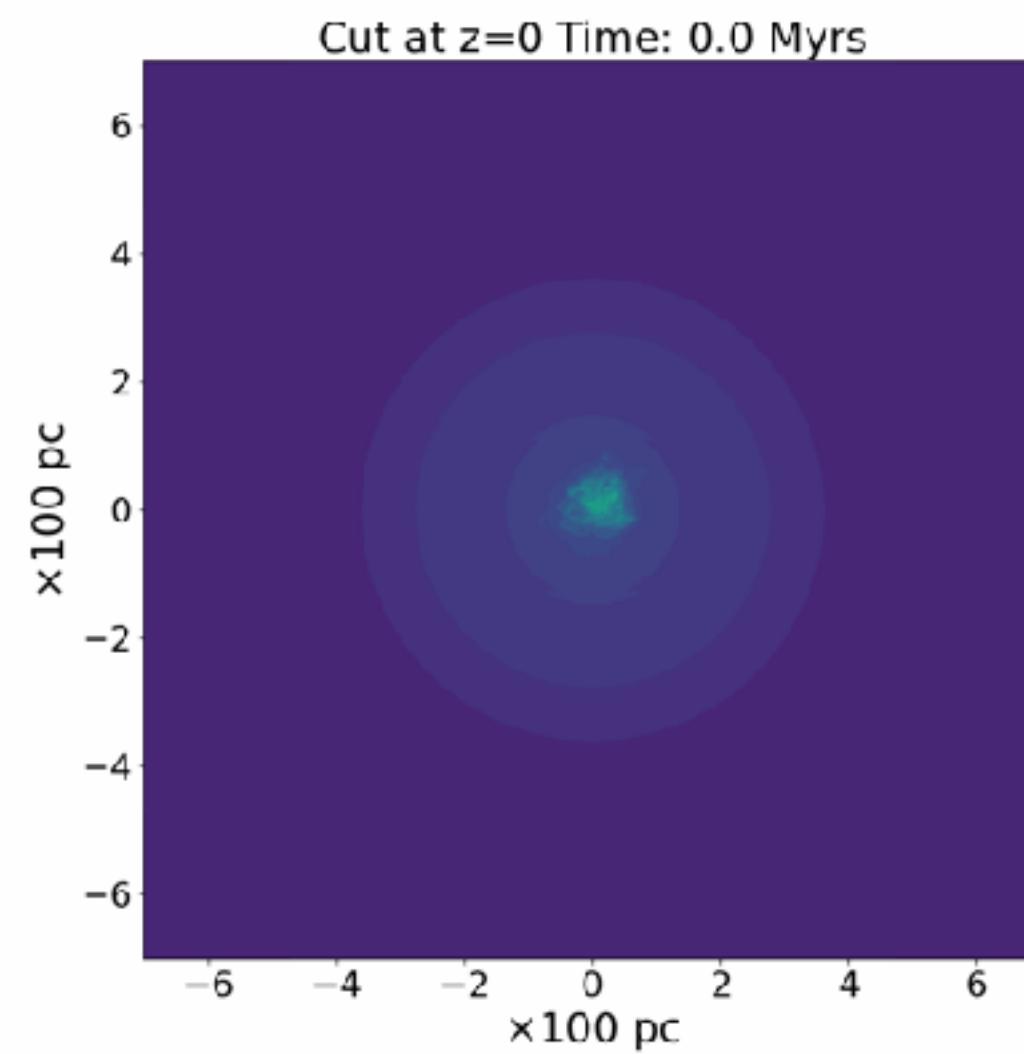
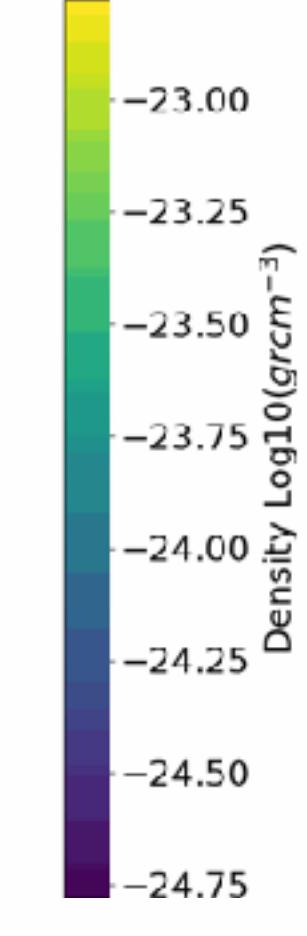
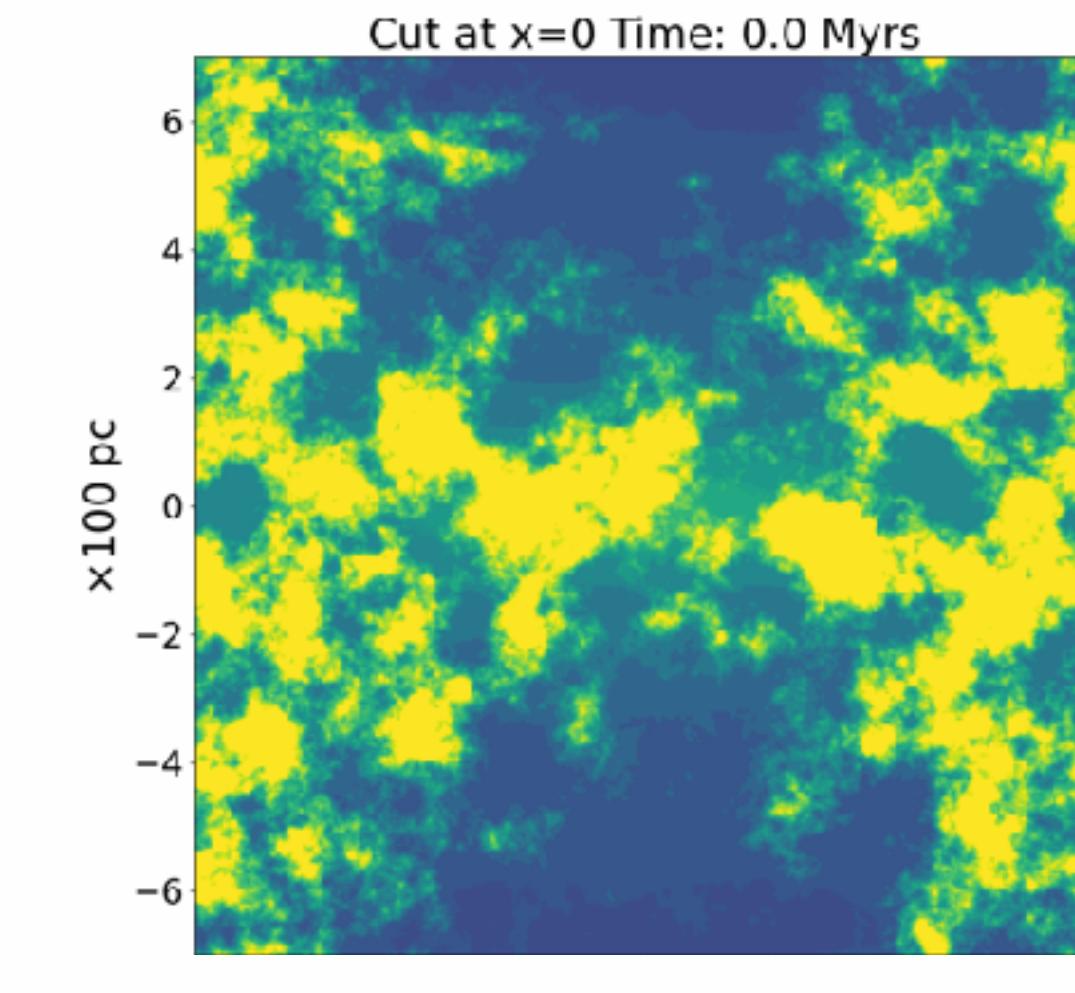
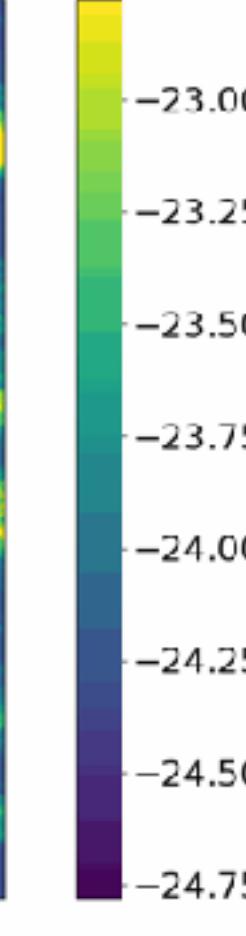
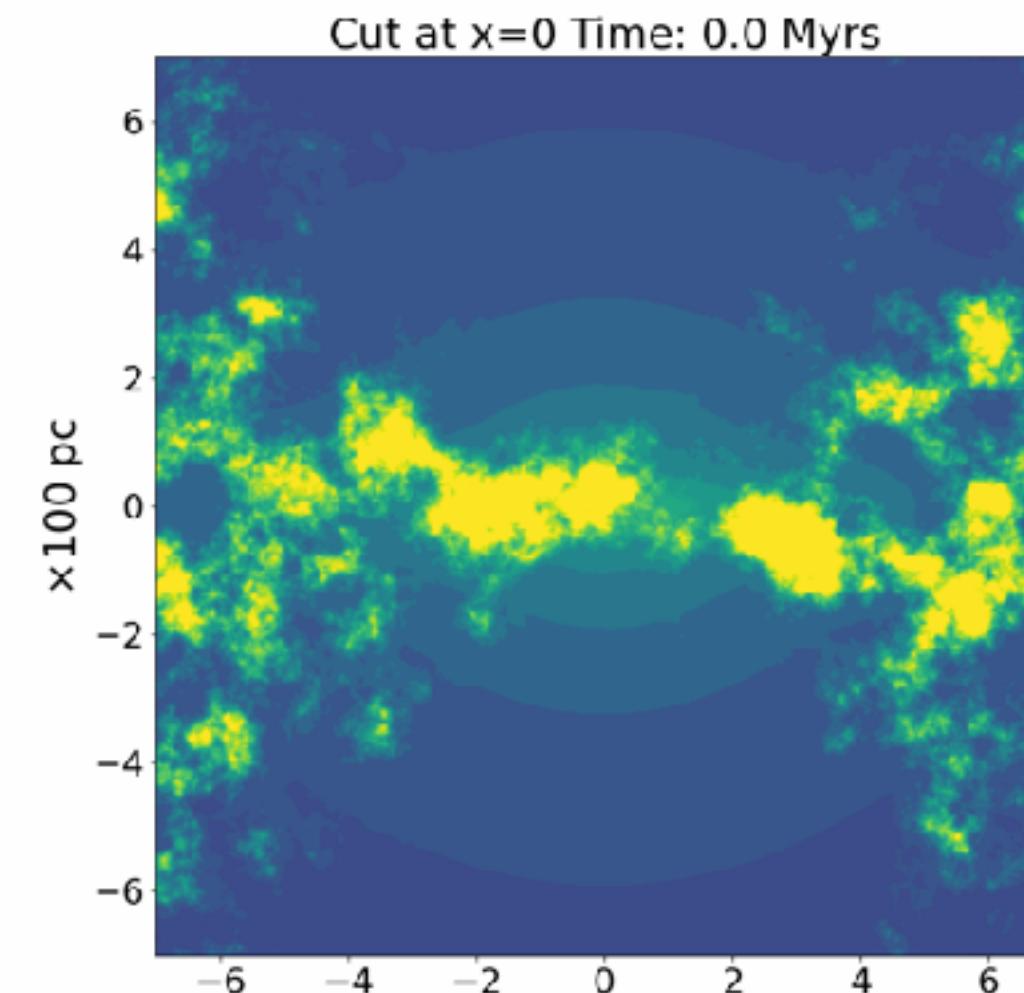
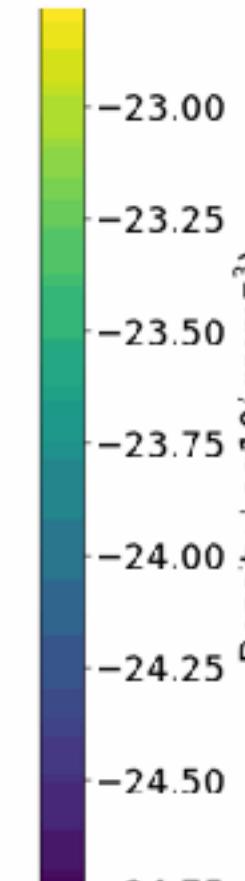
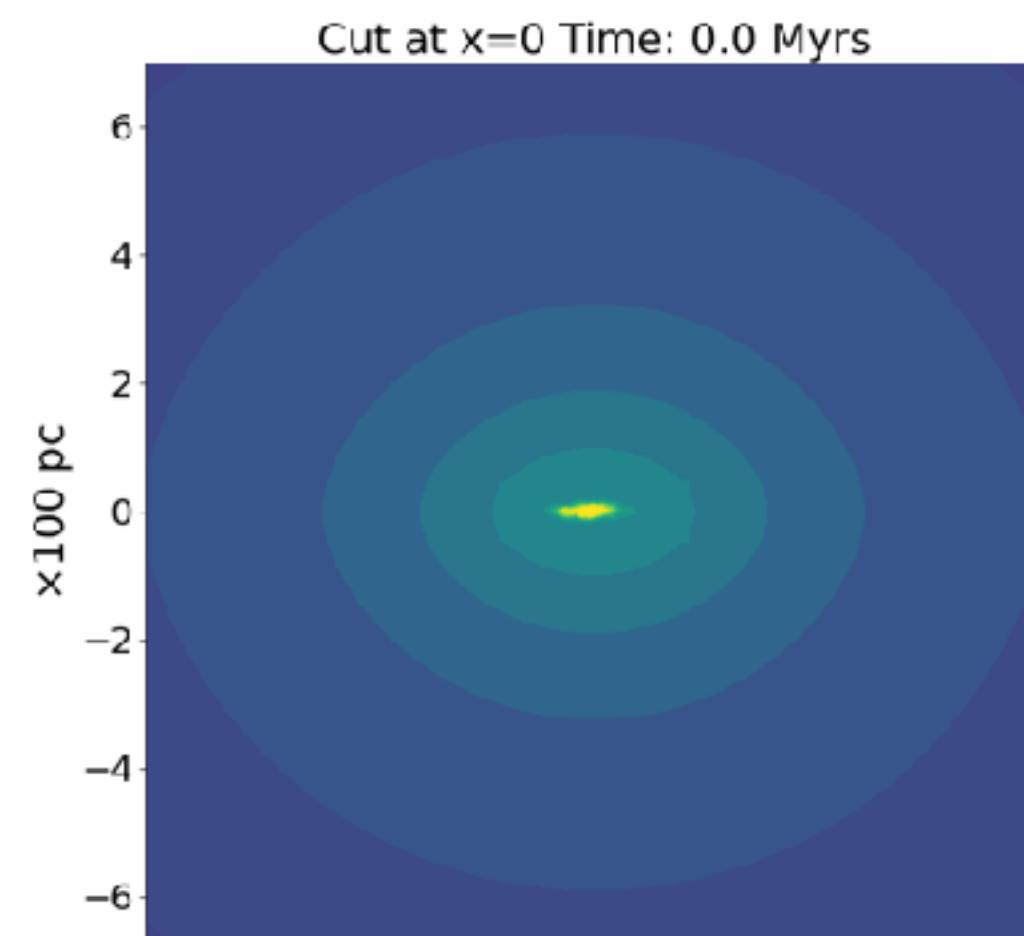
The Hubble classification system

- Also called the **Hubble tuning fork**
- This is the sequentially arranged Hubble classification
- **Elliptical are also called early type galaxies**
- **Spirals are called late type galaxies**
- The early and late type classification is a historical scheme and is evolutionary actually the other way around:
 - late type spirals are actually younger galaxies compared to the early type ellipticals, which are the older galaxies.



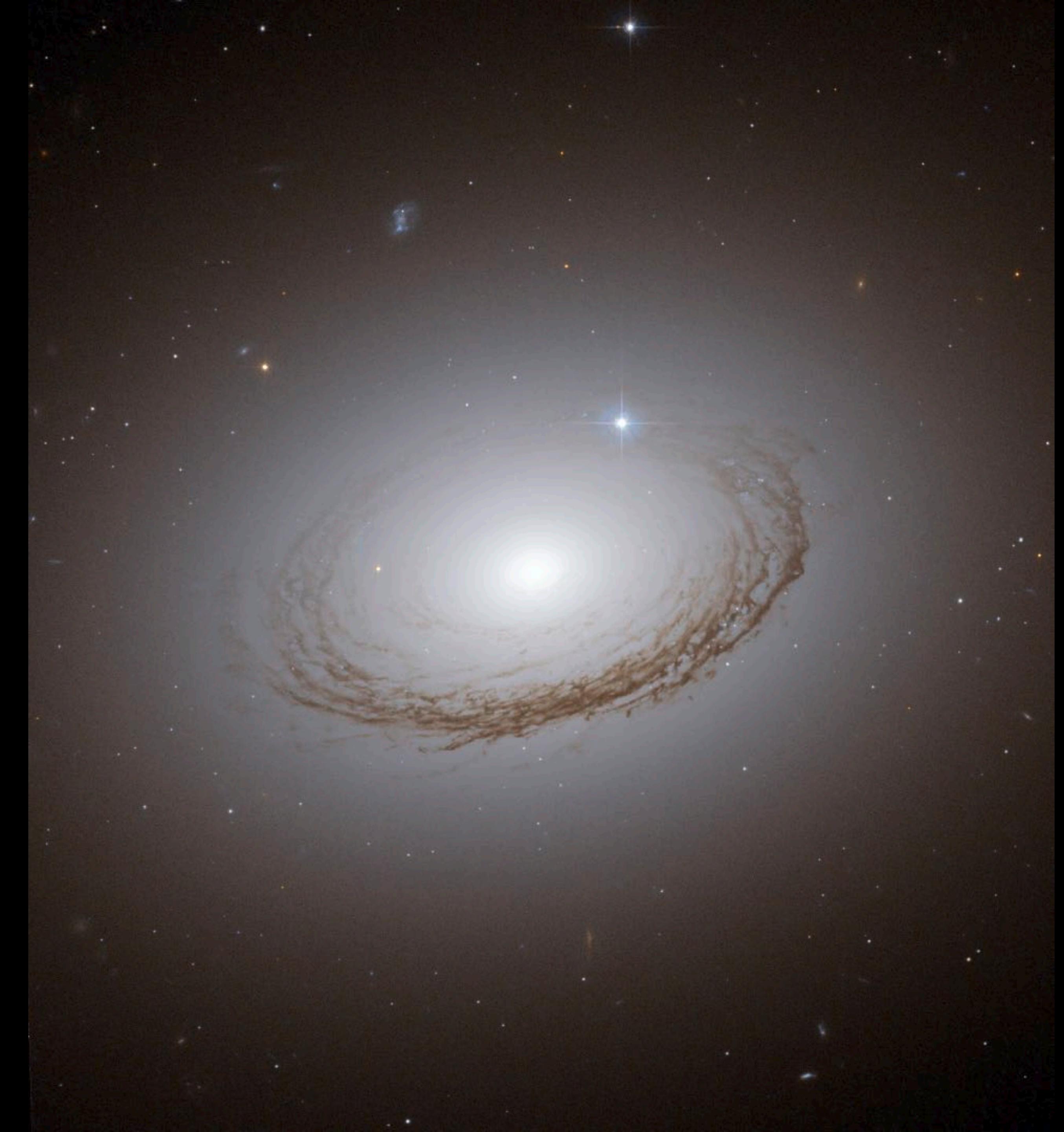
Spiral galaxies

-> turbulence is increasing (more star formation in the centre)

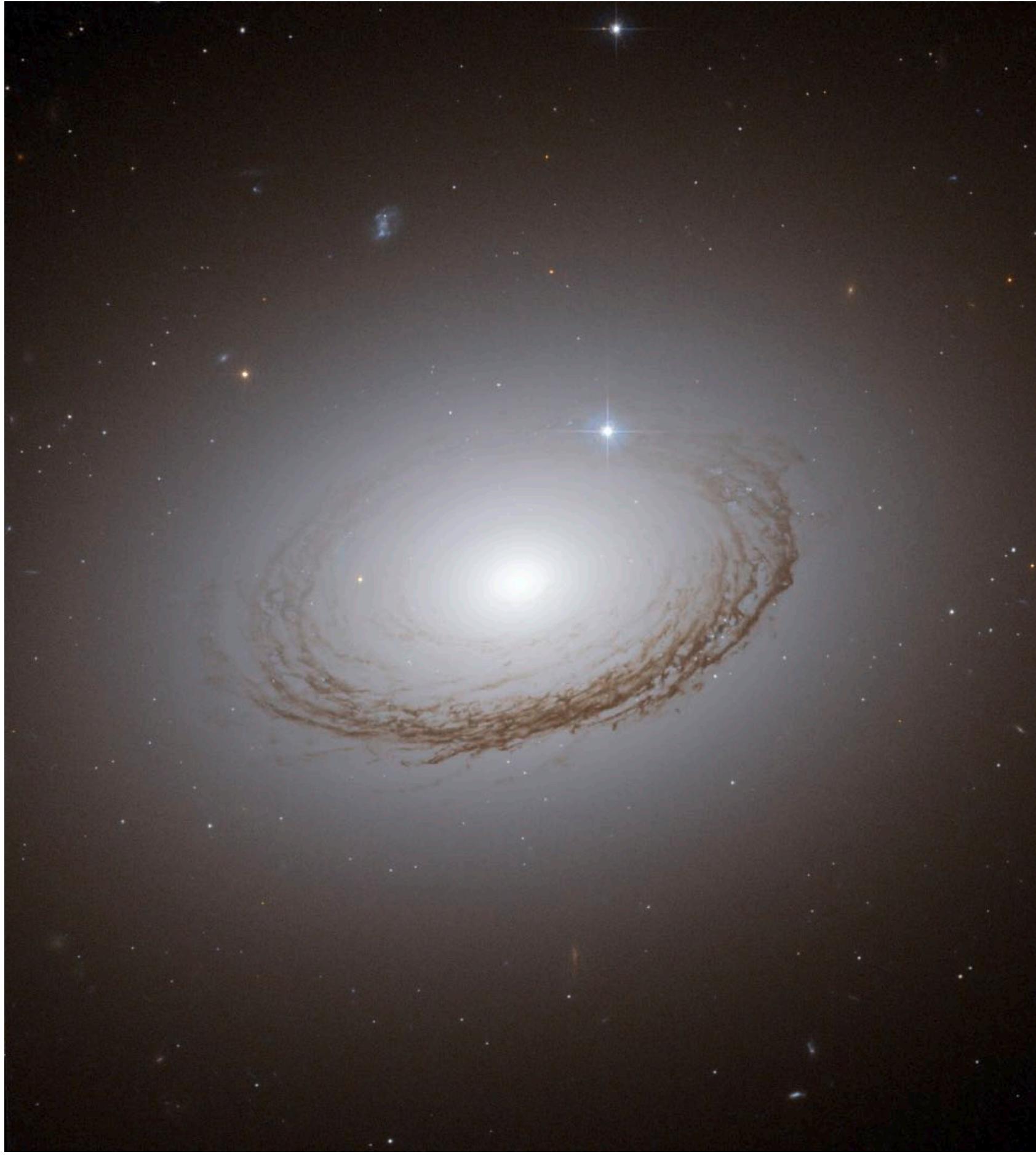


Simulations from Osmer Suárez (Yachay)

Spiral galaxies



Spiral galaxies



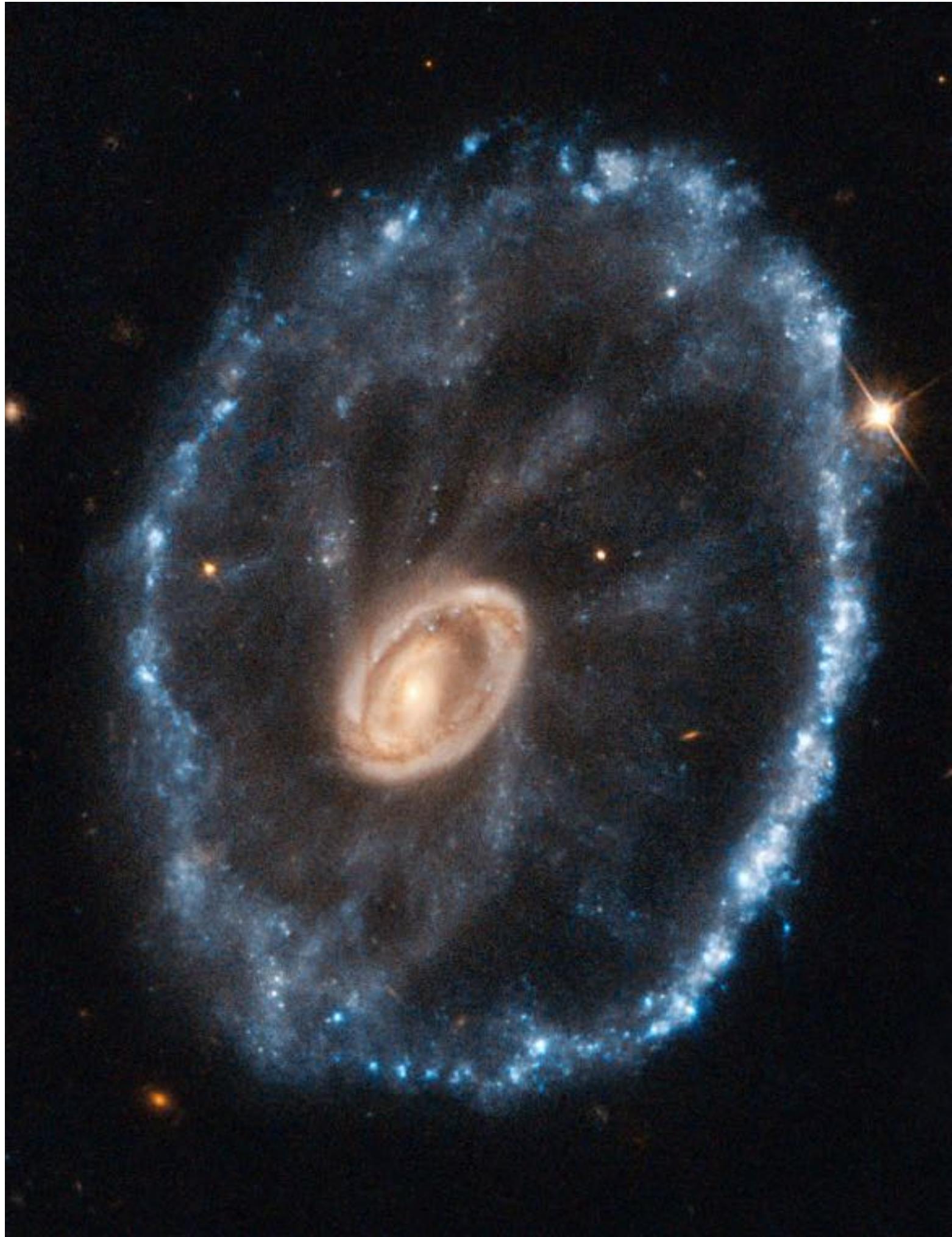
NGC 7049

- NGC 7049, on the border between spiral and elliptical galaxies.
- It the brightest of a cluster of galaxies, a so-called Brightest Cluster Galaxy (BCG). BCGs are some of the oldest and most massive galaxies.
- Globular clusters appear as glittering spots dusted around the galaxy halo -> to learn more about the formation and evolution of the galaxy.
- The **globular clusters** in NGC 7049 are seen as the **sprinkling of small faint points** of light in the galaxy's halo.
- The halo – the ghostly region of diffuse light surrounding the galaxy – is composed of myriads of individual stars and provides a luminous background to the remarkable swirling ring of dust lanes surrounding NGC 7049's core.
- Globular clusters are very dense and compact groupings of a few hundreds of thousands of stars bound together by gravity. They contain some of the first stars to be produced in a galaxy.

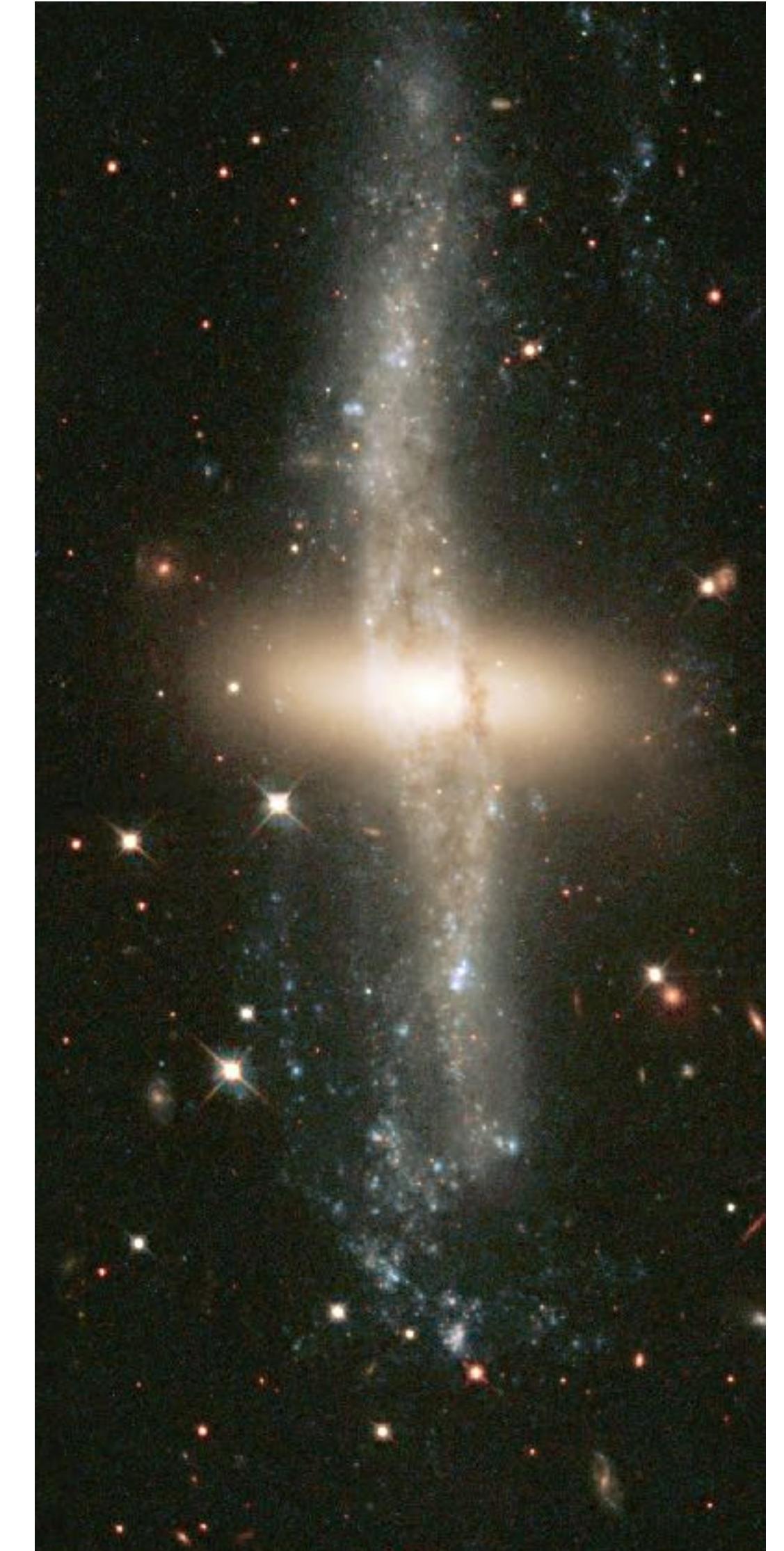
How would you classify these?

NGC 4650A

Cartwheel Galaxy



NGC 660

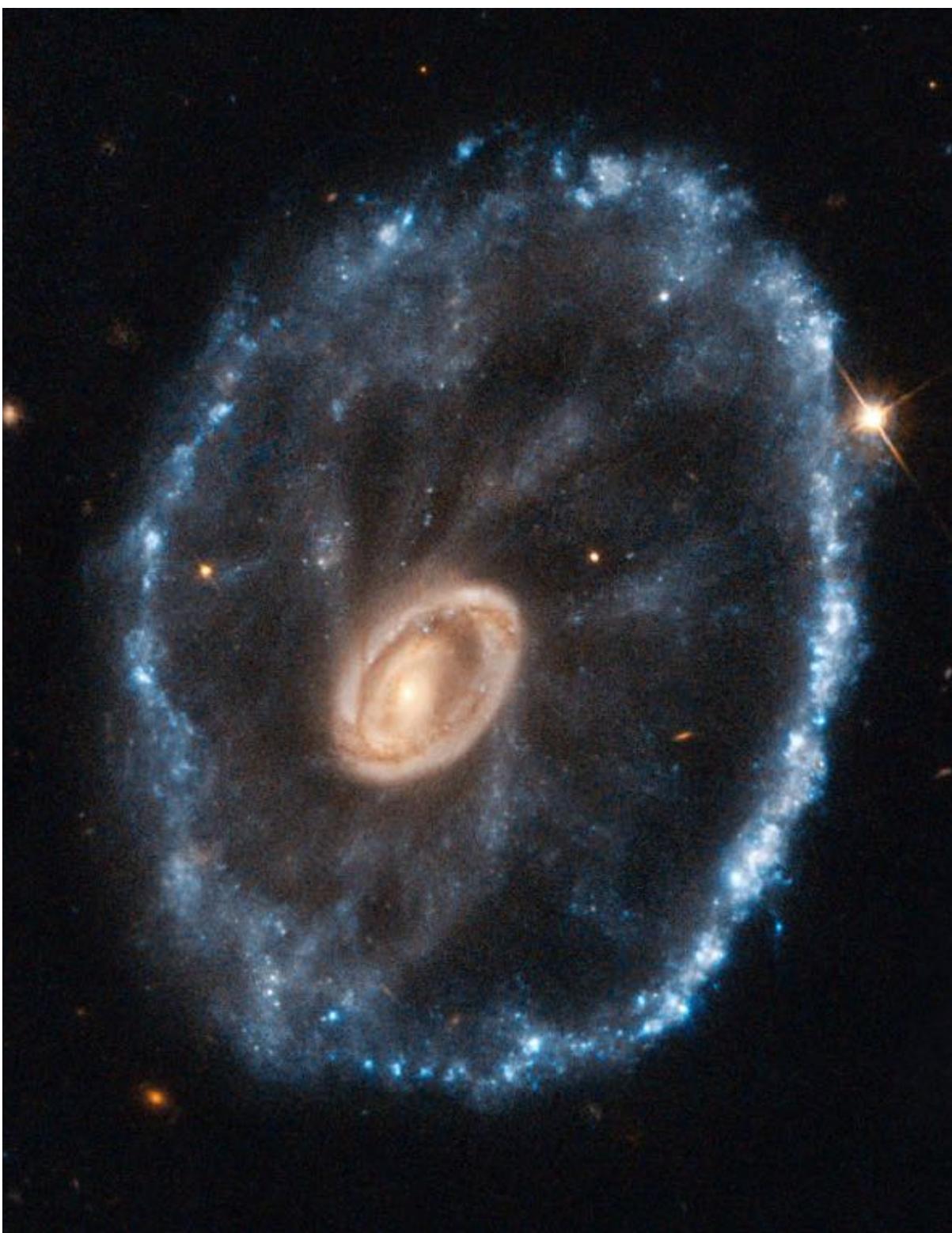


Credit: Gemini Observatory / AURA

Gemini Observatory Legacy Image

How would you classify these?

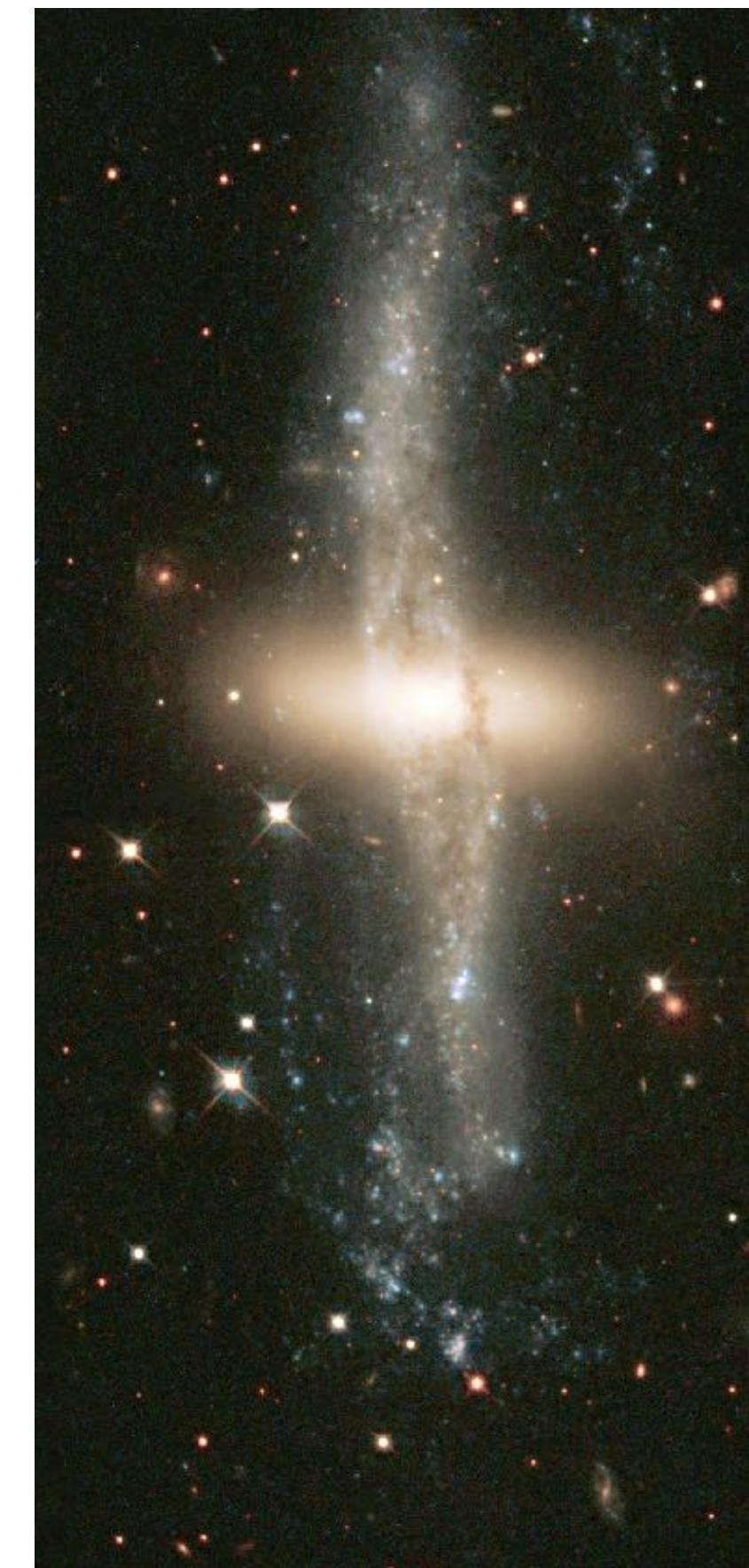
Polar ring galaxies are likely created with a gas rich minor merger (large galaxy + small galaxy)



Cartwheel Galaxy



NGC 660



NGC 4650A

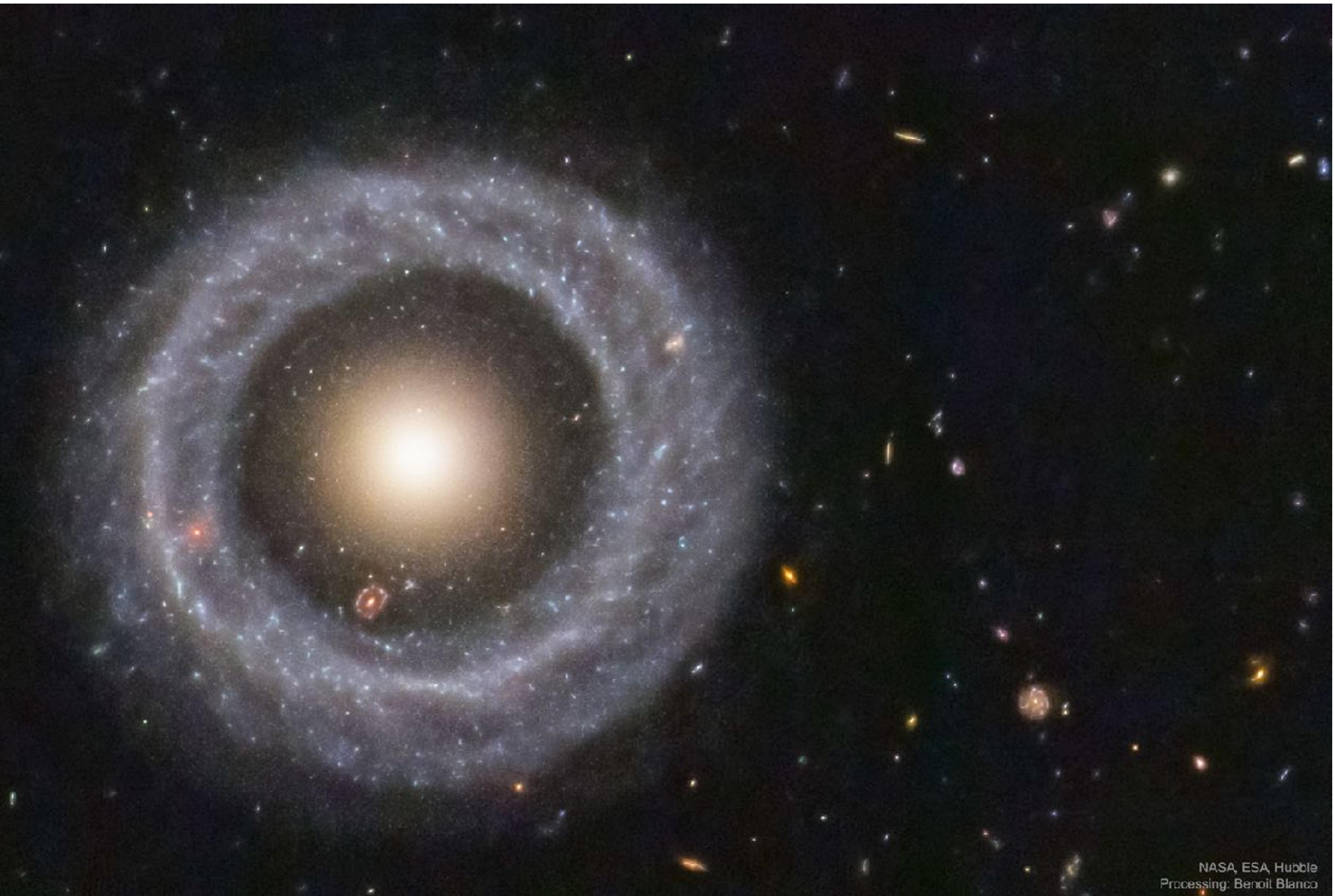
Ring galaxies

Hoag's Object: A Nearly Perfect Ring Galaxy

The gap separating the two stellar populations may contain some star clusters that are almost too faint to see. Though ring galaxies are rare, another more distant ring galaxy can be seen through Hoag's Object, between the nucleus and the outer ring of the galaxy.

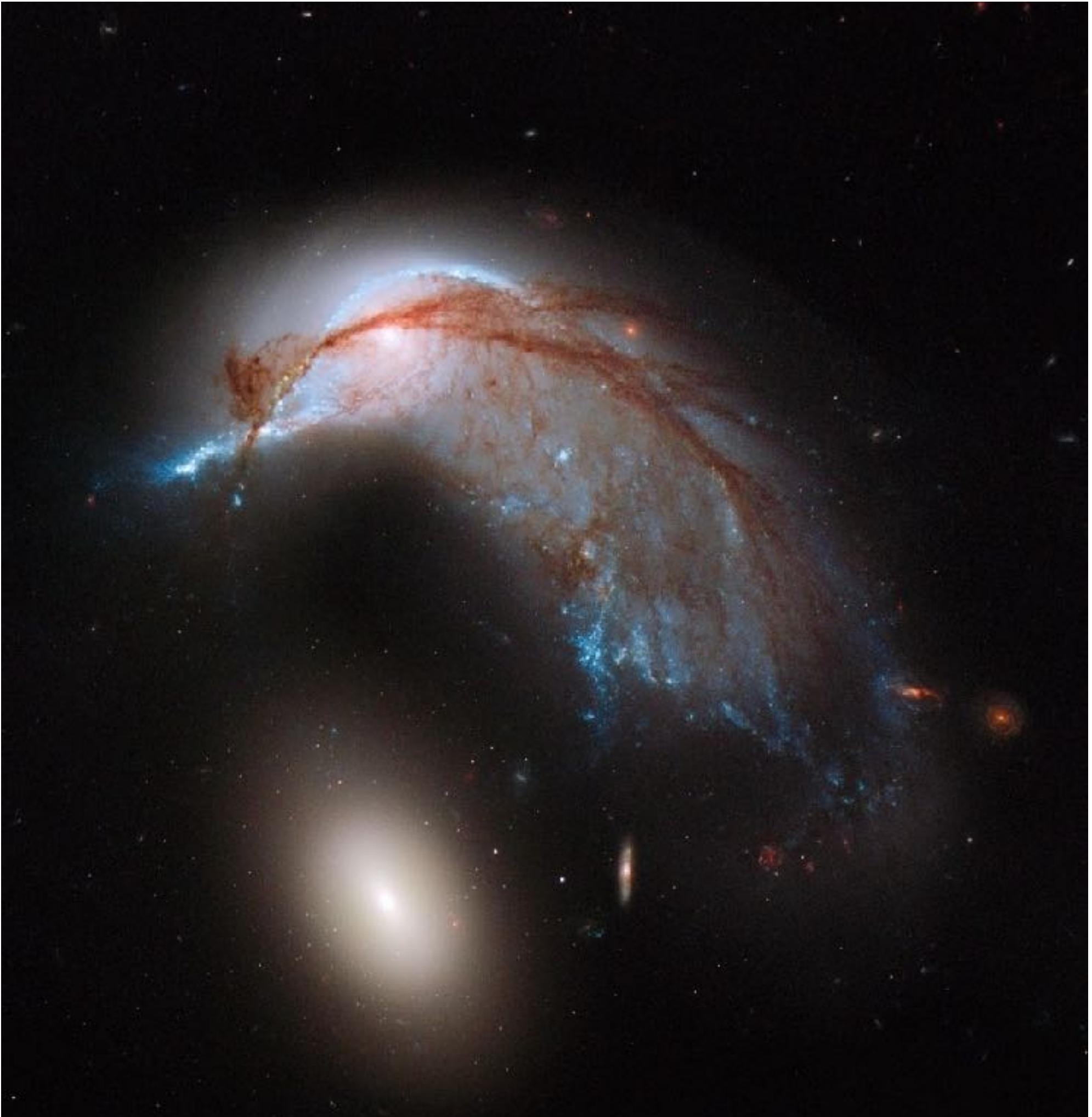
How do we know that the inner and the other part are the same object?

<https://apod.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html>



How would you classify these?

Arp-142, also called the penguin and the egg

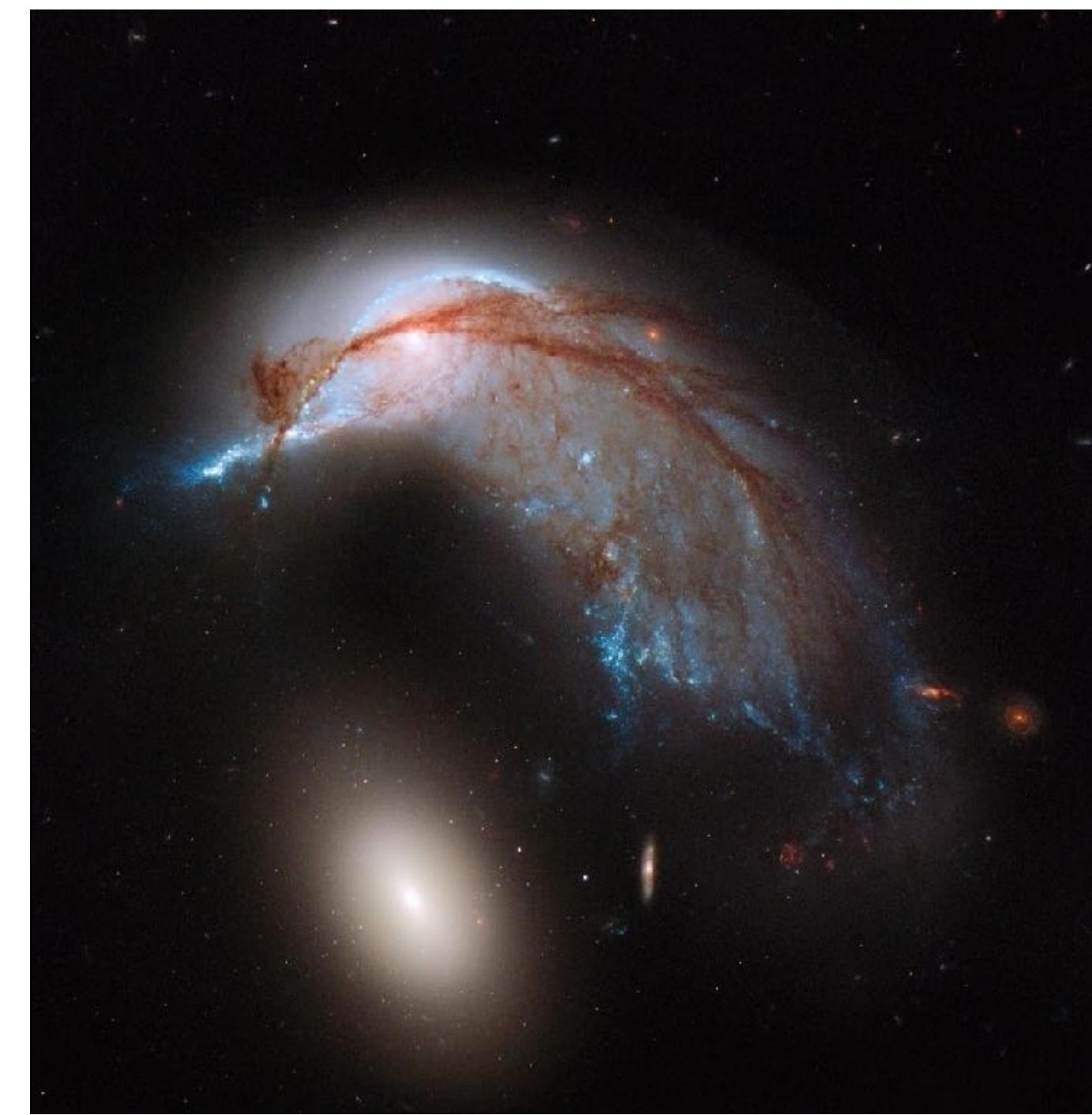


NGC 7764A



How would you classify these?

These are galaxies that are currently undergoing a major merger. A major merger is a merger of two similar sized galaxies.



Arp-142

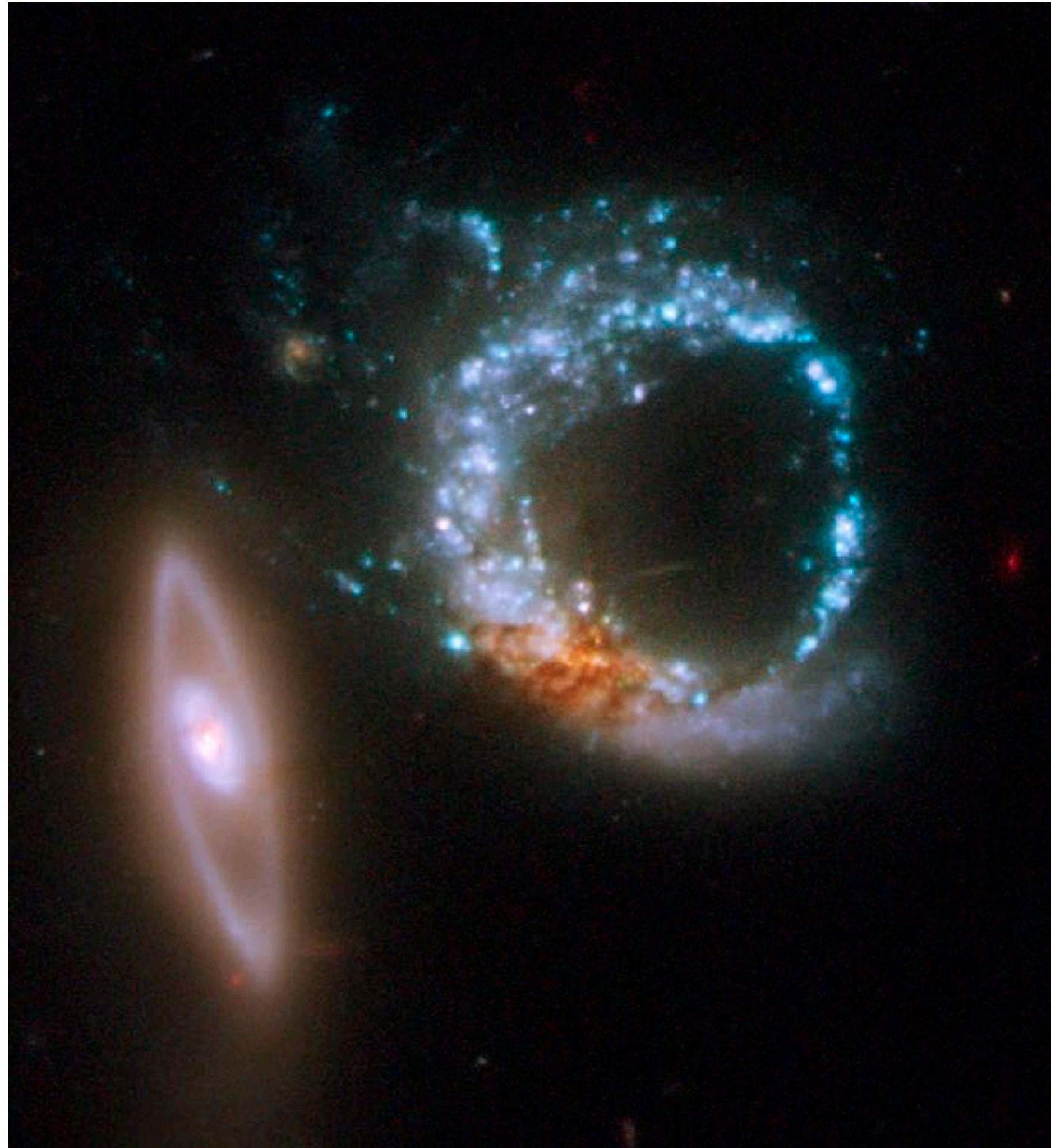


NGC 7764A

Infrared image of Arp-142,
the “original” spiral structure is more visible

How would you classify these?

Arp-147



- The system was formed when a spiral galaxy collided with an elliptical galaxy.
- The collision produced an expanding wave of star production (shown as bright blue) traveling at an effective speed of ≥ 100 km/s and began some 40 million years ago.
- The most extreme period of star formation is estimated to have ended 15 million years ago and as the young, super hot stars died (as exploding supernovas) they left behind neutron stars and black holes.
- The main ring contains nine **bright X-ray sources which are black holes**, each with a mass 10–20 times the mass of the Sun.
- The **reddish bulge** in the main ring is **thought to be the original galactic nucleus of the primary galaxy** and comprises 30–50% of the total mass of the galaxy.

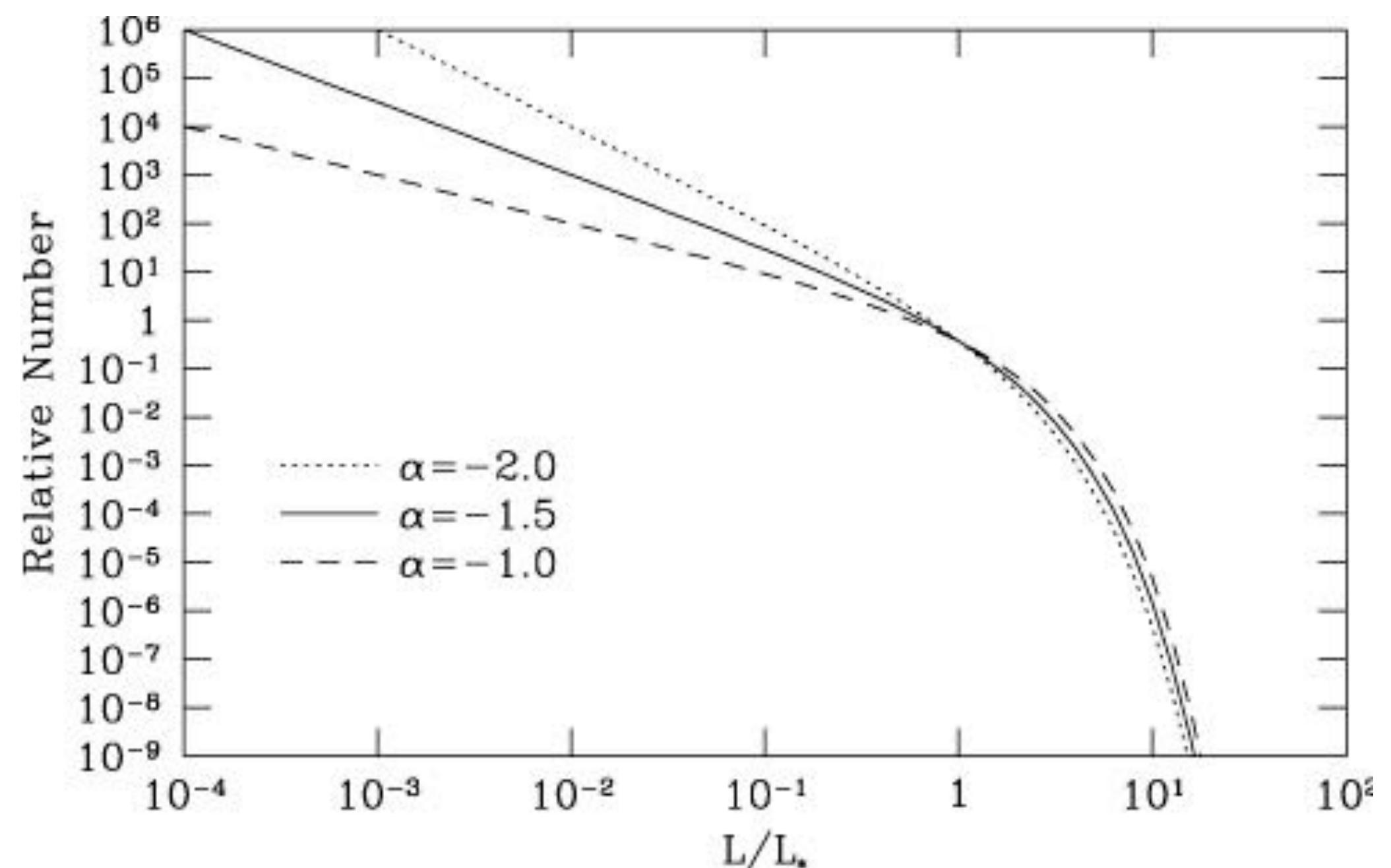
Luminosity function

Galaxies vary widely in luminosity – from very luminous giant galaxies to dwarf galaxies. The number density of galaxies with luminosity in the range L to $L + dL$ is approximately given by *Schechter's law*

$$\phi(L) dL \approx N_0 \left(\frac{L}{L_*} \right)^\alpha \exp(-L/L_*) \frac{dL}{L_*},$$

where $N_0 = 1.2 \times 10^{-2} h^3 \text{ Mpc}^{-3}$, $\alpha = -1.25$ and $L_* = 1.0 \times 10^{10} h^{-2} L_\odot$.

- Here h appearing in the expressions of N_0 and L_* is not Planck's constant but called the **Hubble constant**.
- The Hubble constant has a value $\sim 70 \text{ km/s/Mpc}$.
- **There is more dwarf galaxies than giant galaxies.**



Environment

The typical **fractions of spirals and ellipticals in a population of galaxies depend on the environment**.

In the central regions of rich clusters of galaxies, only about 10% of the galaxies may be spirals. In contrast, the spirals may constitute nearly 80% of the bright galaxies in the low-density regions of the Universe. This is called the morphology-density relation.

Environment: galaxies can be found in galaxy clusters, galaxy groups and in the field.

Galaxy cluster: is a structure that consists of anywhere from **hundreds to thousands of galaxies** that are bound together by gravity, with typical masses ranging from 10^{14} to 10^{15} solar masses.

Coma Cluster of Galaxies



Hubble
Heritage

Environment

Galaxy groups: is a structure of galaxies comprising **about 50 or fewer gravitationally bound members.**

The groups and clusters of galaxies can themselves be clustered, into superclusters of galaxies.

The Milky Way galaxy is part of a group of galaxies called the **Local Group**, which is part of the **Virgo Supercluster**.

Field: galaxies that are not gravitationally bound in a group or a cluster

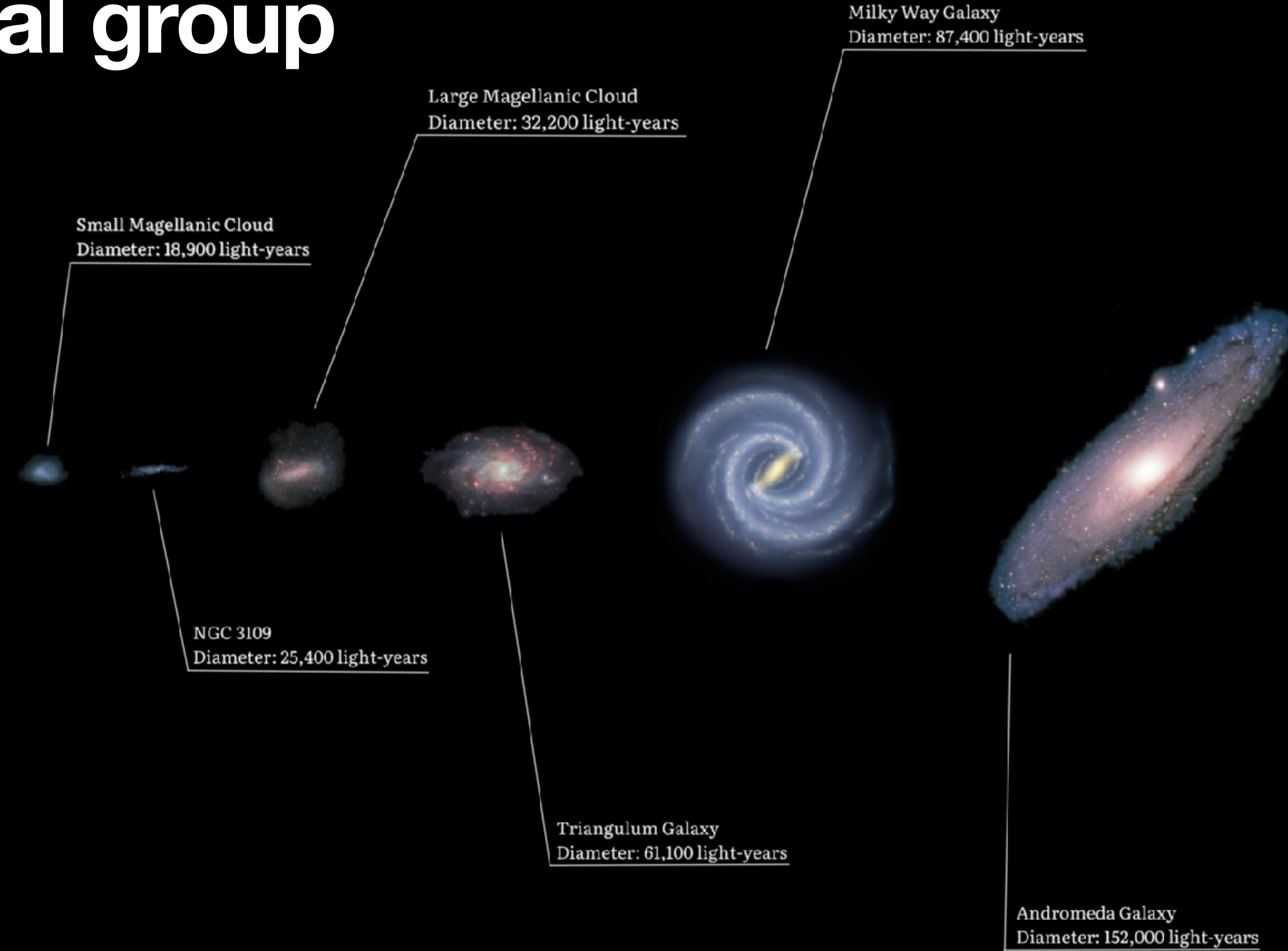
Void: large regions of space with practically no galaxies.

Hickson Compact Group 31



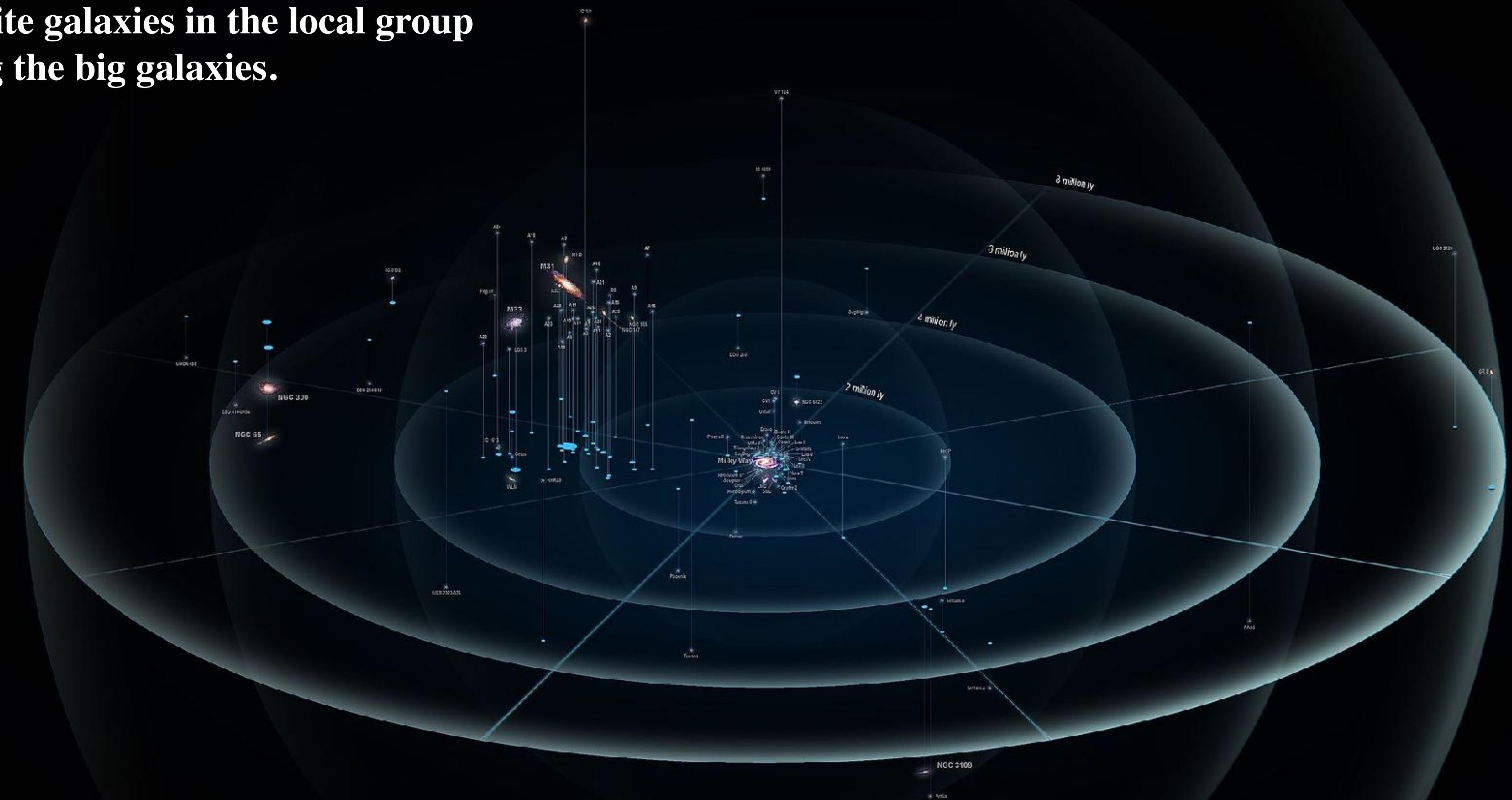
Hubble
Heritage

The Local group



Local Group and nearest galaxies

In addition to the big galaxies, there are also many tiny satellite galaxies in the local group that are orbiting the big galaxies.



The Milky Way and it's satellites

The current census of Milky Way (MW) satellite galaxies.

Galaxies discovered since 2015 are in red.

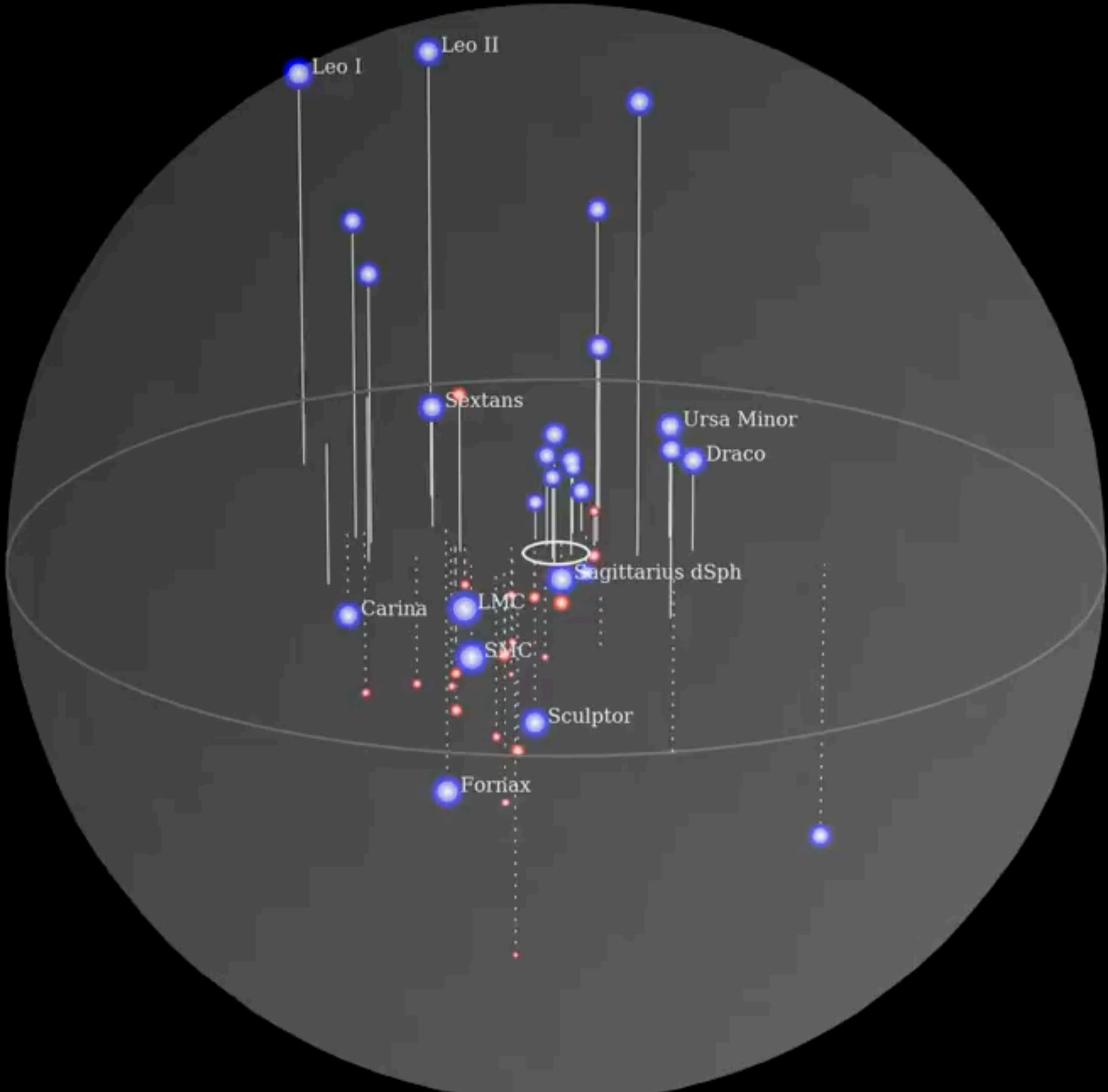
The Galactic disk is represented by a circle of radius **15 kpc** at the center.

The outer sphere has a radius of 250 kpc.

The 11 brightest (classical) MW satellites are labeled by name.

Sizes of the symbols are not to scale but are rather proportional to the log of each satellite galaxy's stellar mass.

Currently, there are ~ 50 satellite galaxies known in the MW as compared to thousands of predicted by cosmological models.



Pawlowski/Bullock/Boylan-Kolchin

<https://www.annualreviews.org/do/10.1146/do.multimedia.2017.08.16.436/abs/>

Surface brightness

The surface brightness of a galaxy is naturally the maximum at the centre and falls off as we go towards the outer edge. In the case of **elliptical galaxies**, the fall of surface brightness with distance from the centre can be fitted fairly well by the *de Vaucouleurs law*

$$I(r) = I_e \exp \left\{ -7.67 \left[\left(\frac{r}{r_e} \right)^{0.25} - 1 \right] \right\}$$

where r_e is called the **effective radius within which half of the luminosity is contained** (if the image of the galaxy happens to be circular), whereas $I_e = I(r_e)$.

For the **disk of a spiral galaxy**, an exponential law gives a reasonably good fit.

Physical characteristics

Apart from the overall appearances, the physical characteristics of elliptical and spiral galaxies are also very different.

A **typical elliptical galaxy is very much like a Population II object**. There is very **little interstellar matter** in an elliptical galaxy and **star formation no longer takes place**. So **most of the stars are fairly old**, giving a **yellowish colour** to the galaxy, in the absence of young bluish stars.

Another property of Population II objects in our Galaxy, is that they have very little rotational velocity and are supported against gravity by random motions. Exactly similar considerations hold for elliptical galaxies as well.

There is usually very **little systematic rotation in an elliptical galaxy**. The stars do not all collapse to the centre because of the **random motions**.

The larger or the more luminous the elliptical galaxy is, the stronger is its gravity and the stars need to have more random motions in order to maintain a steady state. **The velocity dispersion σ of an elliptical galaxy is related to its intrinsic luminosity by the *Faber–Jackson relation*.**

$$\sigma \approx 220 \left(\frac{L}{L_*} \right)^{0.25} \text{ km s}^{-1}$$

Physical characteristics

σ is larger for elliptical galaxies with higher luminosity L .

The Figure shows velocity dispersions of several elliptical galaxies plotted against their luminosities.

The observational data show a reasonably tight correlation corresponding to the **Faber–Jackson relation**, without too much scatter.

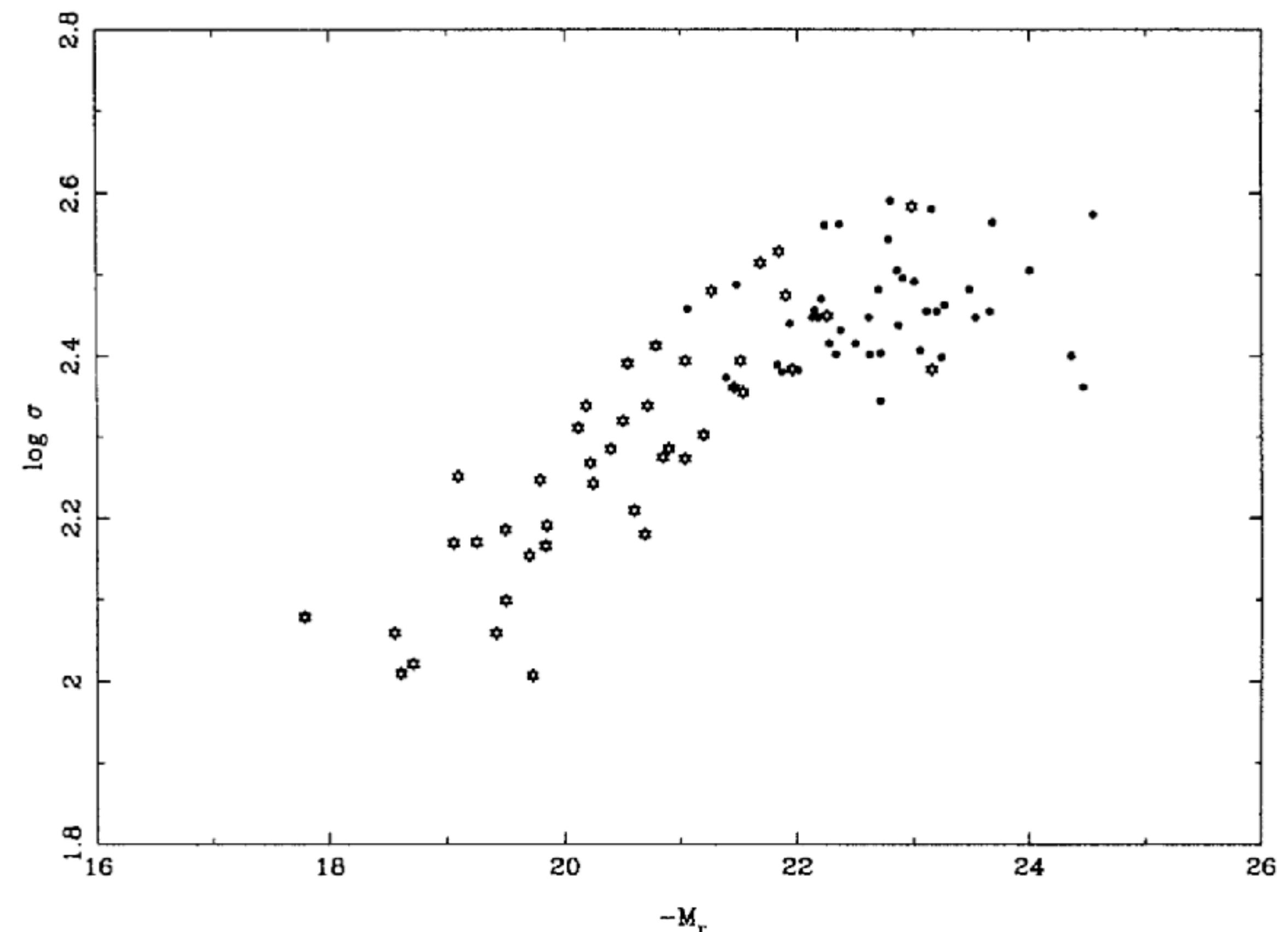


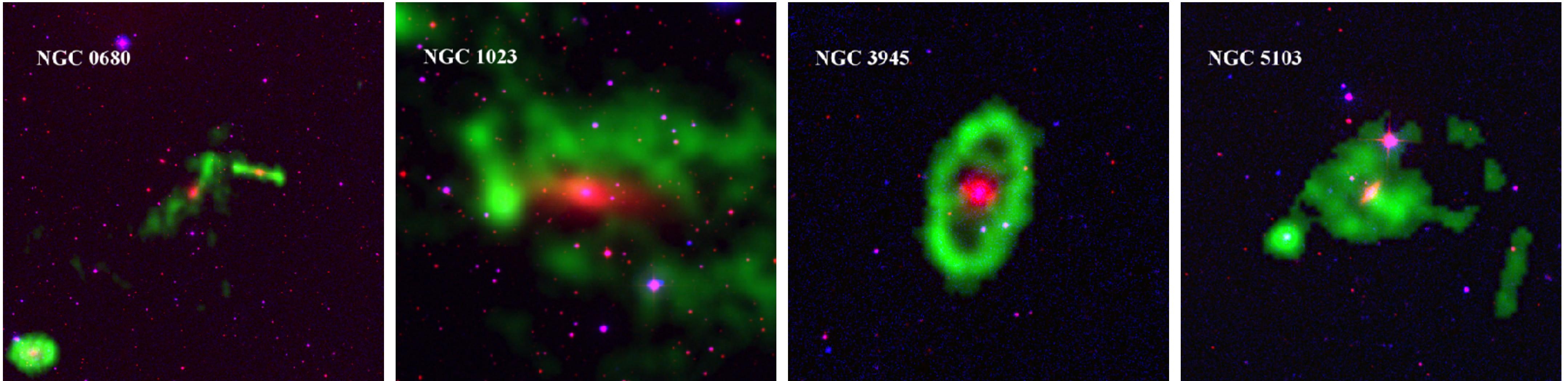
Fig. 9.5 The velocity dispersion σ of elliptical galaxies plotted against their absolute magnitudes. Remembering that the absolute magnitude is 2.5 times the logarithm of luminosity, one obtains the Faber–Jackson relation from this plot. From [Oegerle and Hoessel \(1991\)](#). (©American Astronomical Society. Reproduced with permission from *Astrophysical Journal*.)

Physical characteristics

In addition to the differences in appearance and morphology, spiral galaxies differ from elliptical galaxies in the following basic characteristics:

- **spiral galaxies contain** considerable amounts of **interstellar matter** (ISM); and
- **both stars and the ISM move in roughly circular orbits around the centre of a spiral galaxy** such that the gravitational attraction towards the centre is balanced by the centrifugal force. Because of the presence of ISM, **star formation goes on inside the disks** of spiral galaxies, making them appear **bluer** than elliptical galaxies.
- We also receive synchrotron radiation from the disks of spiral galaxies, which shows that spiral galaxies have **magnetic fields** as well as cosmic ray particles spiralling around them as in our Galaxy.
- Note: elliptical galaxies likely also have some magnetic fields, but they are weaker and more difficult to measure compared to spiral galaxies.

Physical characteristics



- Elliptical galaxies typically do not have much ISM
- In some cases they can acquire from another galaxy (e.g. gas rich merger or tidal interaction)
- In this case they have various HI morphologies from regular disks to rings and unsettled clouds.

Physical characteristics

- Spiral galaxies have HI distributed in a disk, similar to the Milky Way



Physical characteristics

- The emission at the 21-cm line helped in mapping the distribution and kinematics of the ISM in our Galaxy.
- The **ISMs of external spiral galaxies** can also be studied by analysing the emission at the **21-cm line**.
- If the galaxy is moving with respect to us, then we will of course find this line **Doppler shifted**.
- Additionally, in the case of a **rotating disk**, we expect the ISM to be moving towards us on one side of the galaxy and moving away from us on the other side (unless the line of sight is exactly perpendicular to the disk). The **Doppler shifts of the 21-cm line should accordingly be different on the opposite sides of the spiral galaxy**. This is indeed seen and one can use this variation of Doppler shift to determine how the **circular speed v_c** of the ISM varies with distance from the centre of the galaxy.

Physical characteristics

- The **Figure** shows the contours of constant Doppler shift in a spiral galaxy superposed on the optical image of the galaxy.
- The **contour lines go well beyond the optical image**, since the 21-cm emission of a typical spiral galaxy usually comes from a region much larger than the optical image. -> **HI disk is typically about 2 times larger than the stellar disk**.
- From the velocity field, one can determine **how the rotation speed v_c varies with the distance from the centre inside a galaxy**.
- A plot of the circular speed v_c as a function of the radius of a galaxy is known as a ***rotation curve***.

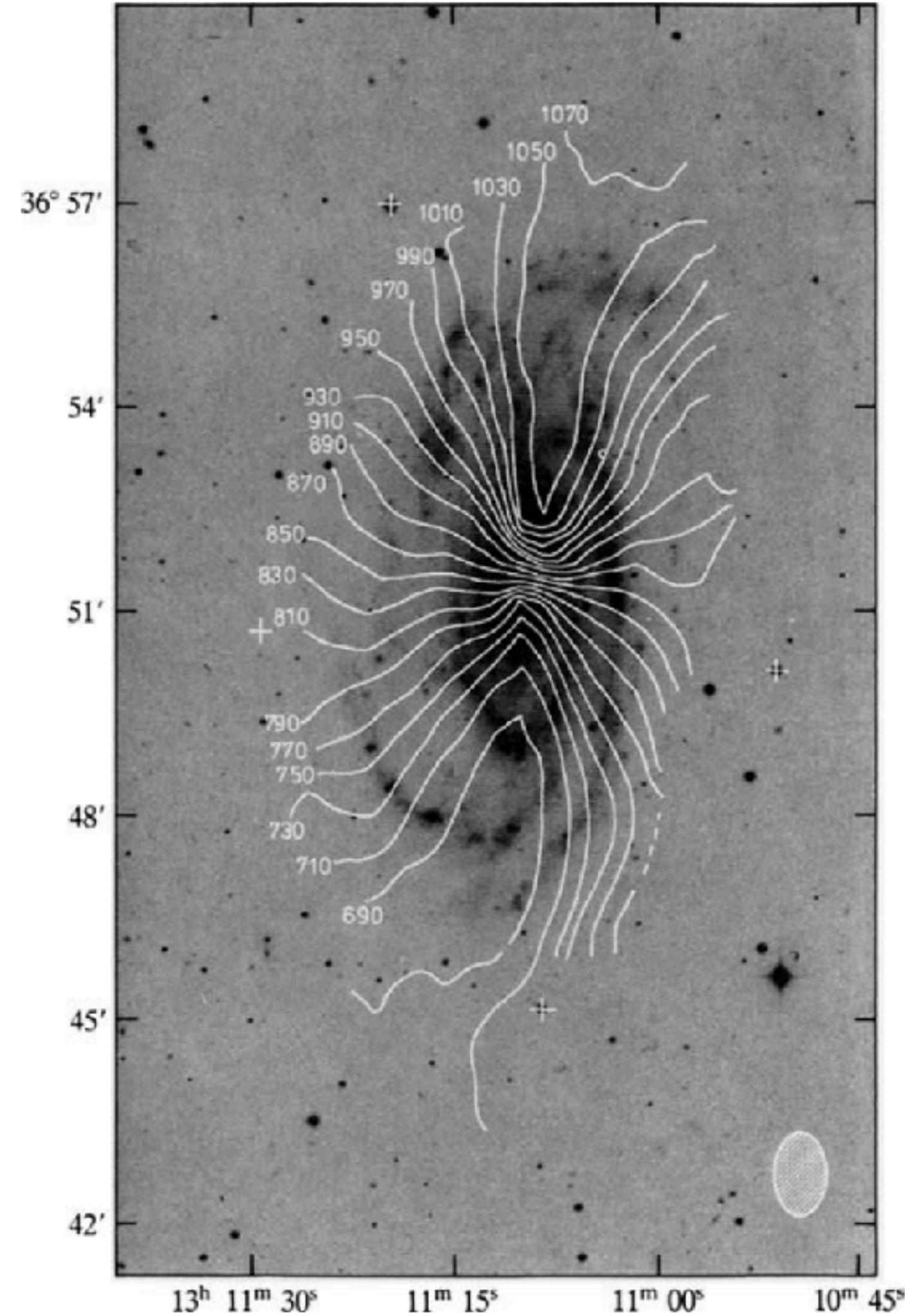
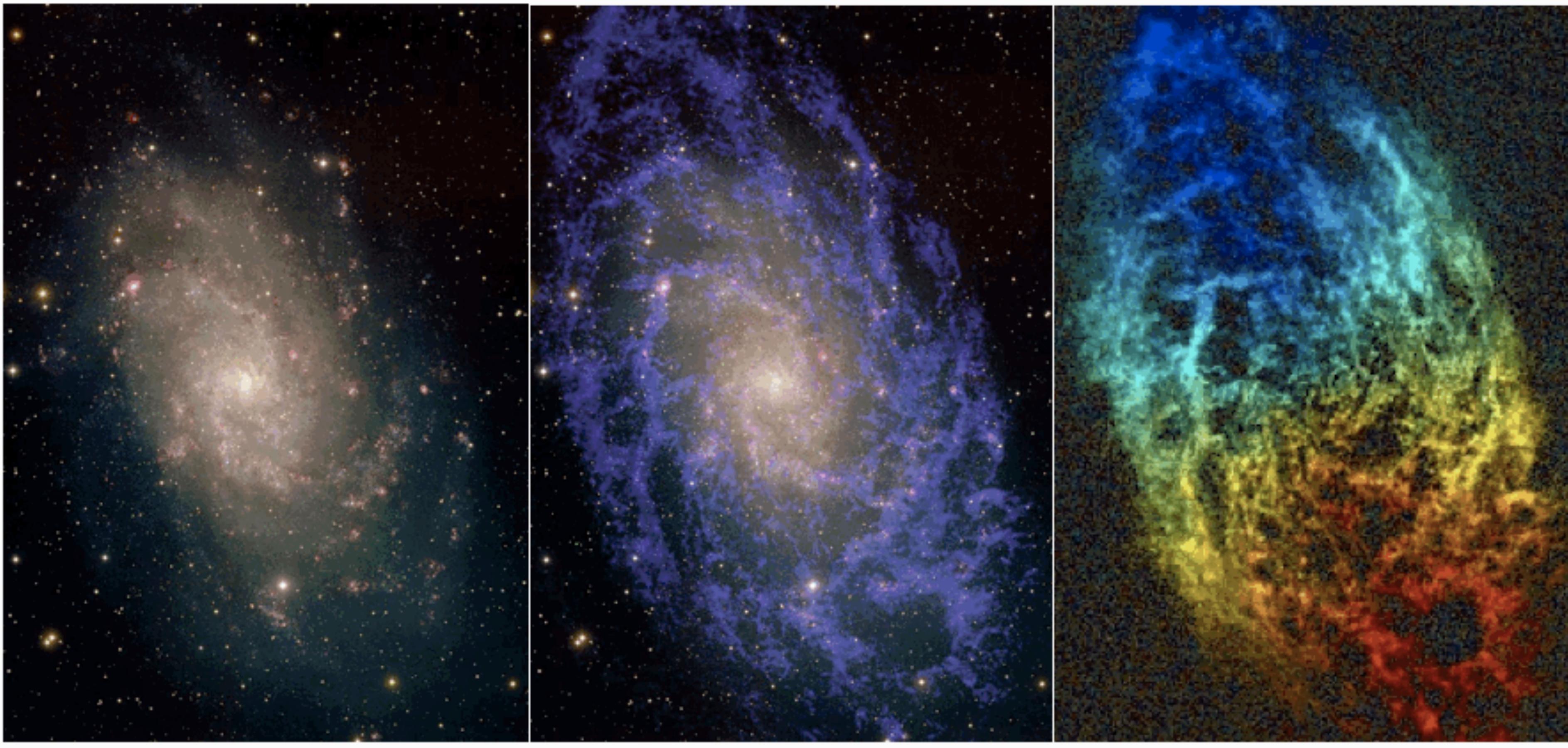


Fig. 9.6 The contours of constant Doppler shift (given in km s^{-1}) in the 21-cm line emission superposed on the negative optical image (i.e. the galaxy is shown in black against a light background) of the galaxy NGC 5033. From [Bosma \(1978\)](#). Courtesy: A. Bosma.

Physical characteristics



stars

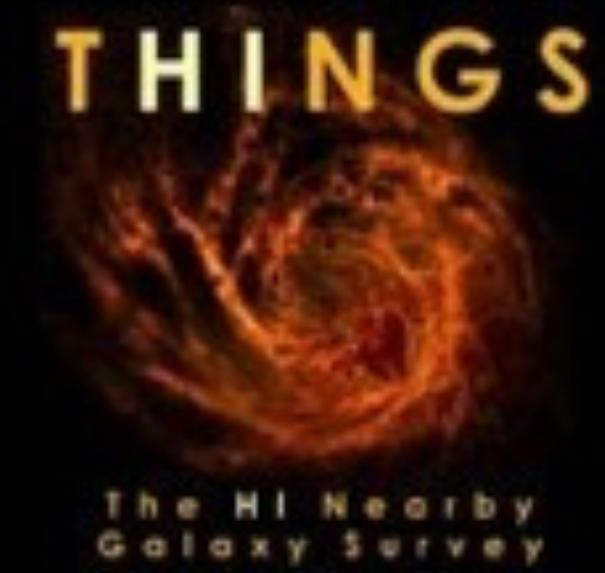
stars + hydrogen

hydrogen velocity

Optical and HI images of M33 (left and center) On the right is illustrated the Doppler velocities of the HI, color coded for redshift and blueshift.

Galaxy Dynamics in THINGS — The HI Nearby Galaxy Survey

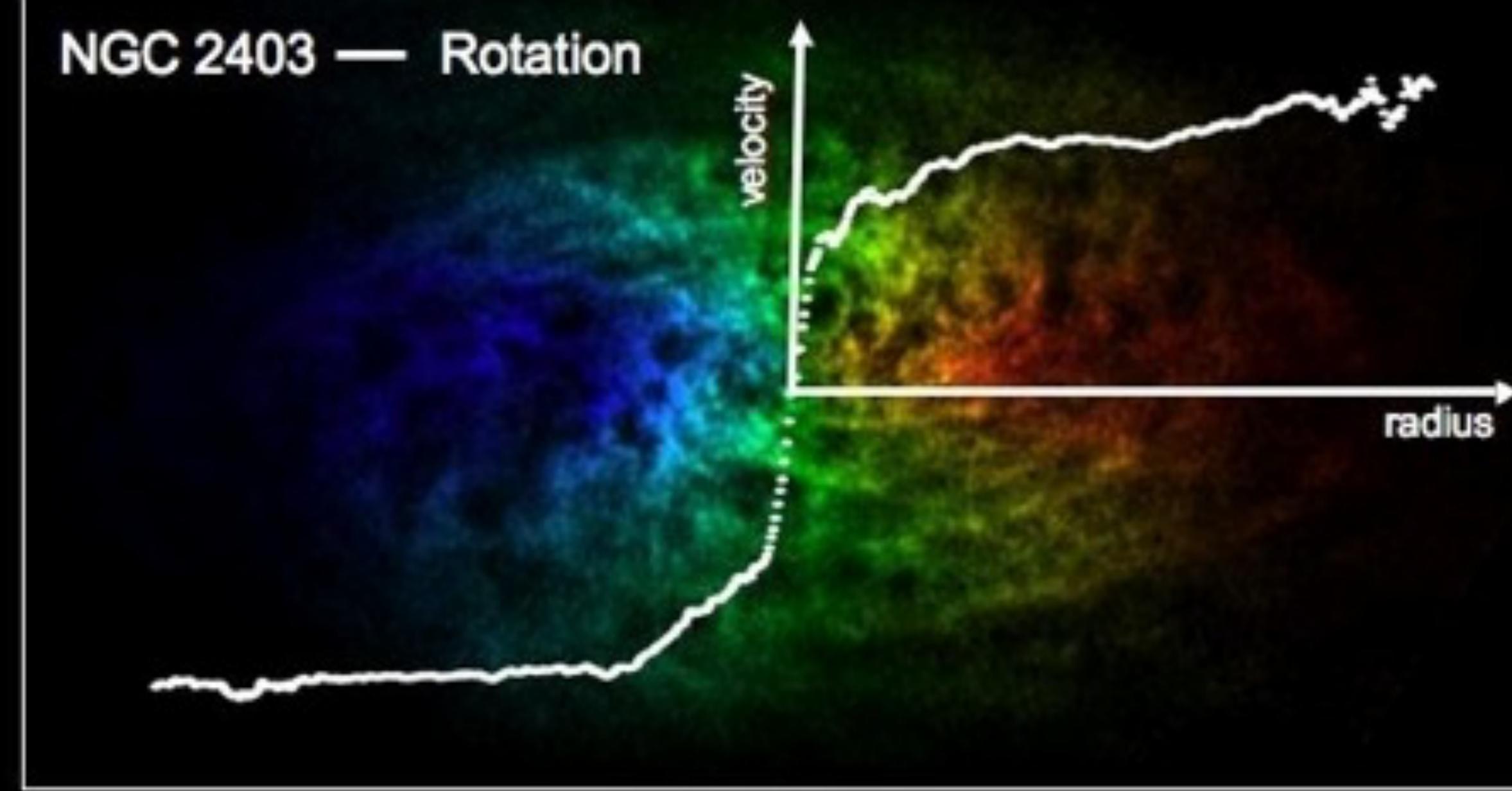
NGC 2403 — Gas and Stars



The HI Nearby Galaxy Survey

Color Coding:
THINGS Atomic Hydrogen
(Very Large Array)
Old stars
(Spitzer Space Telescope)
Star Formation
(GALEX & Spitzer)

NGC 2403 — Rotation



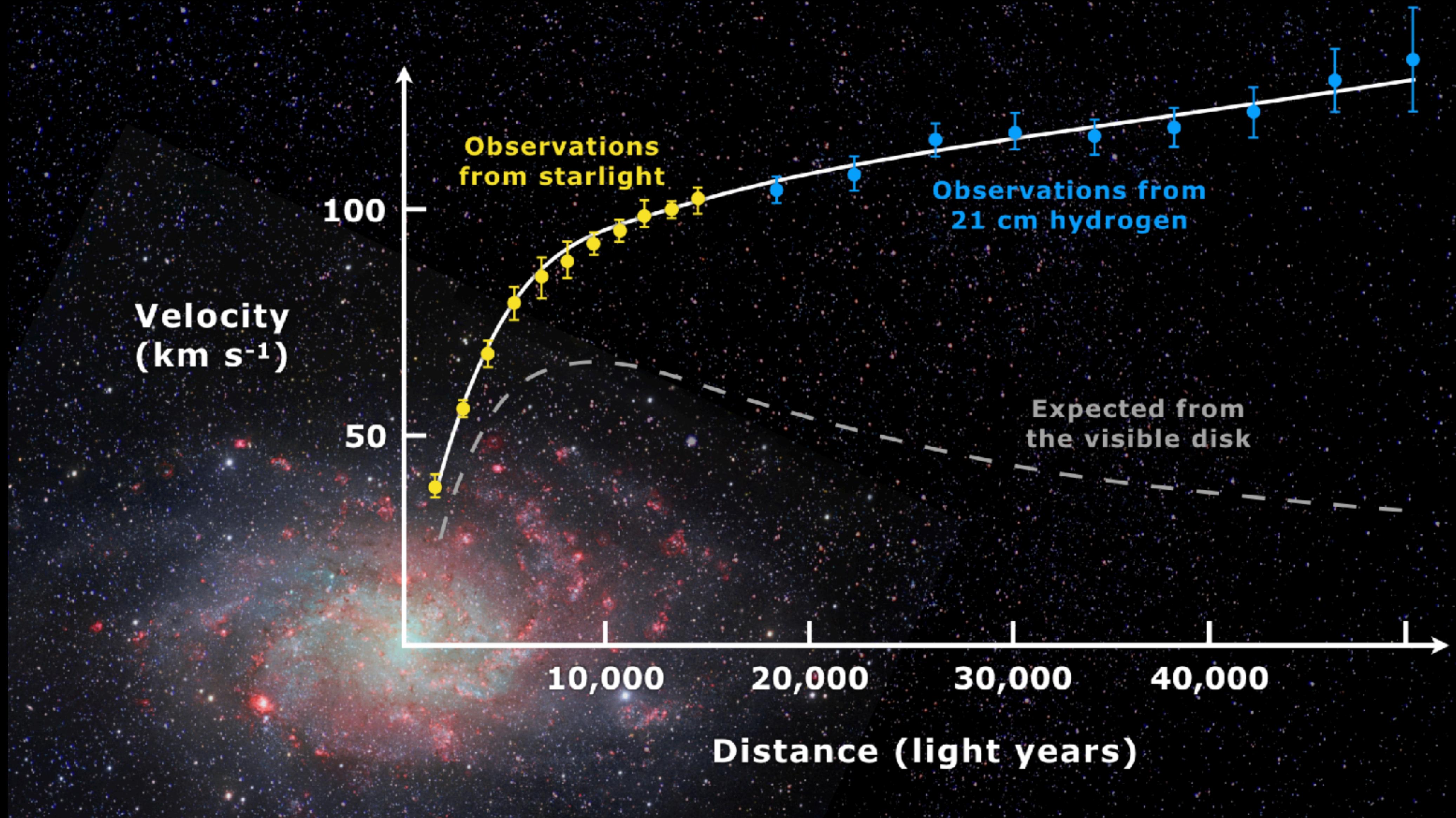
Color coding:
THINGS HI distribution:
Red-shifted (receding)
Blue-shifted (approaching)

— Rotation Curve



Image credits:
VLA THINGS: Walter et al. 08
Spitzer SINGS: Kennicutt et al. 03
GALEX NGS: Gil de Paz et al. 07
Rotation Curve: de Blok et al. 08

Rotation curve



Physical characteristics

- If v_c is the circular speed at a radial distance r from the centre, then **equating the centrifugal force with the gravitational force gives**

$$\frac{v_c^2}{r} = \frac{GM(r)}{r^2}$$

where $M(r)$ is the mass within the radius r .

We should point out that this is strictly valid only for a spherically symmetric distribution of matter. In the case of a spiral galaxy, we expect this equation to give only an approximate qualitative idea of how v_c varies with r .

If we take $M(r) \propto r^3$ in the **central region of the galaxy**, as we would expect in the **case of a uniform spherical distribution**. Then in the central region of the galaxy:

$$v_c \propto r$$

Physical characteristics

If most of the mass is confined within a certain region, then the circular speed beyond that region, on the other hand, must be given by

$$v_c = \sqrt{\frac{GM_{\text{total}}}{r}}$$

where M_{total} is the total mass. In other words, we expect v_c to fall as $r^{-1/2}$ in the outer regions of the galaxy.

The Figure shows the rotation curves of several spiral galaxies determined from the Doppler shift of the 21-cm line.

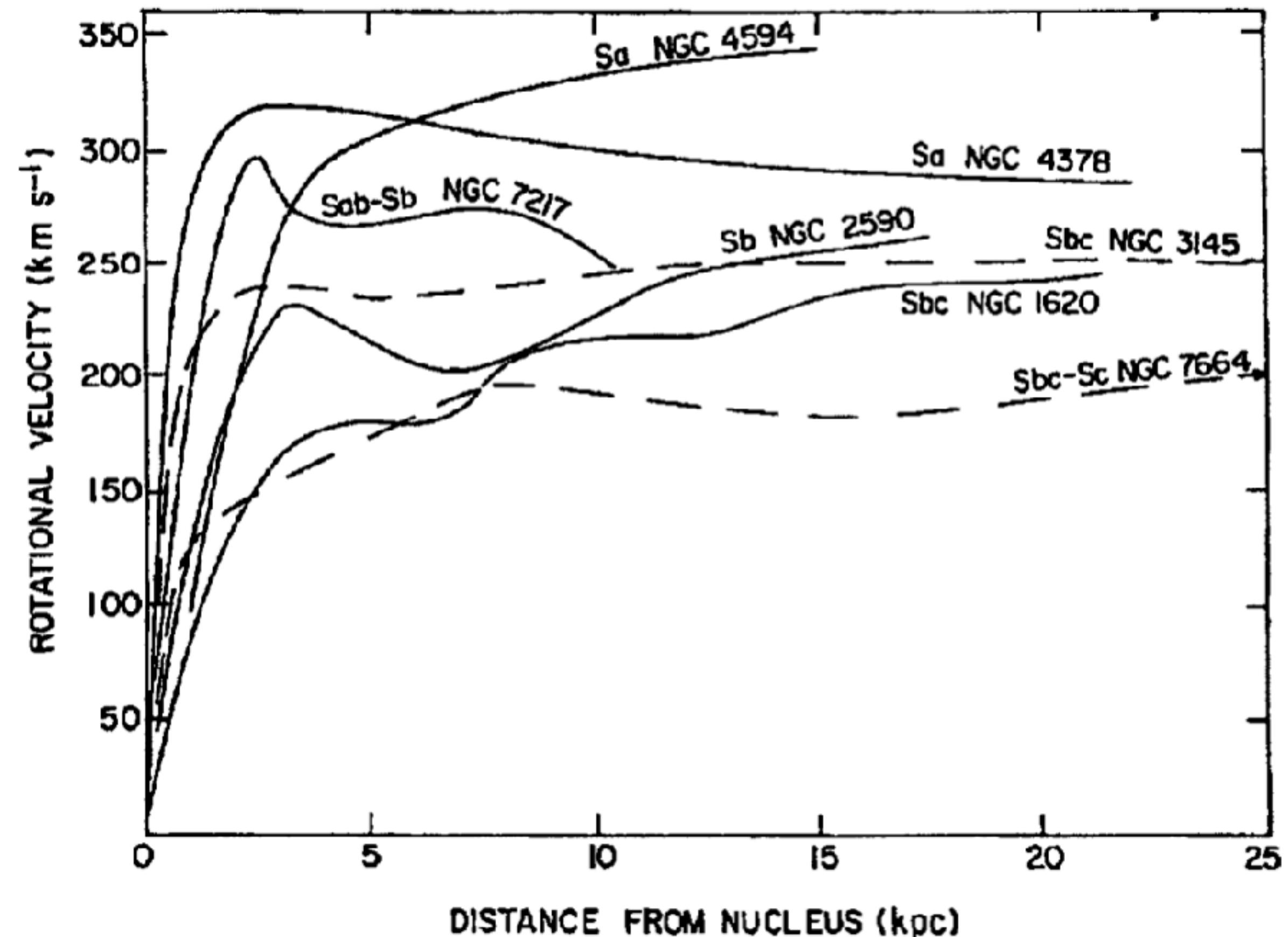


Fig. 9.7 The rotation curves of several galaxies showing how v_c varies with radius. From Rubin, Ford and Thonnard (1978). (©American Astronomical Society. Reproduced with permission from *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.)

Physical characteristics

It seems that v_c rises in the central regions of galaxies roughly as we expect.

However, the **rotation curves become asymptotically flat** and the values of v_c thereafter remain nearly constant with increasing radial distance.

This came as a very big surprise to astronomers when rotation curves of a few spiral galaxies were determined for the first time.

Since the 21-cm emission is detected from regions of galaxies beyond the visible disk, it could be ascertained that **the ISM keeps on going in circular orbits with constant v_c well beyond the regions emitting visible light in the galaxies.**

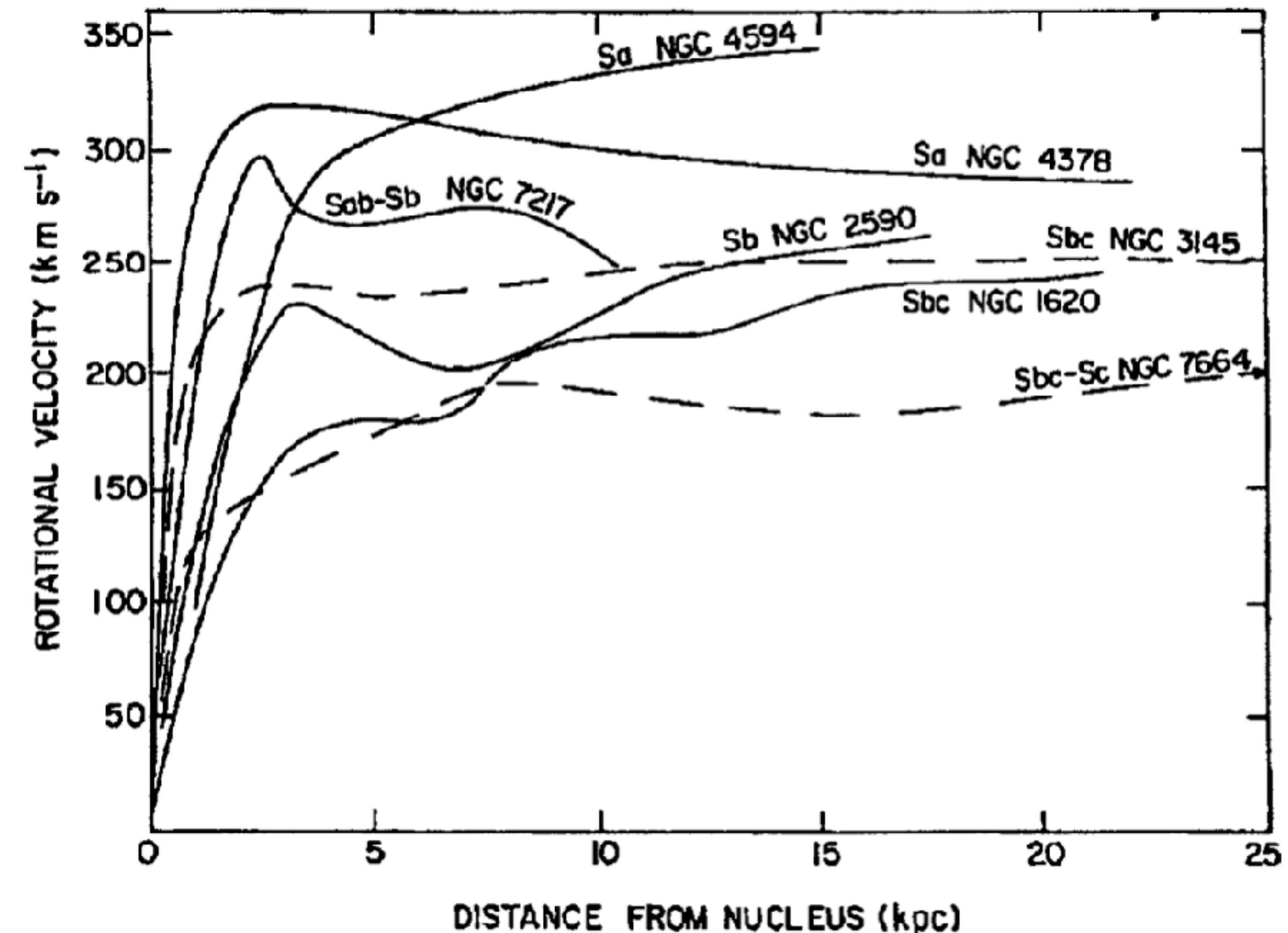


Fig. 9.7 The rotation curves of several galaxies showing how v_c varies with radius. From Rubin, Ford and Thonnard (1978). (©American Astronomical Society. Reproduced with permission from *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.)

Physical characteristics

What is the reason?

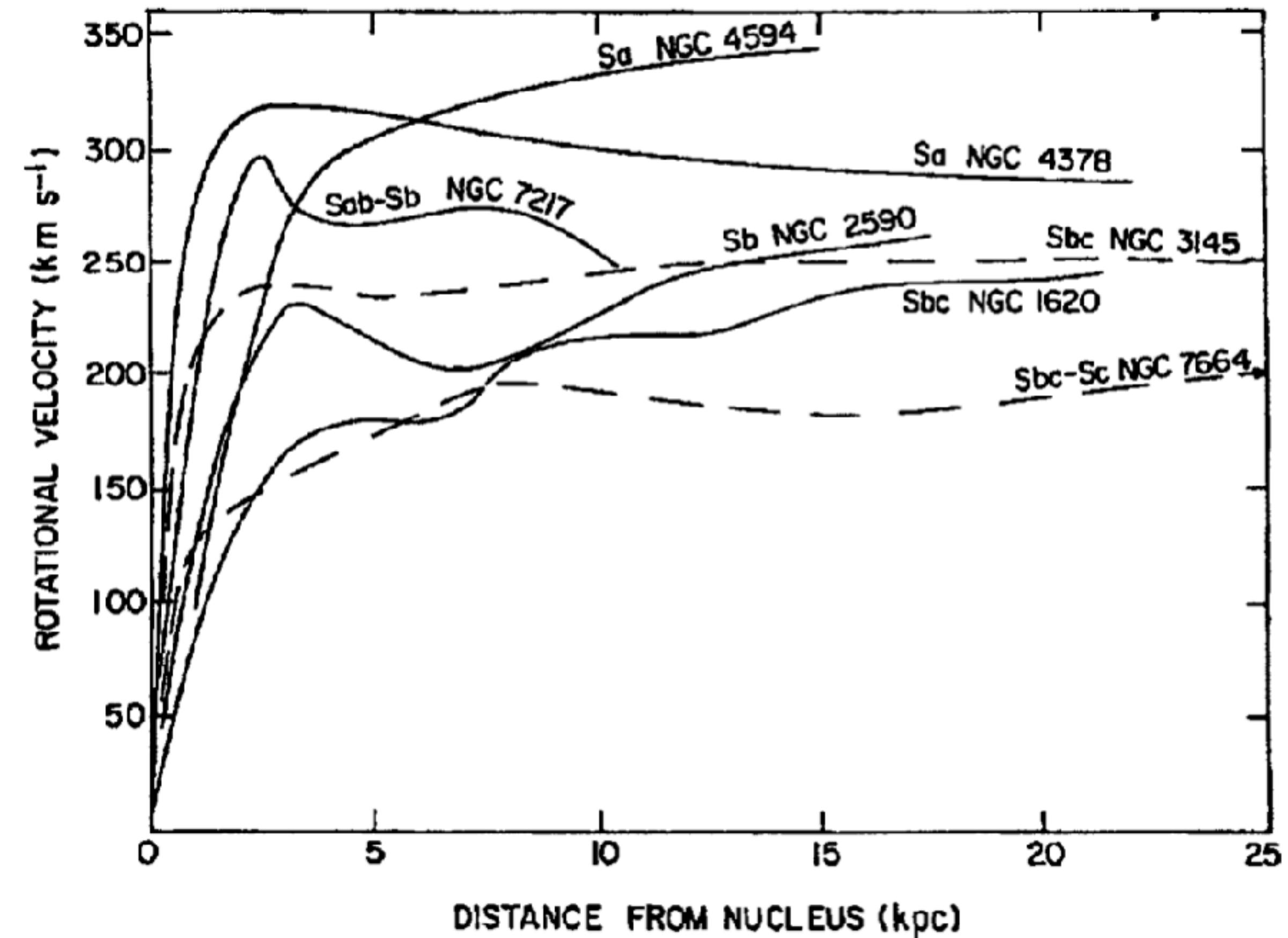


Fig. 9.7 The rotation curves of several galaxies showing how v_c varies with radius. From Rubin, Ford and Thonnard (1978). (©American Astronomical Society. Reproduced with permission from *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.)

Physical characteristics

What is the reason?

- The mass distribution continues beyond the visible stellar disk of the galaxy and even beyond the regions from where we receive 21-cm emission.
- It appears that **the total mass of a typical spiral galaxy is at least a few times the total mass of stars emitting light.** -> most of the matter in a spiral galaxy does not emit light and is usually referred to as **dark matter**.
- Determining the nature of dark matter is one of the major challenges of modern astronomy.

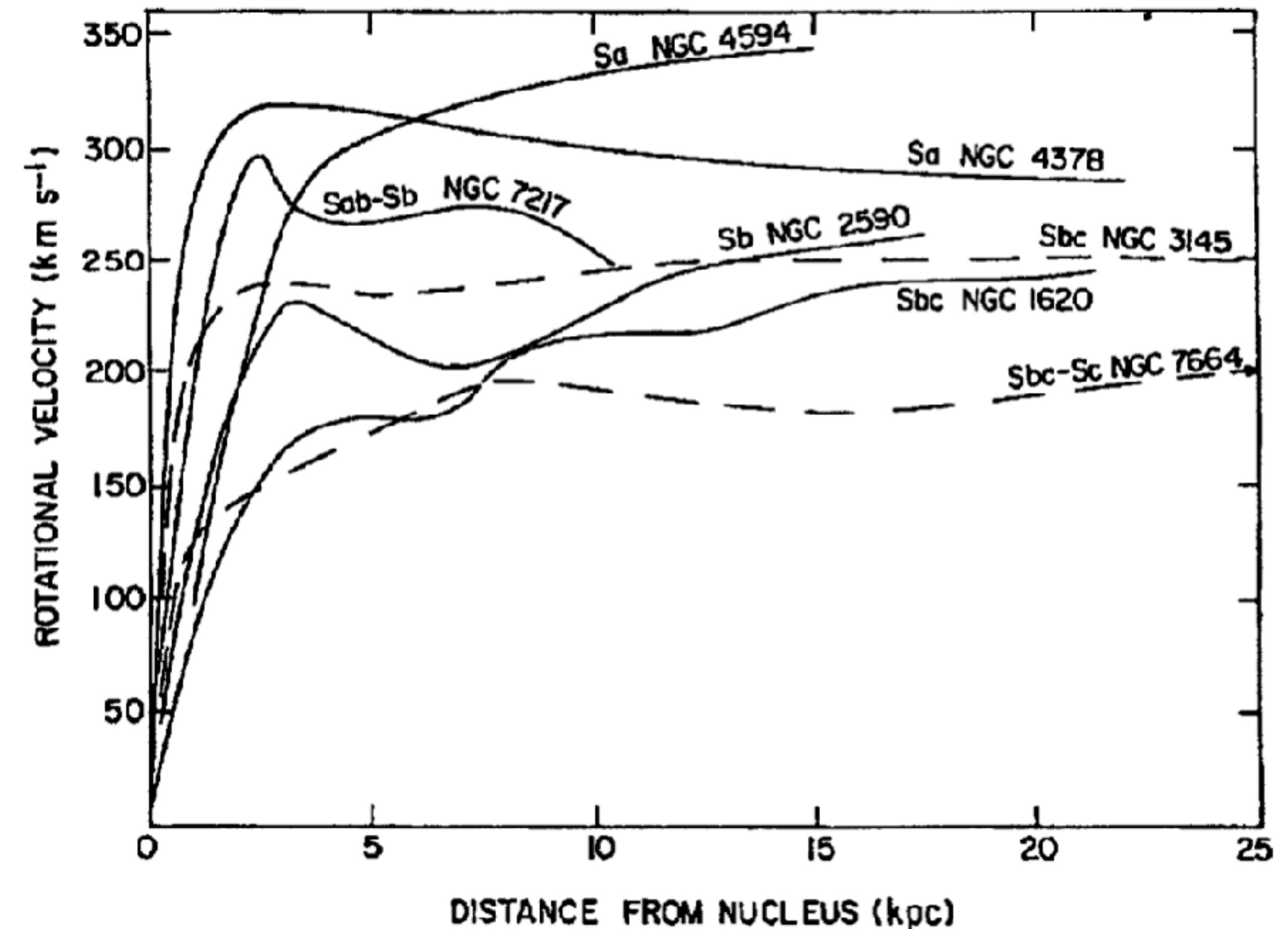


Fig. 9.7 The rotation curves of several galaxies showing how v_c varies with radius. From Rubin, Ford and Thonnard (1978). (©American Astronomical Society. Reproduced with permission from *Astrophysical Journal Letters*.)

Physical characteristics

The asymptotic circular speed v_c in the flat portion of the rotation curve would certainly depend on the mass of the spiral galaxy.

We expect a higher v_c for a more massive galaxy. Since a more massive galaxy is expected to be more luminous as well, we anticipate a **correlation between the asymptotic v_c and the intrinsic brightness of a spiral galaxy**. This is called the ***Tully–Fisher relation*** can be written as

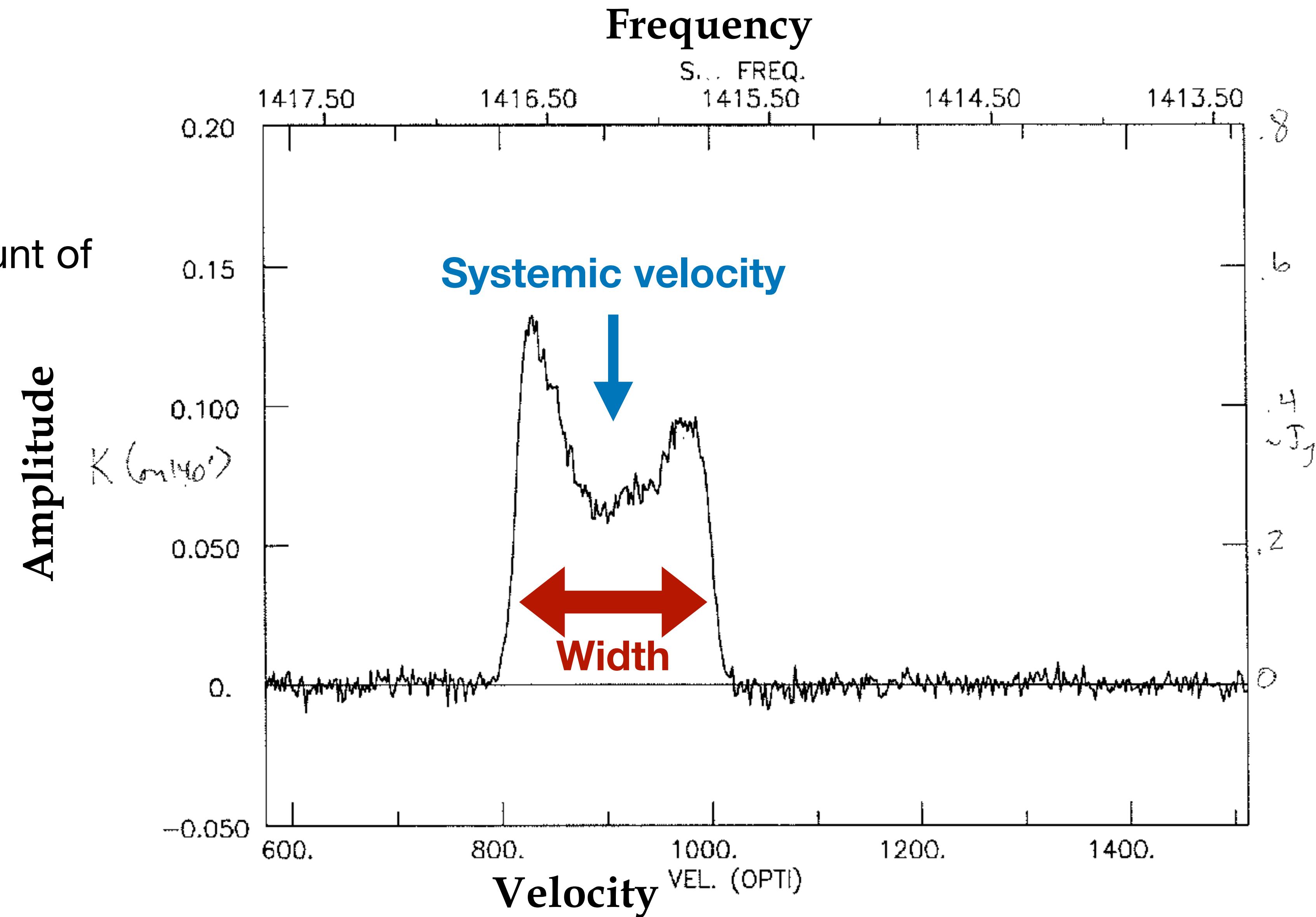
$$v_c \approx 220 \left(\frac{L}{L_*} \right)^{0.22} \text{ km s}^{-1}$$

This is similar to the Faber–Jackson relation of elliptical galaxies.

The luminosity depends on the mass of the galaxy → which also determine the motion of the stars and gas.

HI in spiral galaxies

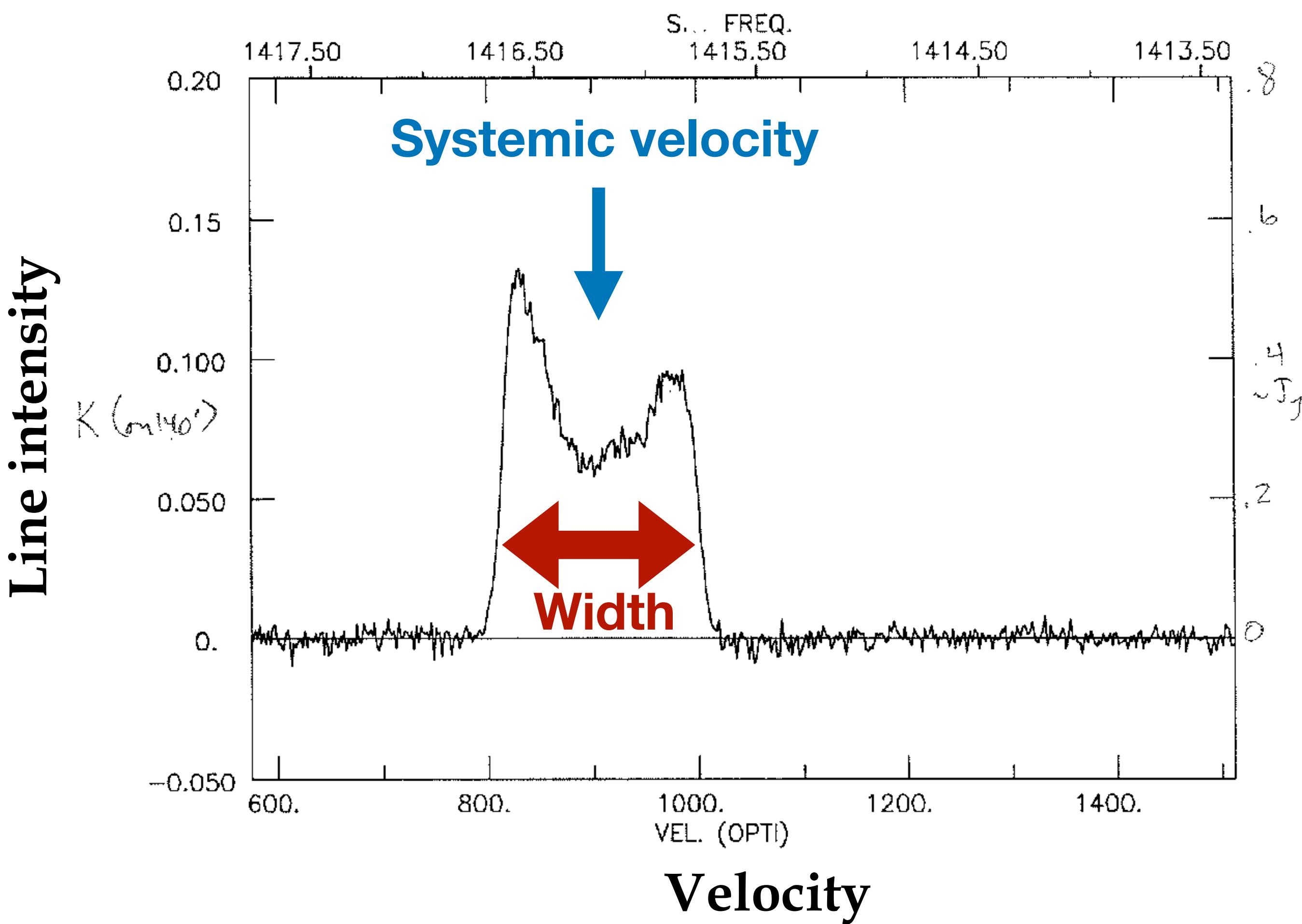
UGC 11707 is a very blue spiral galaxy, indicative of a large amount of HI in the galaxy



HI in spiral galaxies

We use the HI profiles of galaxies to calculate the following parameters:

1. The midpoint of the emission profile in km/s, yields the **systemic velocity** of the galaxy. This can be used to make an estimate of the redshift-distance using Hubble's law.
2. The **total HI line flux**, can be used to derive the total **HI mass**, using the estimated distance.
3. The observed width of the HI line profile, in km/s, gives the **observed Doppler broadening** due to the galaxy's **rotation**. In combination with an estimate of the galaxy's size and inclination on the plane of the sky, the width parameter can be used to make an estimate of the galaxy's **total dynamical mass**.



HI in spiral galaxies

Line intensity is proportional to HI mass, if the gas is optically thin $\tau \ll 1$

$$\left(\frac{M_{\text{H}}}{M_{\odot}}\right) \approx 2.36 \times 10^5 \left(\frac{D}{\text{Mpc}}\right)^2 \int \left[\frac{S(\nu)}{\text{Jy}}\right] \left(\frac{d\nu}{\text{km s}^{-1}}\right)$$

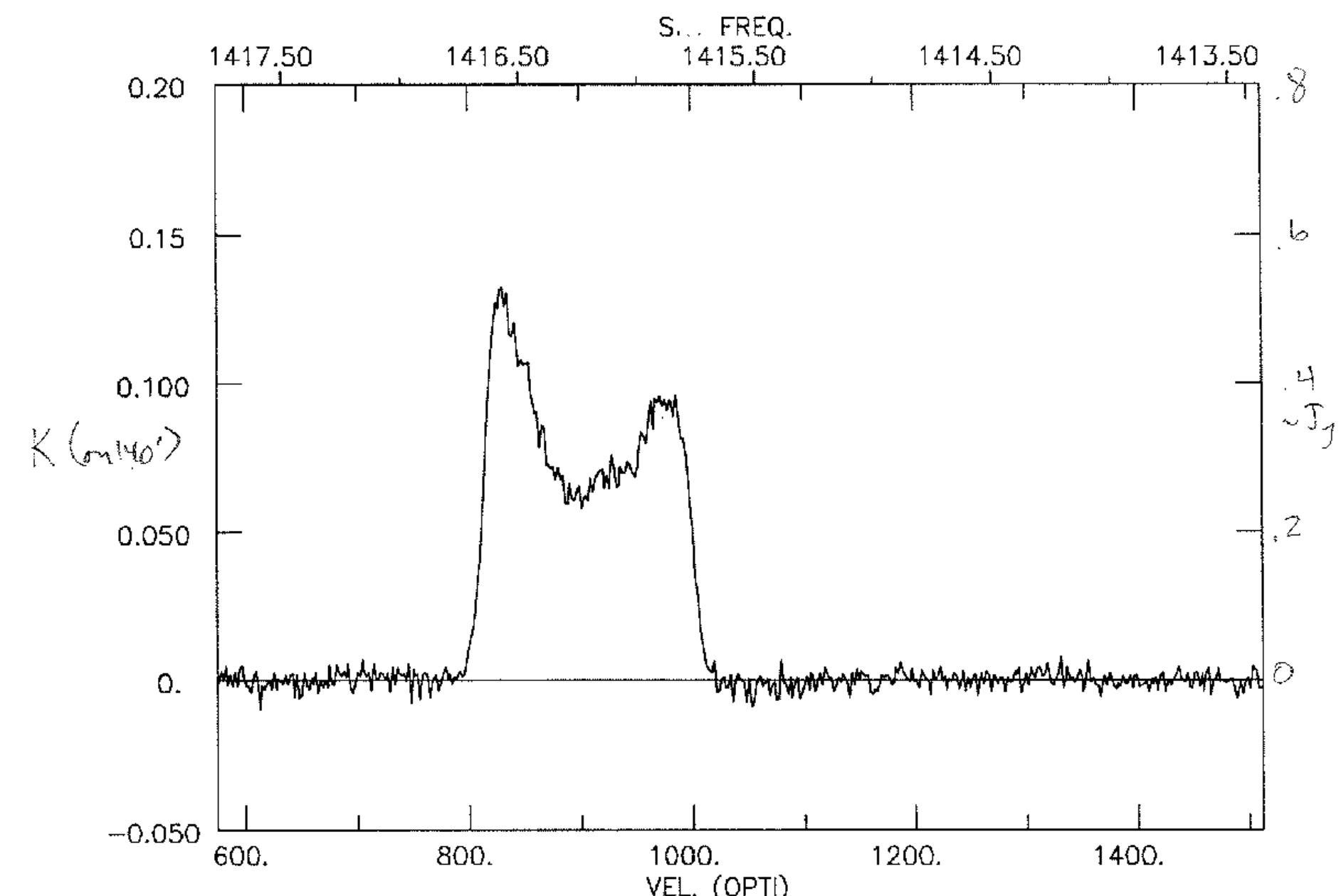
HI mass of a galaxy



Distance Integrated intensity

Hubble flow distance to the galaxy, based on the redshift of the line: $D = v/H_0$

Where v is the velocity of the line centre (recession velocity) and H_0 is the Hubble constant.

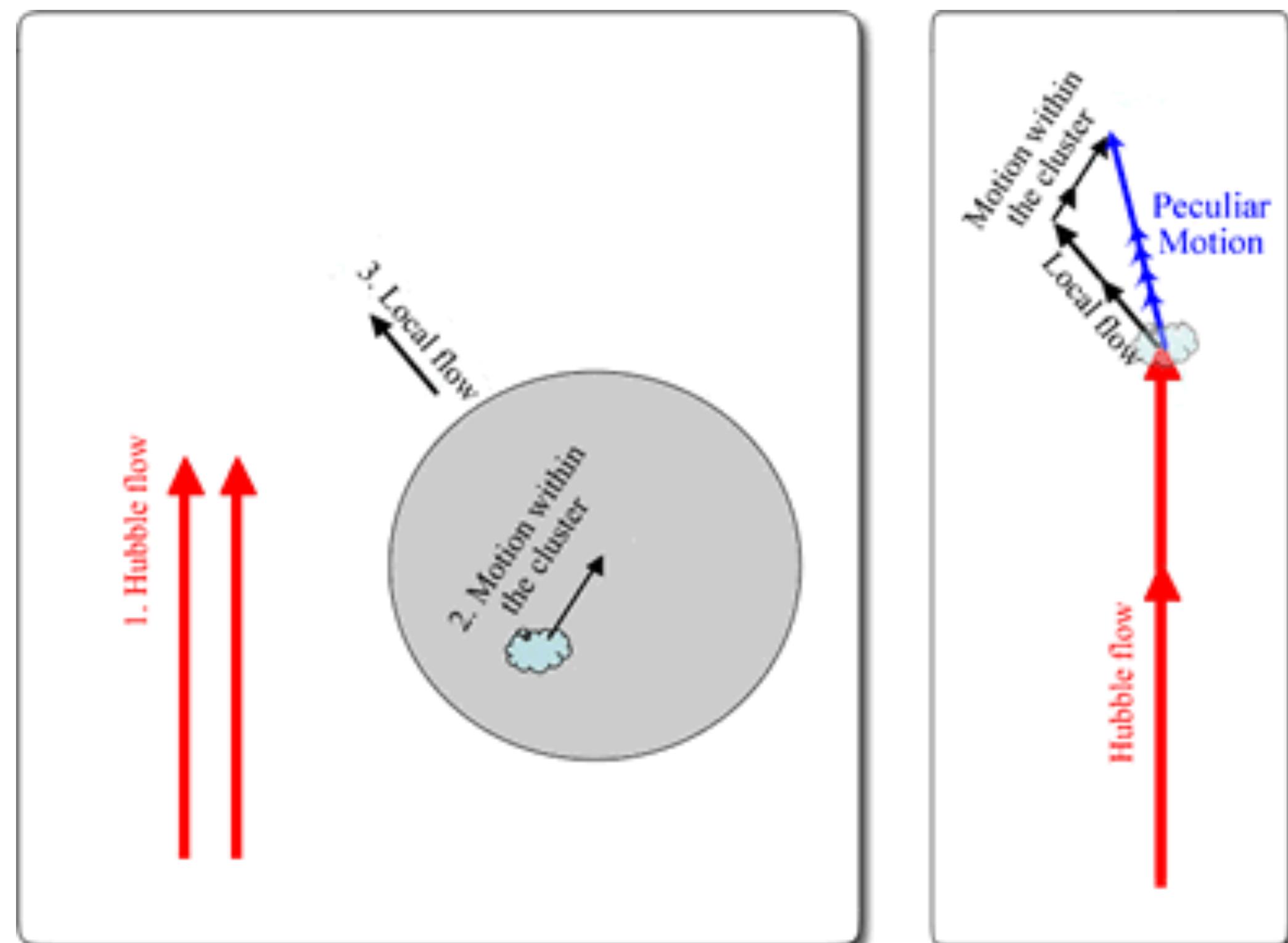
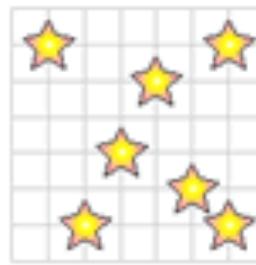


Hubble flow

The ‘Hubble flow’ describes the motion of galaxies due solely to the expansion of the Universe. The idea of the expanding Universe was first put forward by Edwin Hubble in 1929, after observing a correlation between the redshifts of galaxies and their distances measured using the period-luminosity relationship for Cepheid variable stars. Hubble found that all galaxies were moving away from us, and that the velocity of their recession was proportional to their distance from us, this is called the **Hubble Law**:

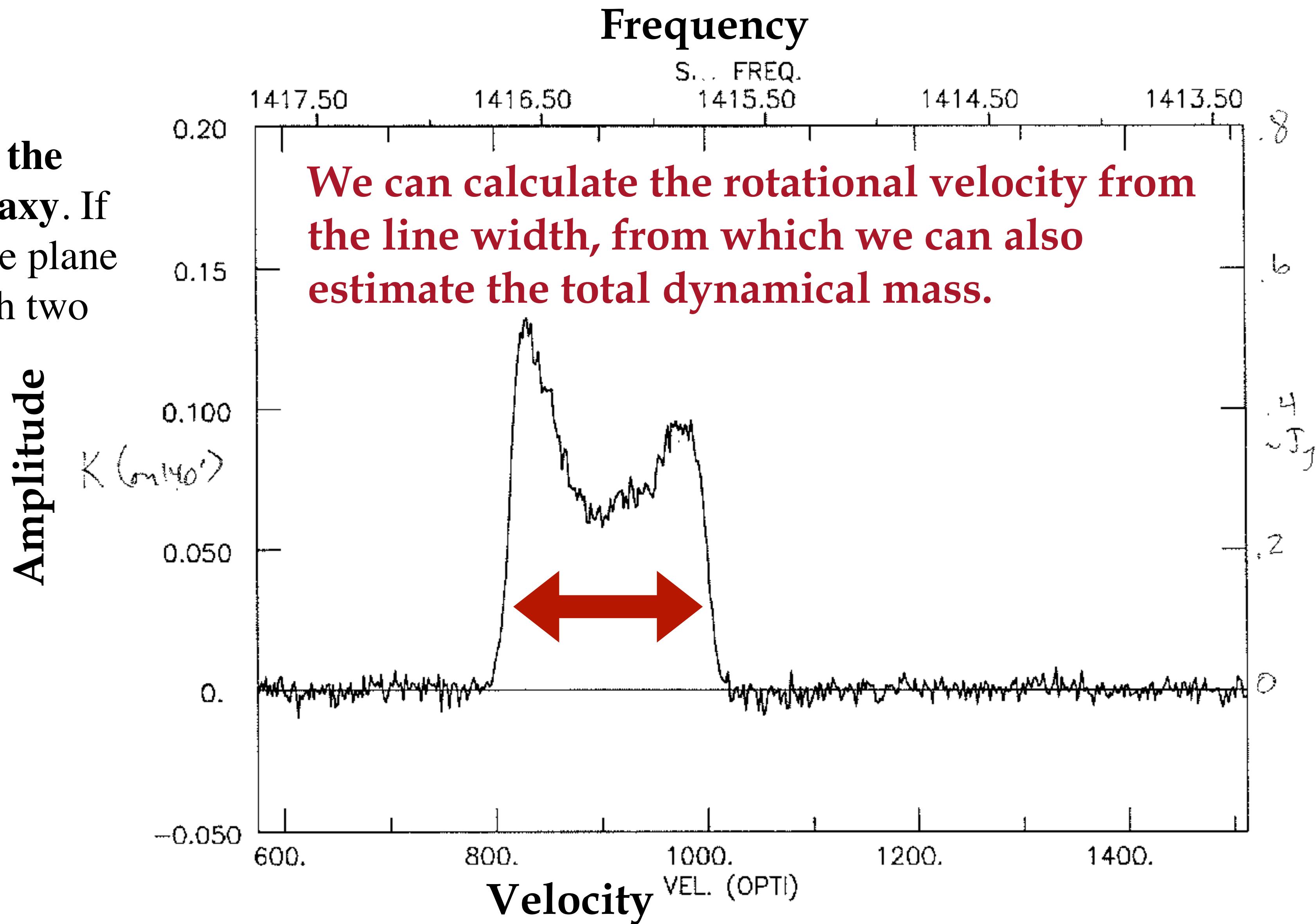
$$v = H_0 \times D$$

The motions of galaxies are influenced by more than just the Hubble flow. The net motions of galaxies are comprised of the Hubble flow, the local flow, and the motion of the galaxy within its cluster and/or group environment. These deviations from the pure Hubble flow are referred to as **peculiar motions**.



HI in spiral galaxies

The shape of the HI line is due to the gas rotating in the disk of the galaxy. If a galaxy is inclined compared to the plane of the sky, we see a line profile with two peaks.



HI in spiral galaxies

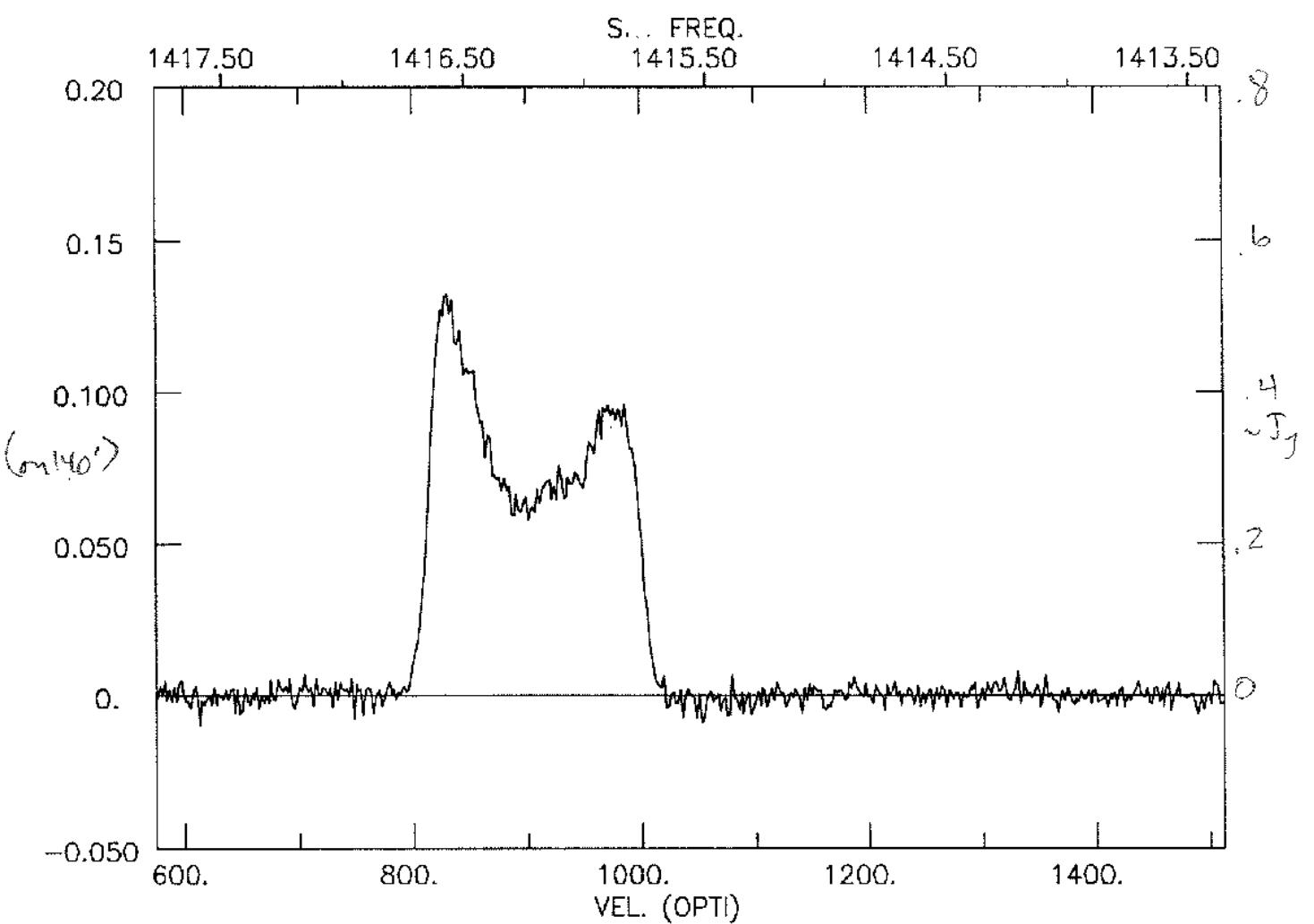
$$v(r) = \frac{v_r(r)}{\sin i}$$

- Where $v(r)$ is the rotational velocity at radius r ,
- $v_r(r)$ is the tangential component of the rotational velocity, contributing to the width of the line profile,
- And i is the inclination of the galaxy compared to the plane of the sky. The inclination is proportional to the axis ratio of the galaxy.

The galaxies **dynamical mass inside a radius r** is:

$$\left(\frac{M}{M_\odot}\right) \approx 2.3 \times 10^5 \left(\frac{v}{\text{km s}^{-1}}\right)^2 \left(\frac{r}{\text{kpc}}\right)$$

Here v is the rotational velocity at radius r .



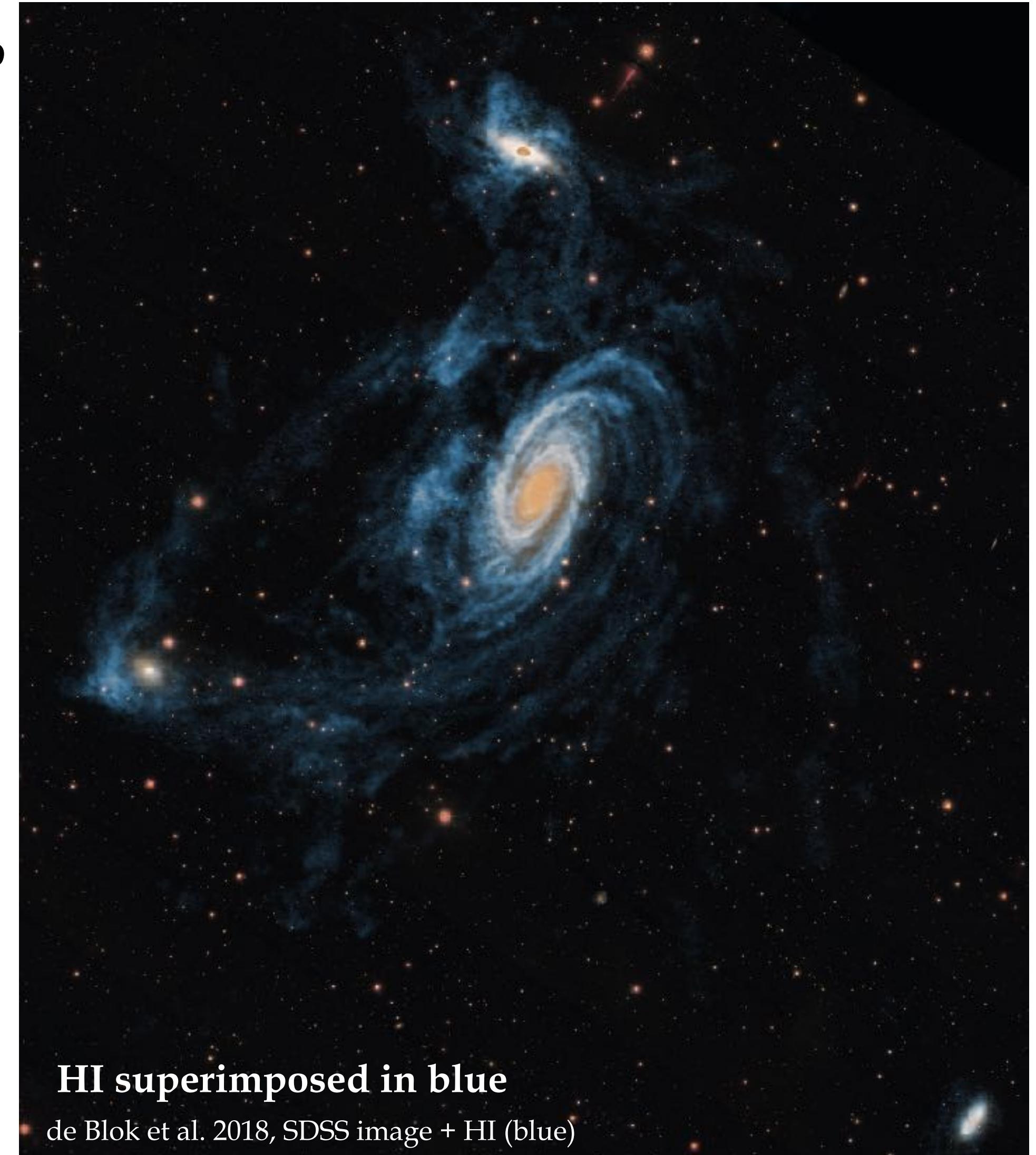
Environmental effects of HI

Tidal interactions between the galaxies are removing gas from the galaxies.



M81 galaxy group

Optical image: stars

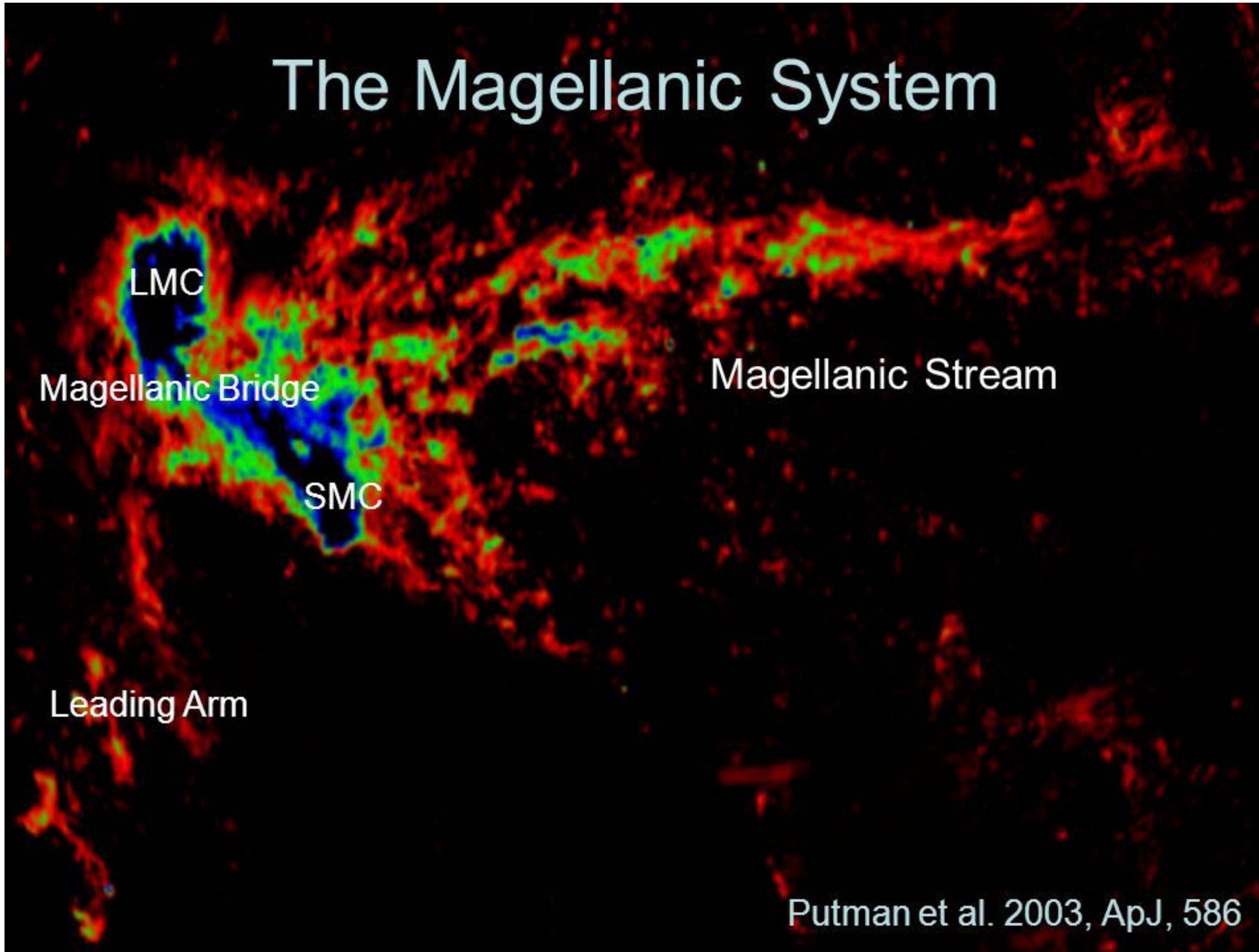


HI superimposed in blue

de Blok et al. 2018, SDSS image + HI (blue)

Tidal interactions

HI image



Optical image



Tidal interaction

Arp 87

The galaxy on the left
is accreting material
from the galaxy on the
right.

The captured material
is starting to form a
polar ring.



More extreme tidal interactions

The antenna galaxy is two **merging spiral galaxies** with tails of stars created by the tidal interaction.

Optical image - gas and stars



Zoom in to the central region

Mergers

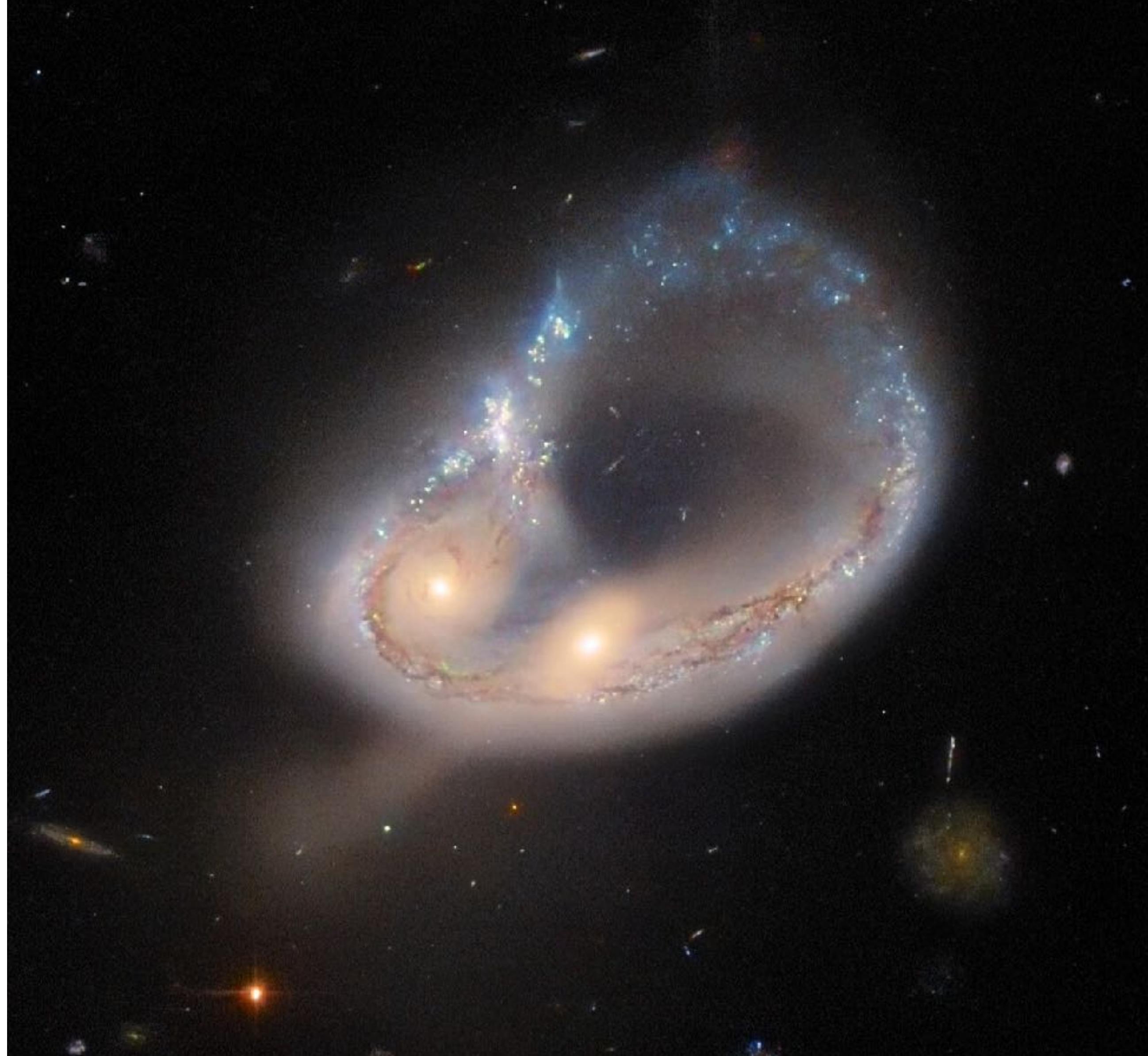
Galaxy group with merging galaxies



Arp-Madore 417-391

Mergers

Tidal arms



Merger

Arp-Madore 417-391

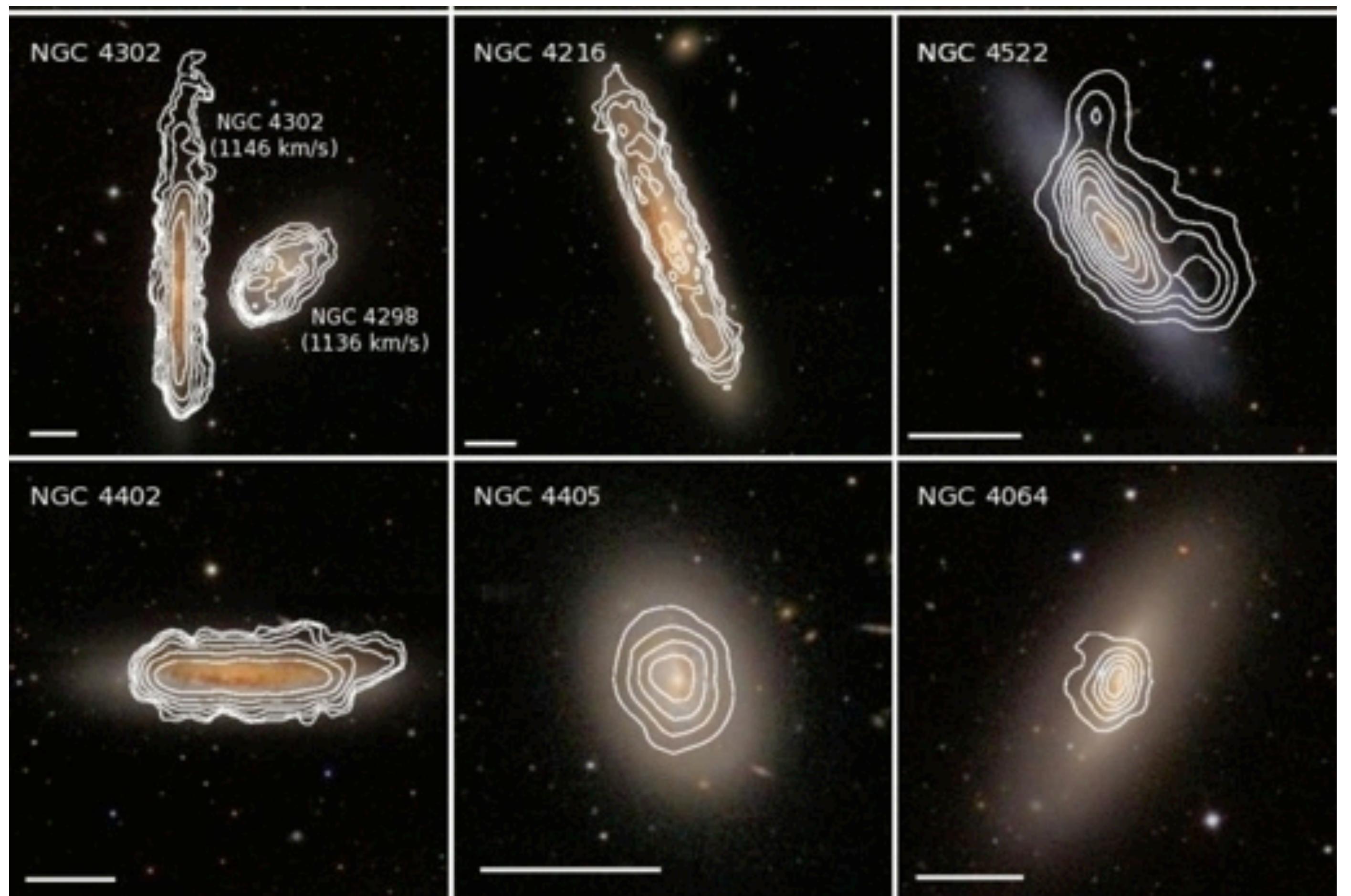
Gas removal in galaxy clusters

Galaxies in the Virgo cluster, optical image + HI contours.
They have significantly smaller HI disks compared to galaxies not in clusters.

Gas removal processes in galaxy clusters:

- Tidal interactions
- Ram pressure stripping
- Starvation

Extreme gas removal can eventually transform a spiral galaxy into an elliptical galaxy. -> reason for morphology - density relation in galaxy clusters.



Ram pressure stripping

Galaxy clusters contain hot ionised gas between the individual galaxies. The density of this gas is typically the highest in the centre of the clusters. -> This gas can be observed through X-ray observations.

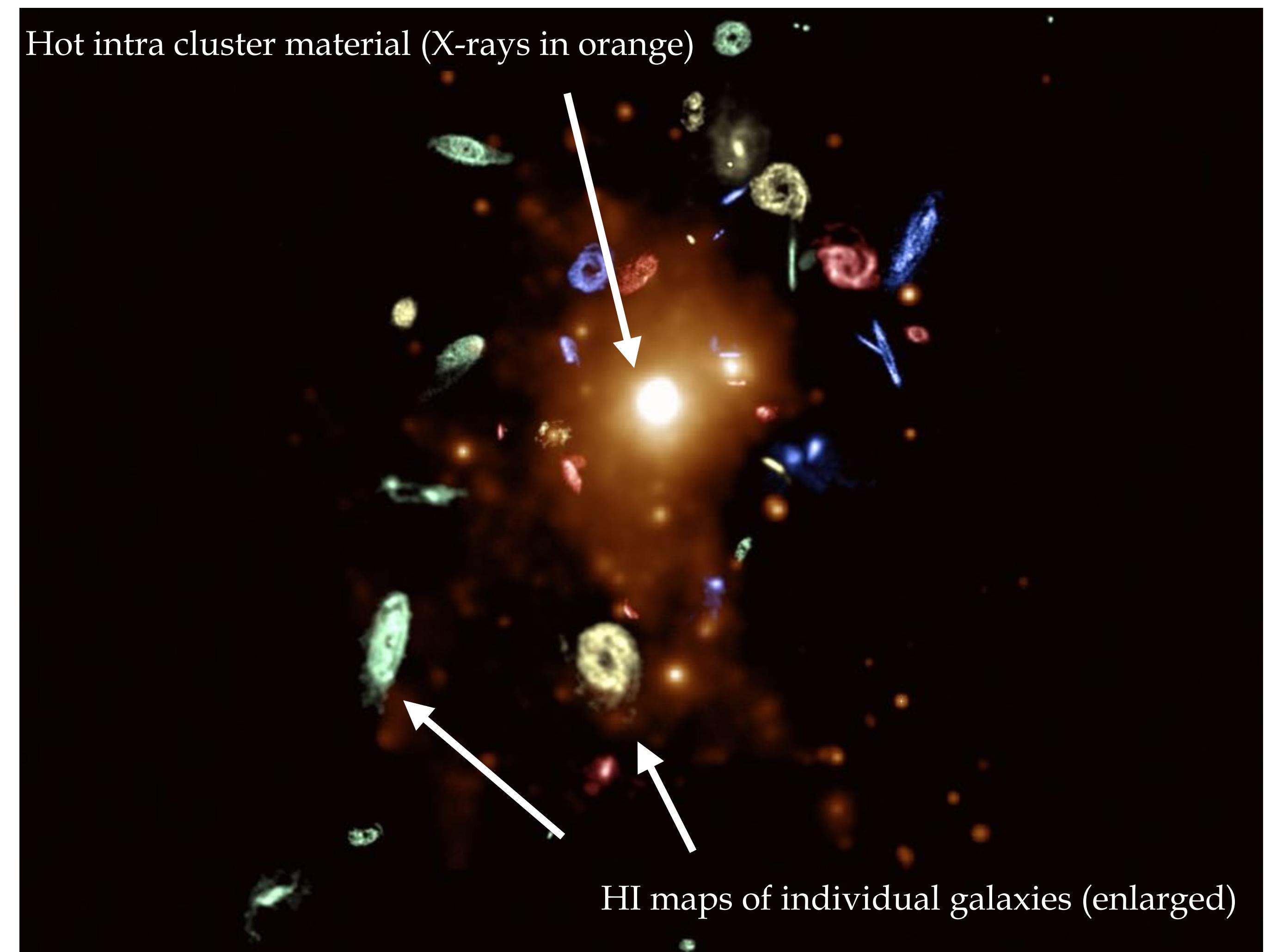
As galaxies move through the cluster they interact hydrodynamically with the hot cluster gas. -> this can remove gas and dust from the galaxies.

$$\rho_{\text{ICM}} v^2 \geq 2\pi G \sigma_*(r) \sigma_g(r)$$

↗
ram pressure

↗
disk's gravitational potential

Galaxies in the Virgo cluster



Ram pressure stripping

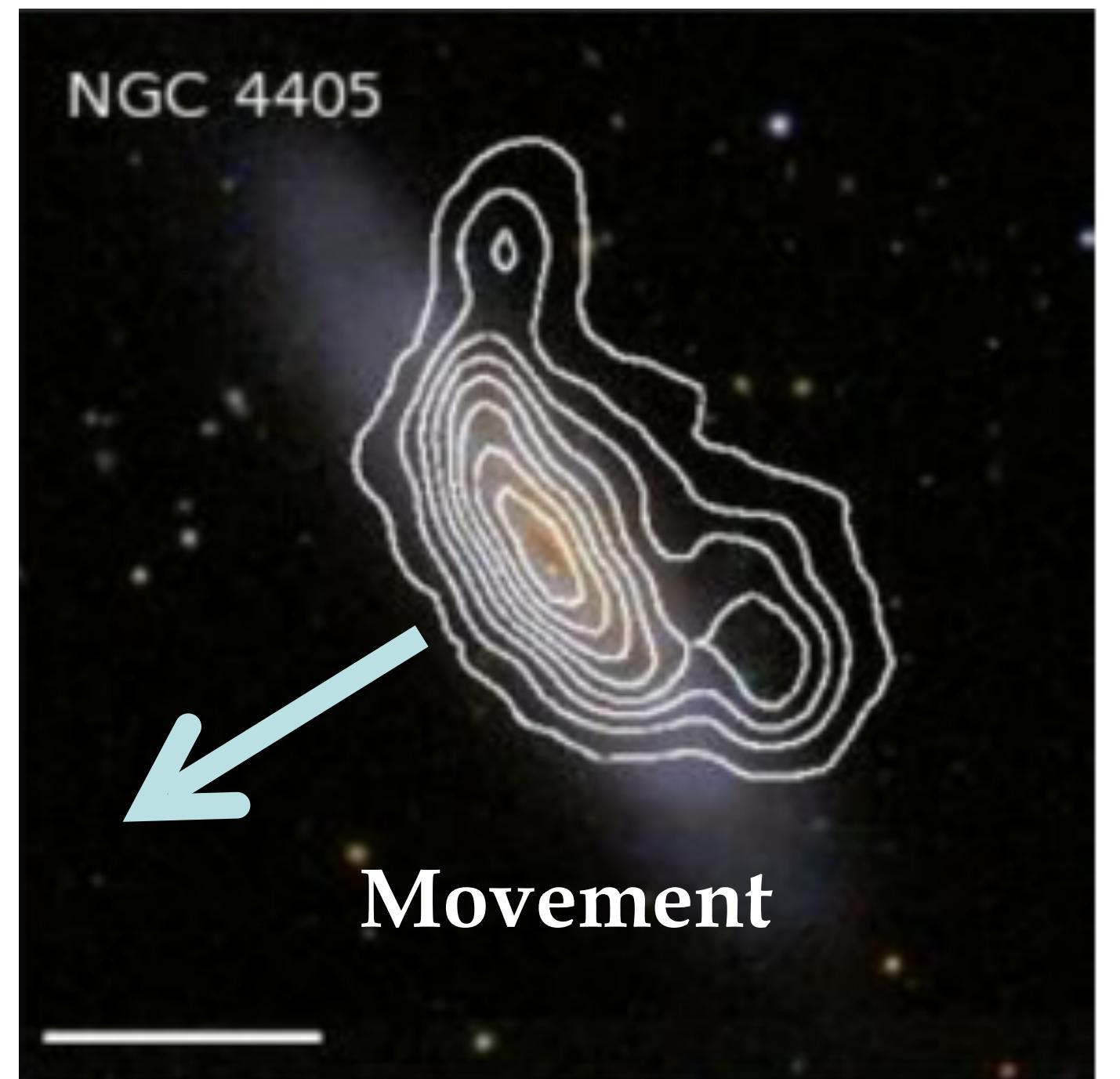
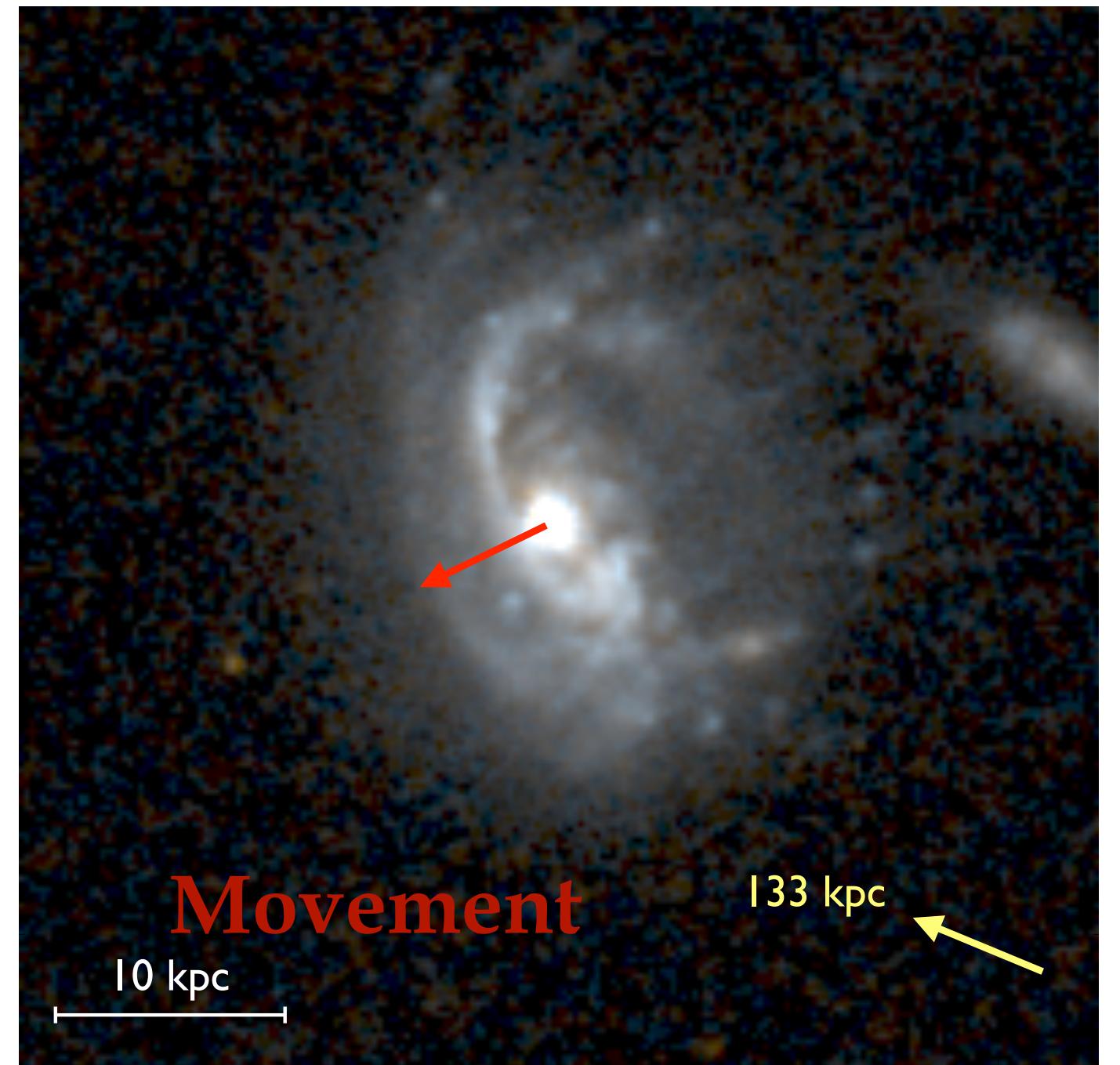
$$\rho_{\text{ICM}} v^2 \geq 2\pi G \sigma_*(r) \sigma_g(r)$$

ram pressure

disk's gravitational potential

ρ_{ICM} is the density of the intra cluster medium,
 v is the velocity of the galaxy inside the cluster,
 G is the gravitational constant,
 $\sigma_*(r)$ is the surface density of stars inside radius r ,
 $\sigma_g(r)$ is the surface density of gas inside radius r

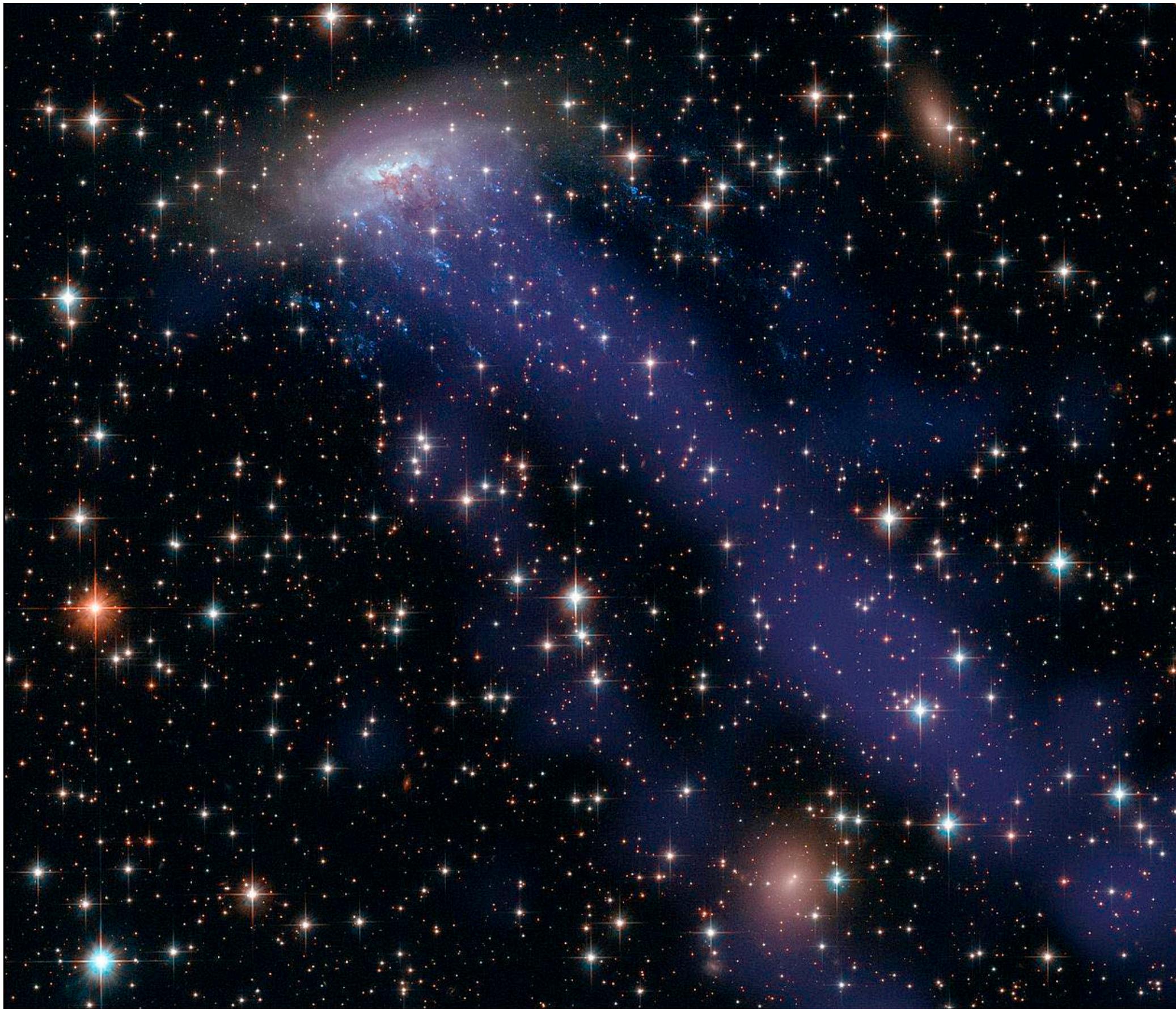
Eblinger et al. 2014



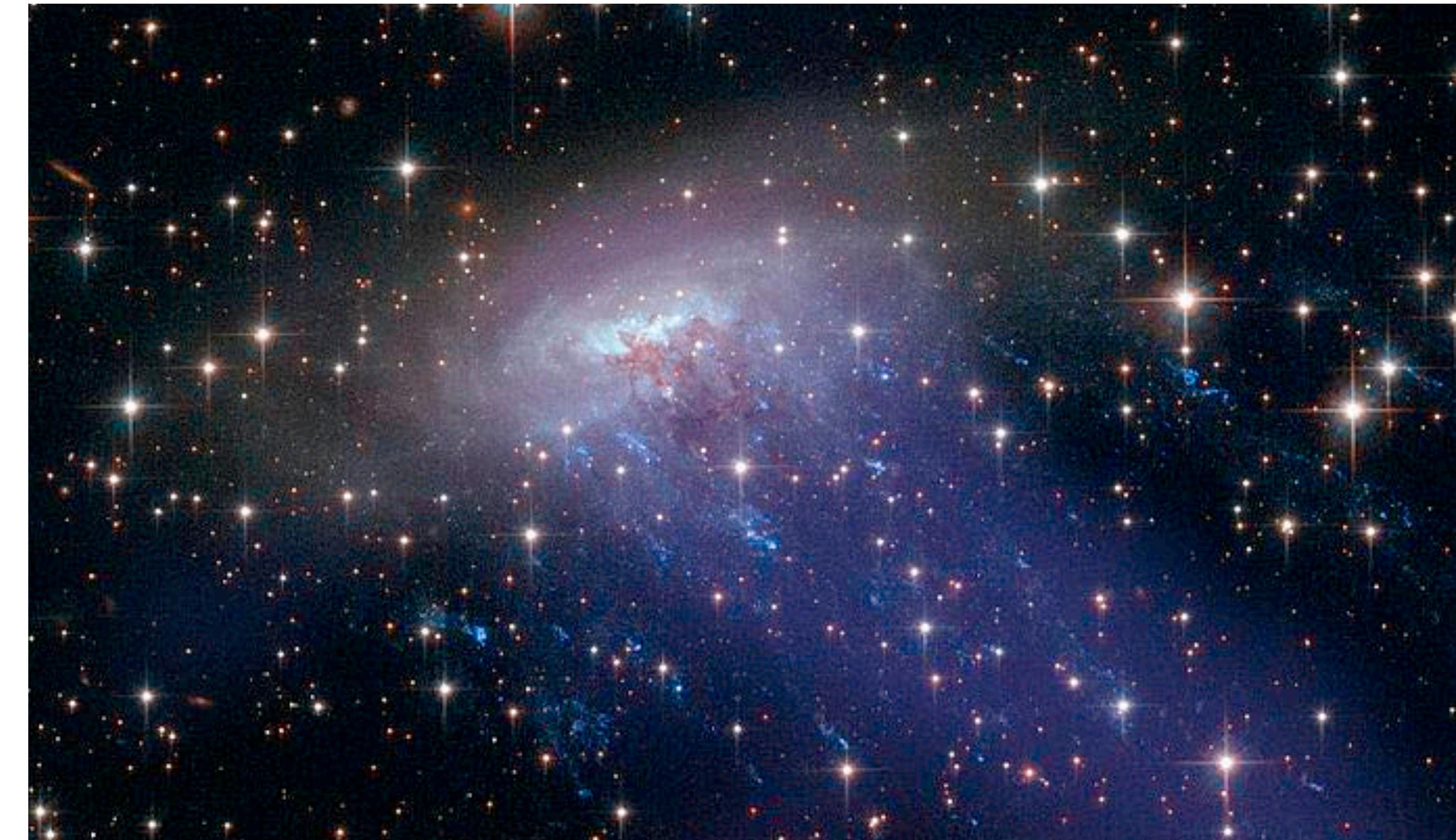
Extreme ram pressure stripping

Jellyfish galaxies

As the dust and gas gets pushed out of the galaxy new stars form in the tail.

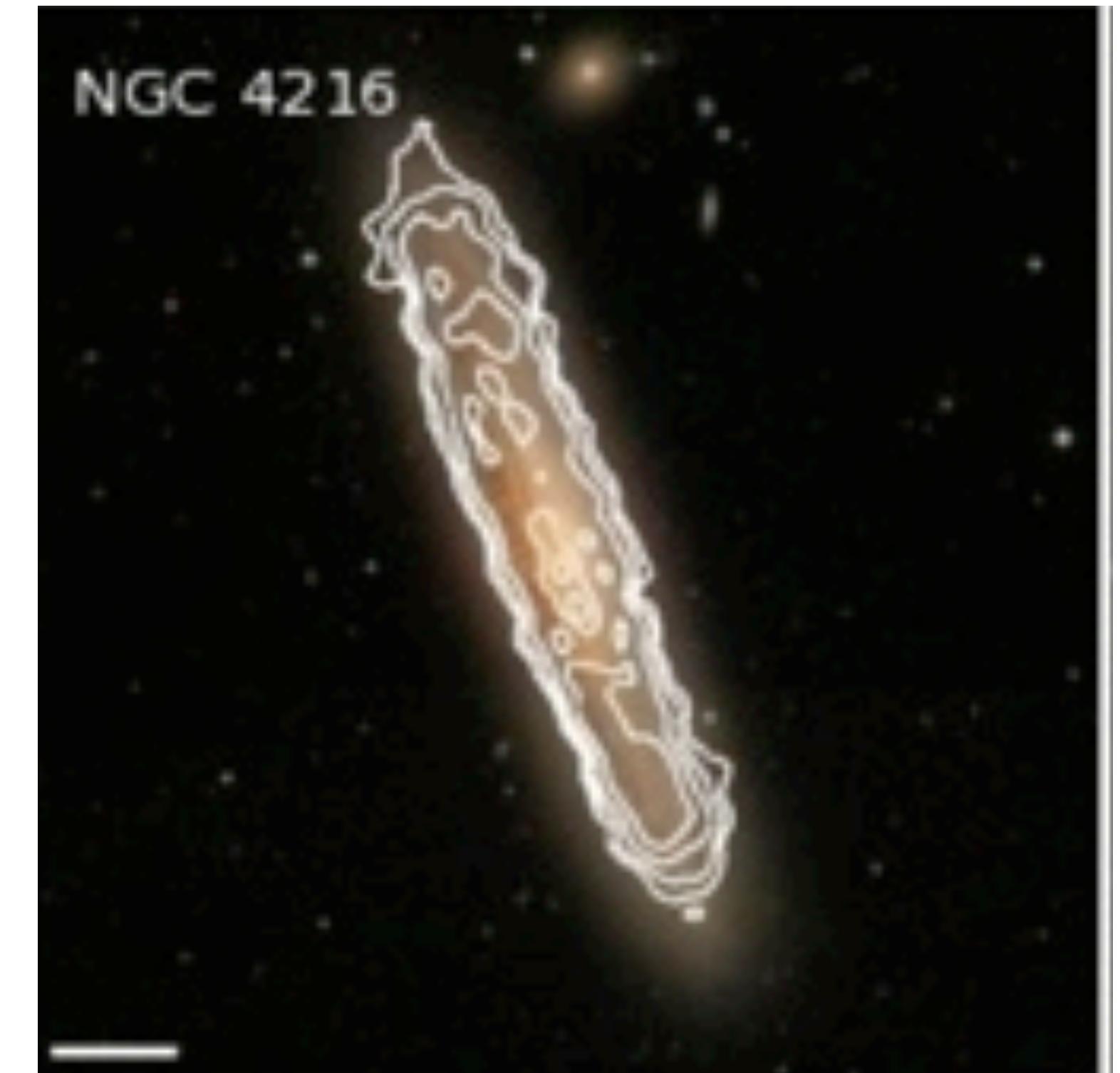


Optical image of ESO 137-001



Starvation

Starvation is the process when a galaxy **can not replenish its HI** from its hot halo (e.g. the hot halo can get removed in a cluster) or the cosmic web (there is very diffuse HI gas between the galaxies). If there is no new HI accreted onto the disk of a galaxy, **the galaxy will form stars from its HI disk until there is no more gas left for star formation.**



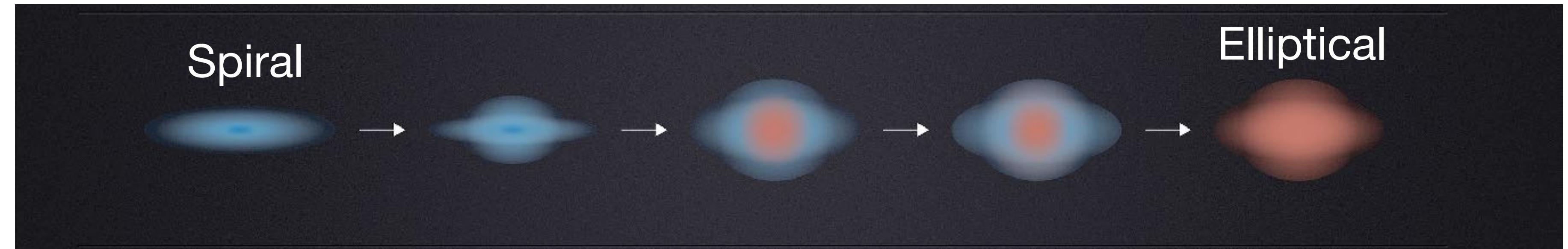
NGC 4216 is a possible example galaxy from the Virgo cluster with a small, regular shaped HI disk.

Galaxy formation

What determines whether a galaxy will turn out to be a spiral galaxy or an elliptical galaxy?

This can be best explained by the **hierarchical galaxy formation**:

- Since the spiral galaxies are younger we can take them as a first step.
- Stars are in a disk shape because of the angular momentum of the gas when a galaxy is forming.
- As the galaxy runs out of fuel it will not produce new stars and the already present stars will relax into a spherical shape.
- In addition, galaxies often merge. If two spiral galaxies with similar size merge the outcome will be a large elliptical galaxy.



Note: the open questions section in the book is now actually much better understood. Galaxy formation and evolution is a rapidly evolving field in astrophysics.

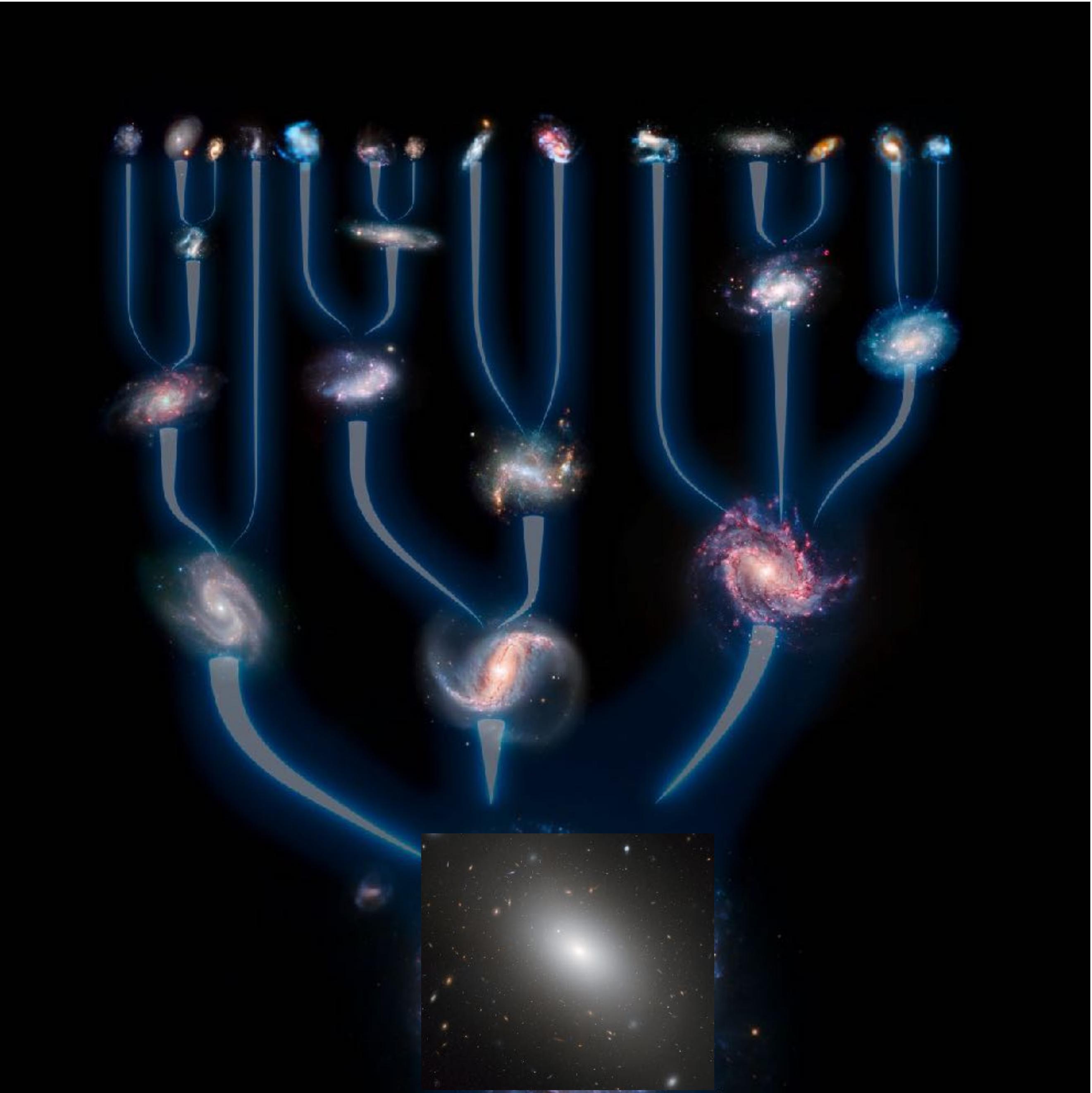
Galaxy formation

Galaxies can grow through mergers.

We distinguish two types of mergers based on the size ratio of the galaxies involved:

Major merger (both galaxies have similar mass) - the result is almost always an elliptical galaxy. Stellar streams in the Milky Way are remnants of minor mergers, where the Milky Way consumed some small galaxies.

Minor merger (one galaxy is much larger compared to the other galaxy) - the result is usually the same type of galaxy as the larger galaxy in the merger.



Minor mergers

Simulation of a dwarf galaxy colliding with the Milky Way.

