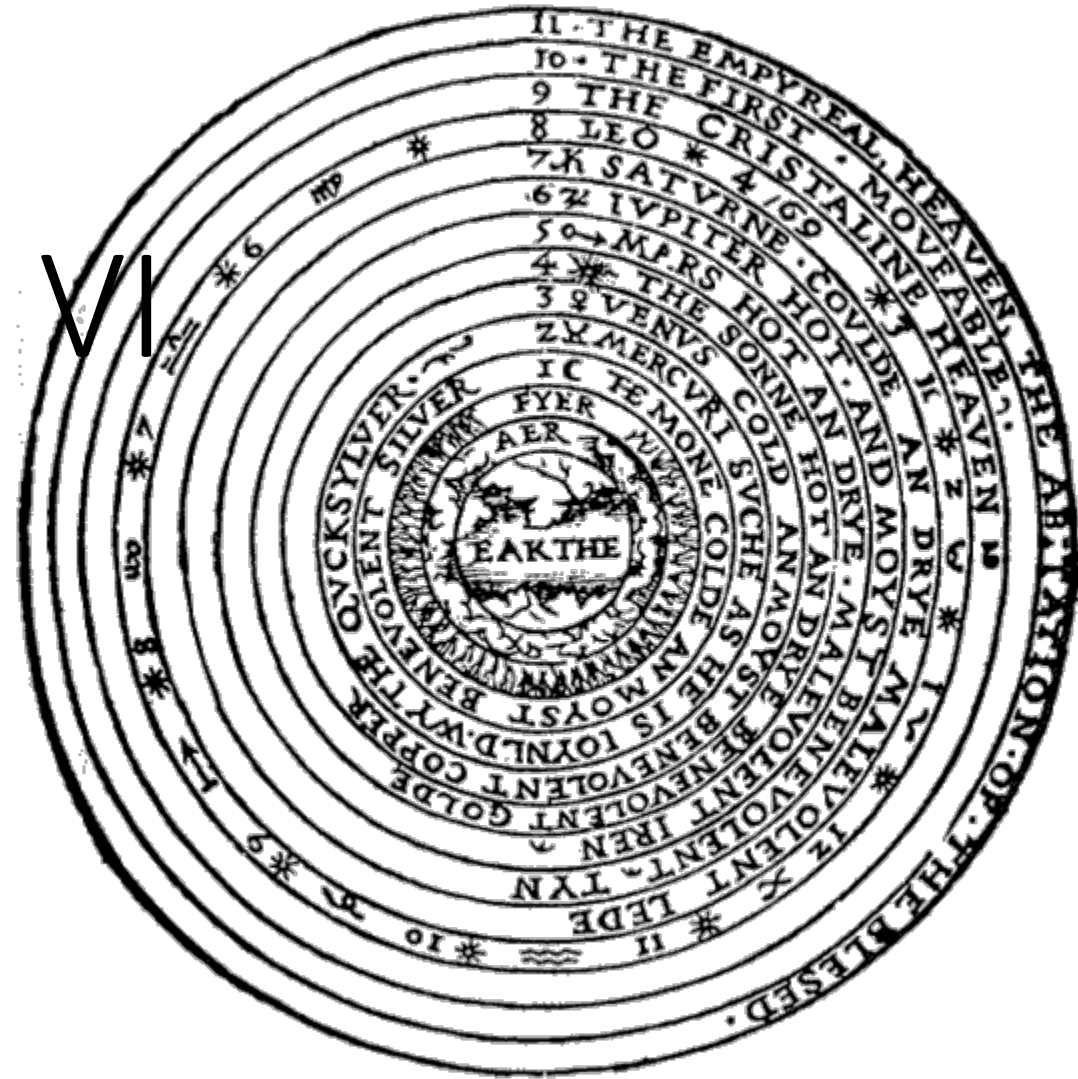


Paradiso: I-II, VI

20 April 2020



Dante and Eliot

'be mindful in due time of my pain'.
Then dived he back into that fire which refines them.

Purgatorio (XXVI, 147–148) in T.S. Eliot's 1922 *The Waste Land*

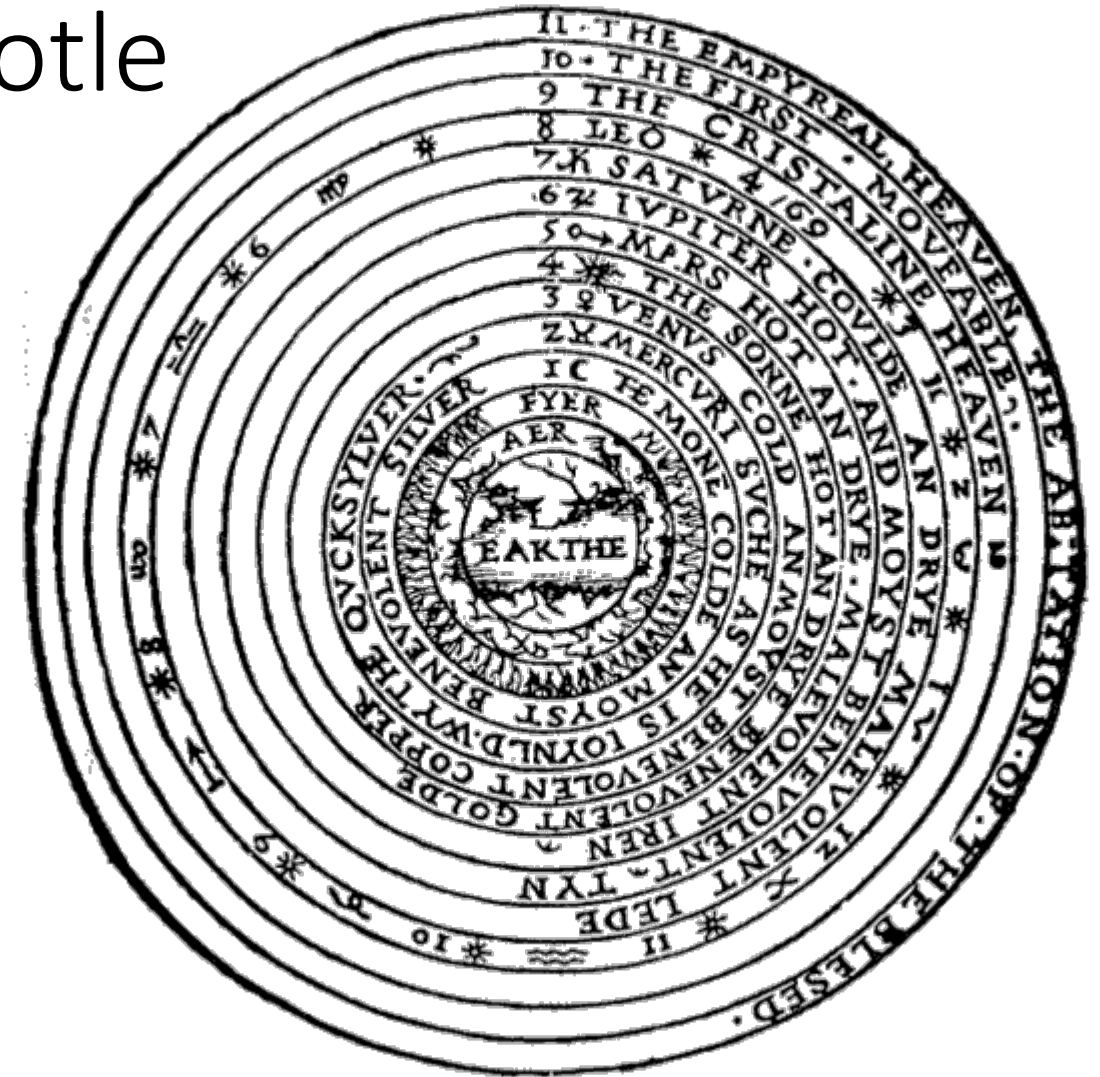
If I but thought that my response were made
to one perhaps returning to the world,
this tongue of flame would cease to flicker.
But since, up from these depths, no one has yet
returned alive, if what I hear is true,
I answer without fear of being shamed

Inferno (XXVII, 61–66) in T.S. Eliot's 1915 "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock"

Medieval Cosmology

- Ptolemaic based on Aristotle

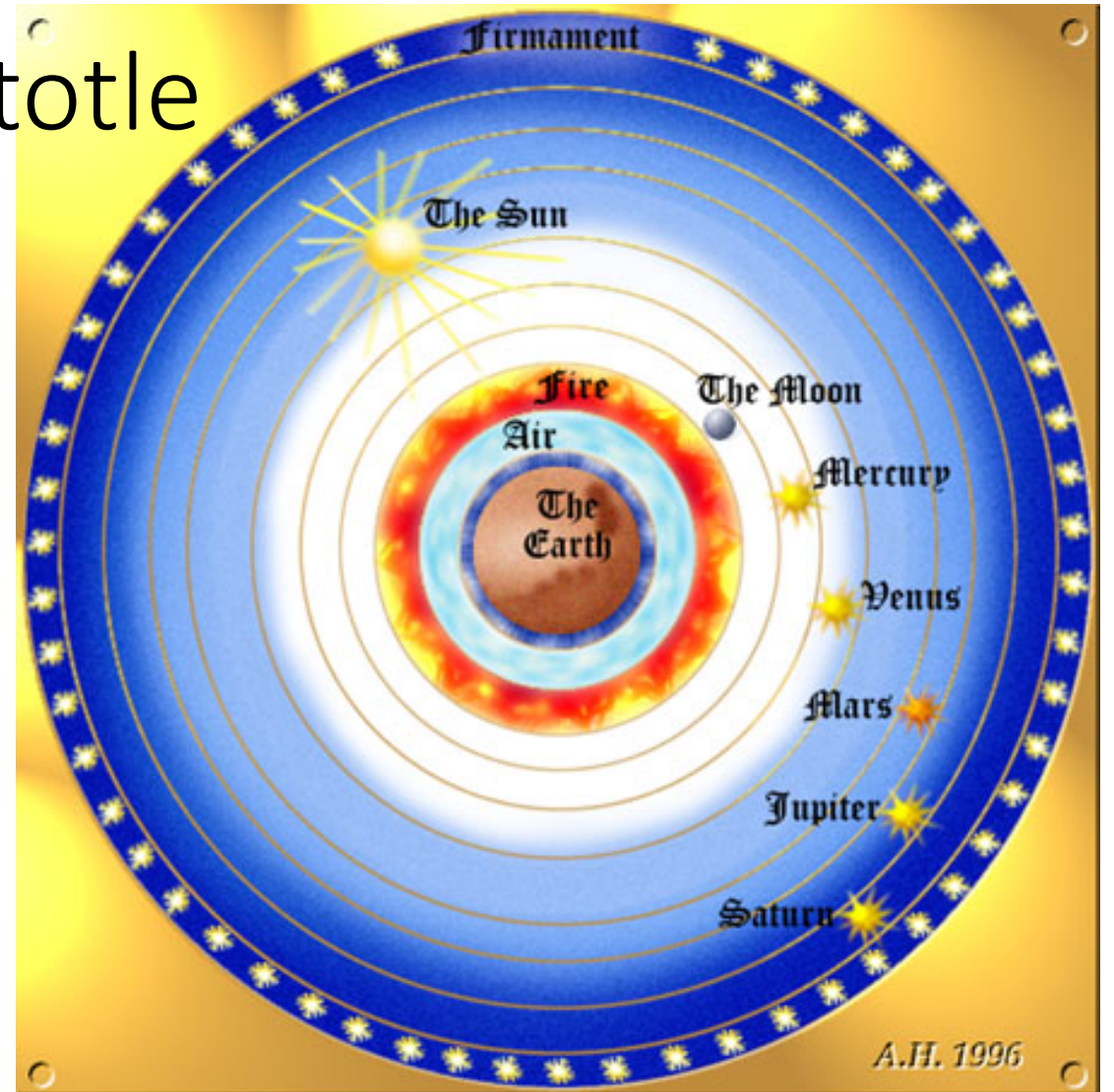
- The Ptolemaic Model
- Based on Aristotle
 - Divided into two parts
 - The sublunar: changeable and corruptible
 - The celestial: immutable and perfect



Medieval Cosmology

- Ptolemaic based on Aristotle

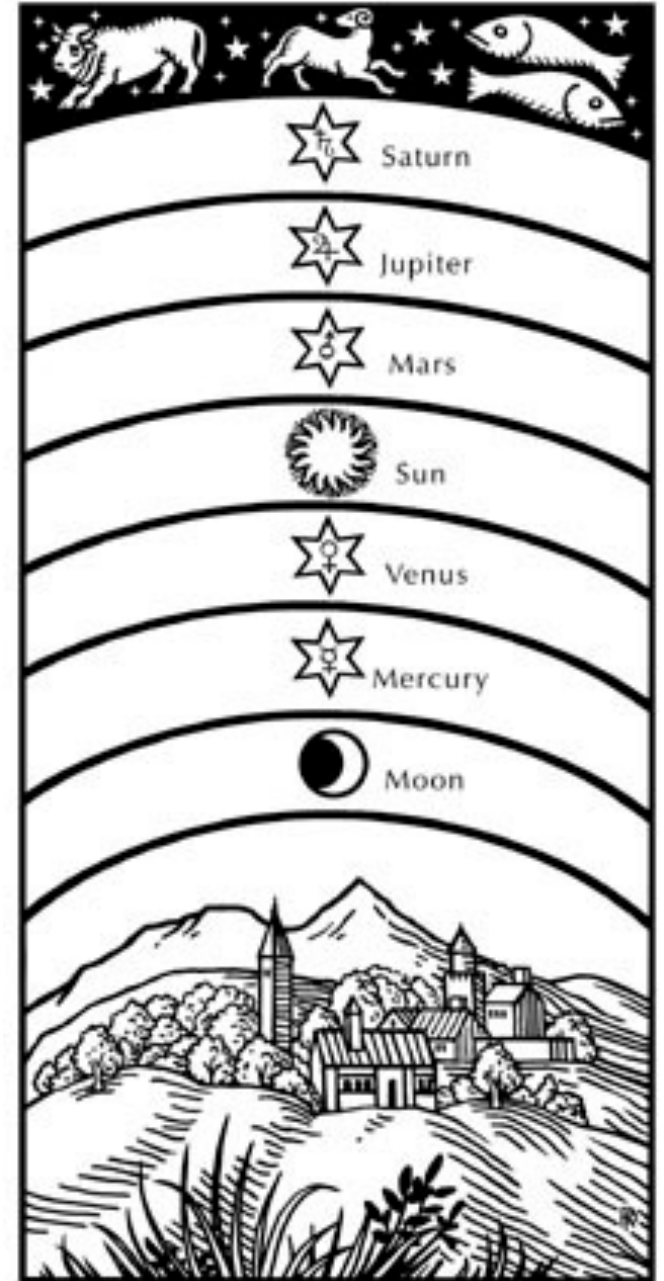
- Earth at its center (unmoving)
 - The sublunar sphere was made up of four elements
 - Earth
 - Water
 - Air
 - Fire
- The Planetary sphere
 - Made up of the 5 visible (to the naked eye) planets, and the moon and sun
 - Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn



Medieval Cosmology

- Ptolemaic based on Aristotle

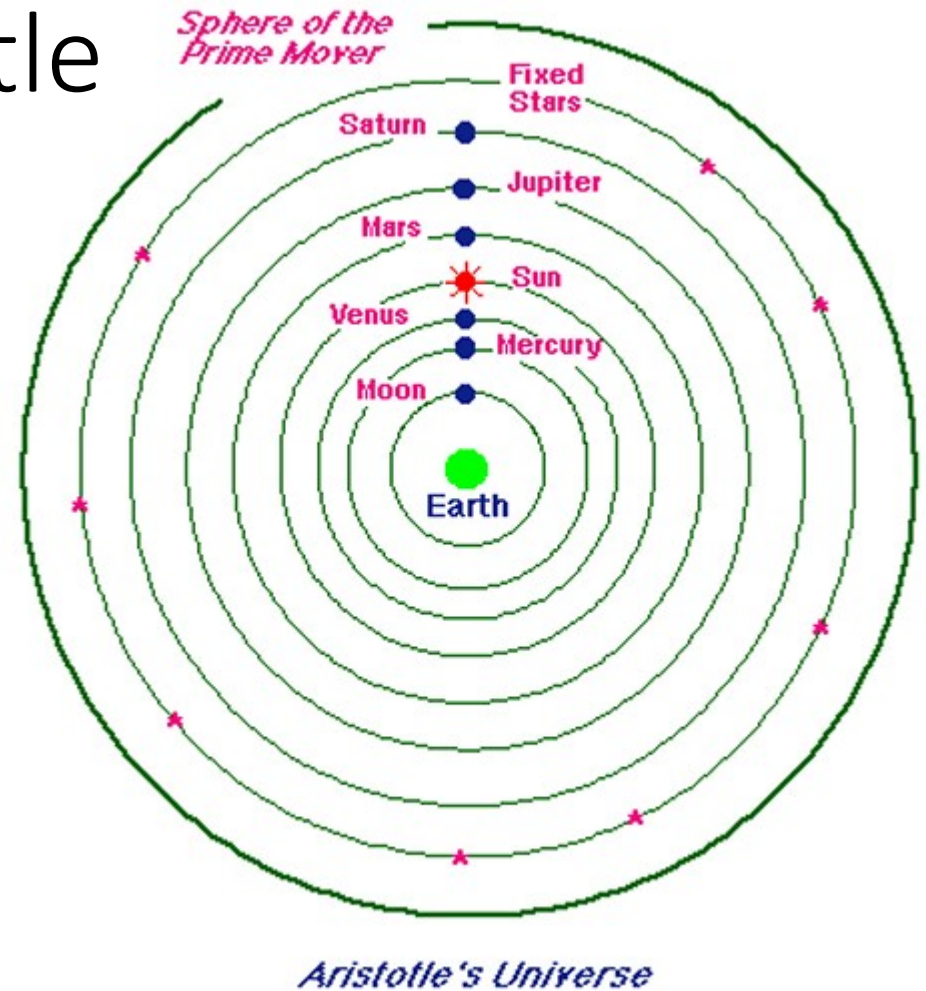
- The Sublunar Sphere
- The Planetary Sphere
- Then the Firmament or Sphere of the Fixed Stars
 - This included the zodiac stars



Medieval Cosmology

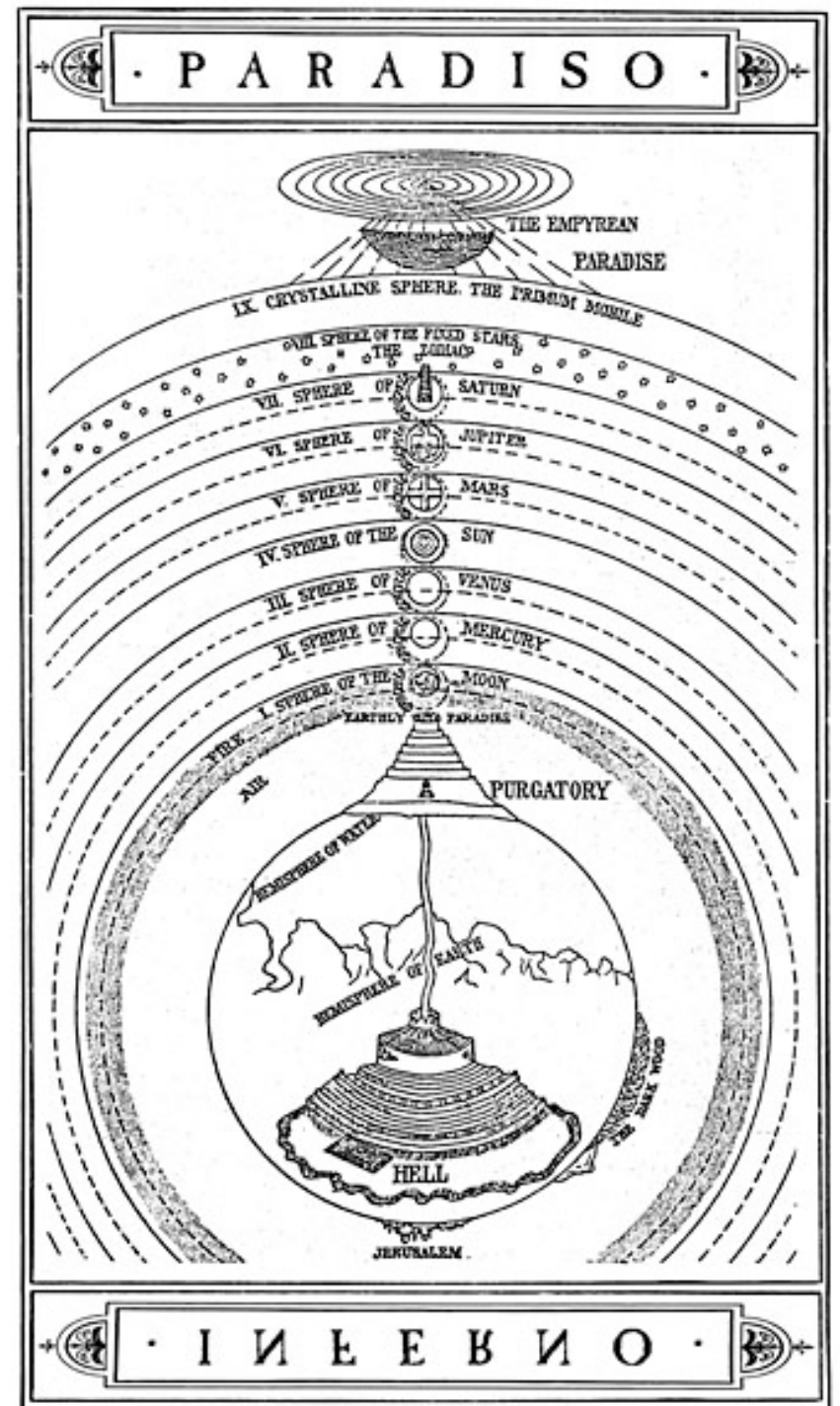
- Ptolemaic based on Aristotle

- The Sublunar Sphere
- The Planetary Sphere
- Then the Firmament or Sphere of the Fixed Stars
 - This included the zodiac stars
- Primum Mobile (Prime/First Mover)



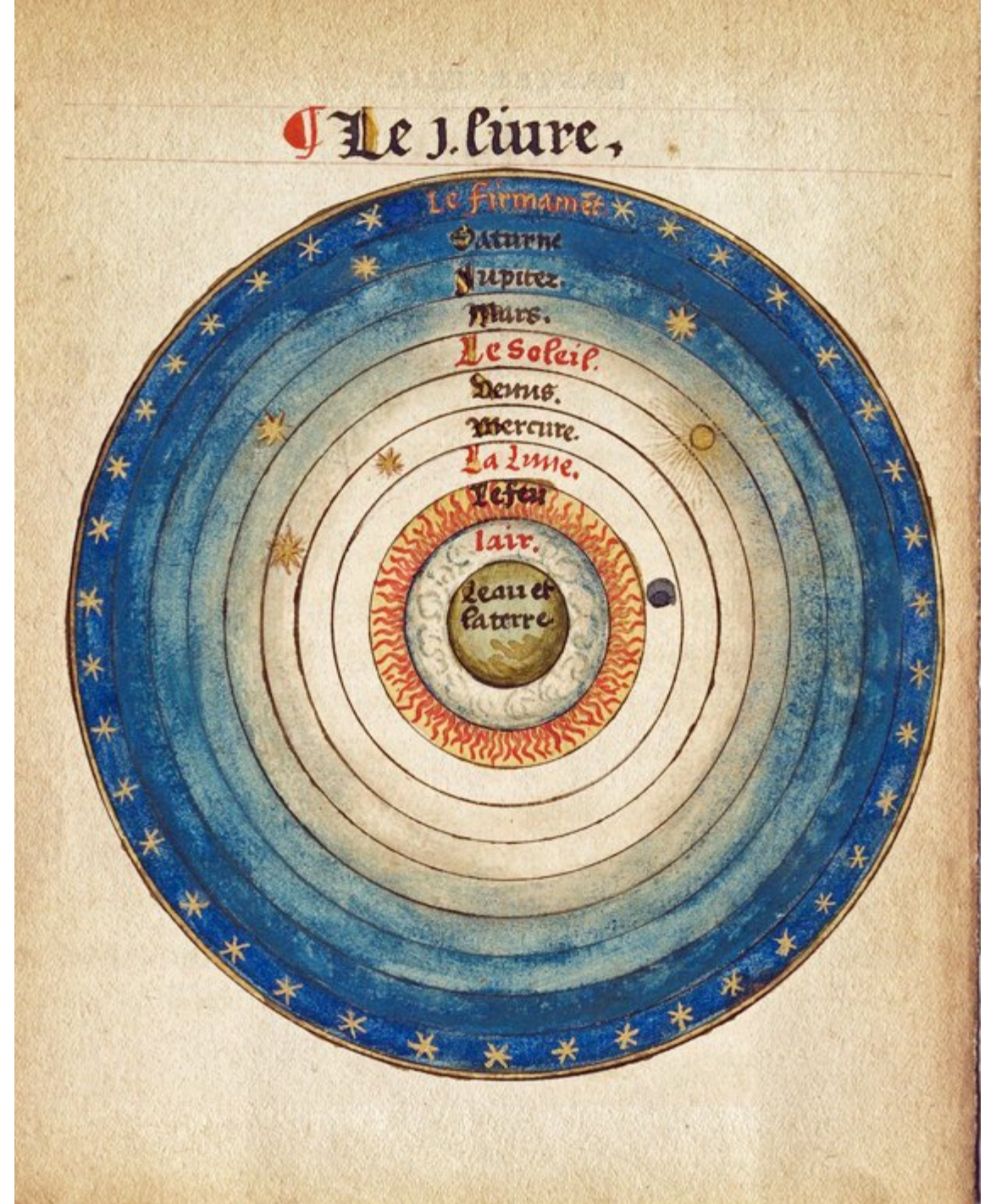
Medieval Cosmology - Christian Alterations

- The Sublunar Sphere
- The Planetary Sphere
- Then the Firmament or Sphere of the Fixed Stars
 - This included the zodiac stars
- Primum Mobile (Prime/First Mover)
 - Split into three parts
 - Crystalline sphere (becomes Heaven)
 - Primum Mobile (becomes God (powered by God's will affecting the movement of Angels))
 - Empyrean



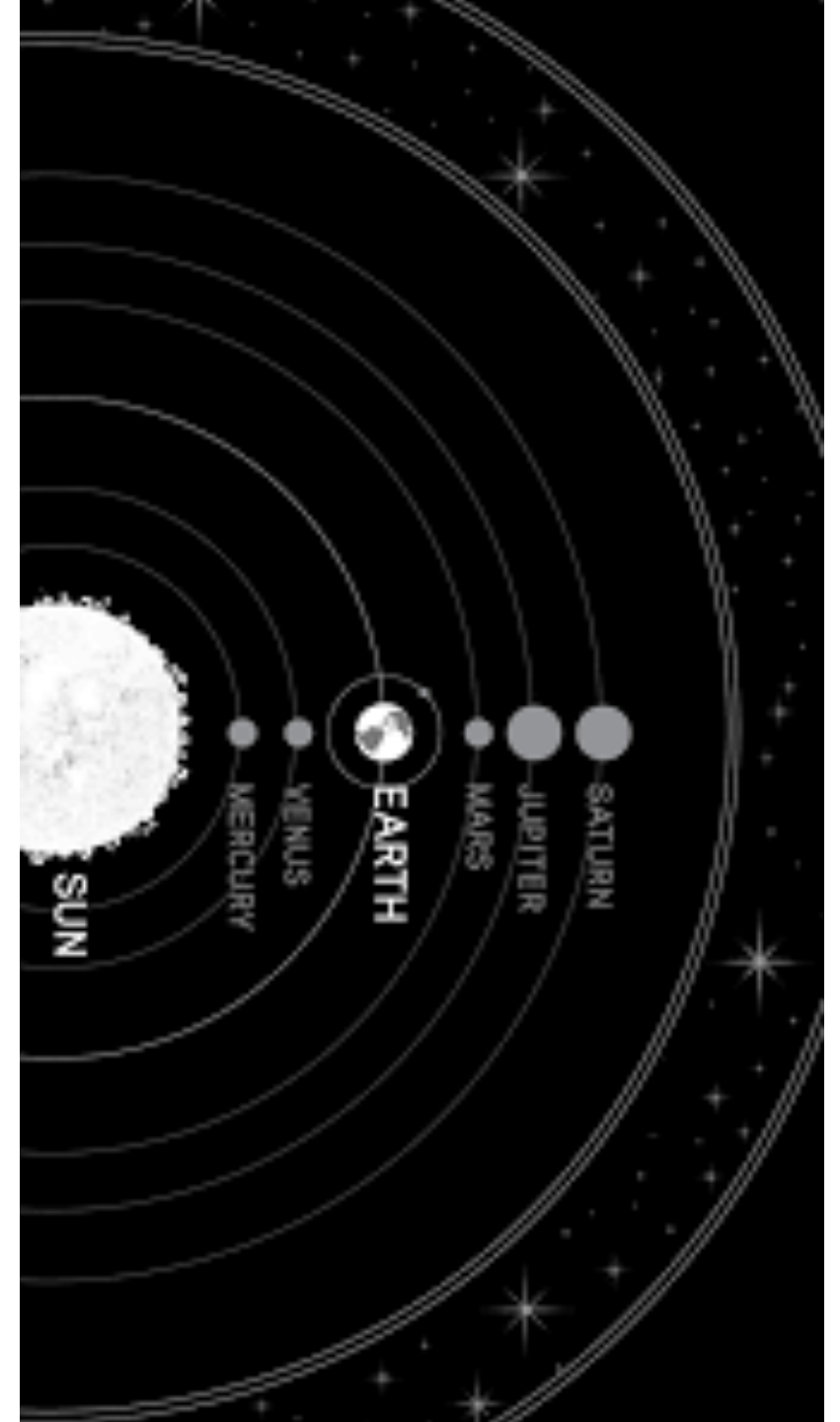
Medieval Cosmology

- The Earth was static and the sphere circled around it, moved by the First Mover (Primum Mobile)
 - The harmonic movement of the spheres created music that could be heard in those spheres
 - Man could not hear the music
- These spheres were made up of solid, transparent matter



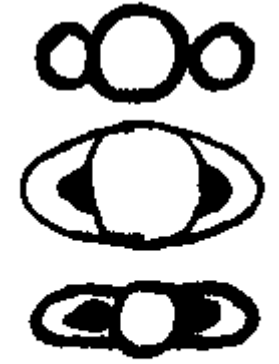
The end of Medieval Cosmology

- Eventually, in the West, the Ptolemaic model (geocentric) was overcome by the Copernican model (heliocentric)
- In the early 1500s, Copernicus (Poland) circulates his new theory of the Universe
 - He published his theory only in 1543, just before his death
 - It was a pioneering contribution to the Scientific Revolution
 - His work was charged as heretical by the Church



The end of Medieval Cosmology

- Eventually, in the West, the Ptolemaic model (geocentric) was overcome by the Copernican model (heliocentric)
 - In the early 1600s, Galileo (Italy) verifies this theory with empirical observations of the movement of the planets through the telescope
 - In 1615, The Roman Inquisition stated that Galileo's 'findings' were "foolish and absurd in philosophy, and formally heretical since they explicitly contradict in many places the sense of Holy Scripture."
 - He was formally charged by the Inquisition and tried as "vehemently suspect of heresy." He was forced to publicly recant his findings and lived the remainder of his life under house arrest.



These are sketches of three drawings Galileo made of Saturn through his primitive telescope. ("New Worlds," Couper & Henbest, p.86.)

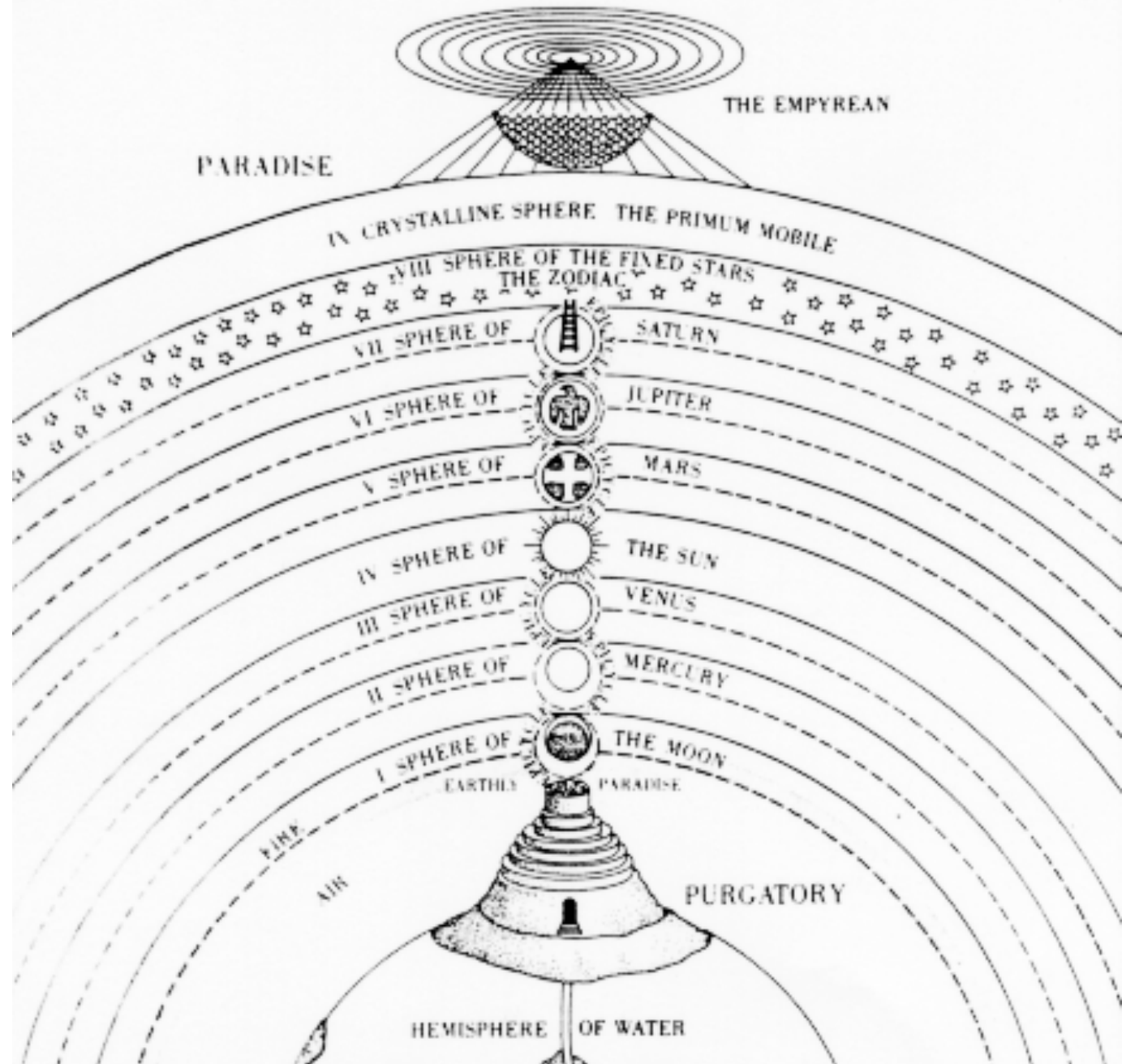


Why was the heliocentric universe impossible for the Church to adopt?

- Because its medieval cosmology centered on the balance of the angelic sphere and the earthy realm.
 - As we will see in Dante
- What effects does this have for the Christian religion in the West once the cosmos is disproven?
 - It implies that man has disproven 'God's Word'.
 - This creates a schism that still exists today between Christianity and intellectualism.

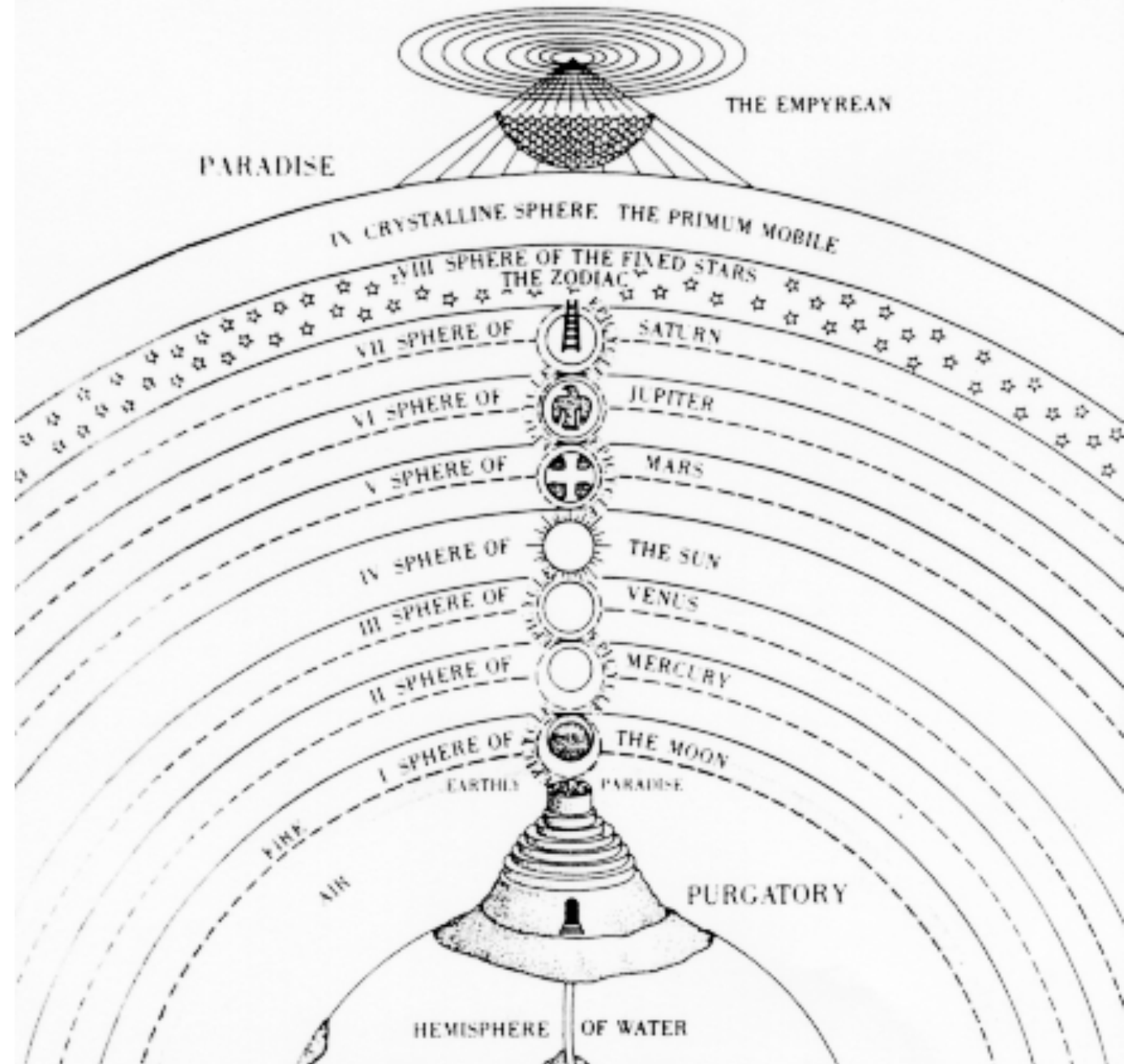
Dante's Cosmos

- It is very much, structurally, a replica of the Medieval Christian cosmos.
- He does make some of his own specifications/additions.



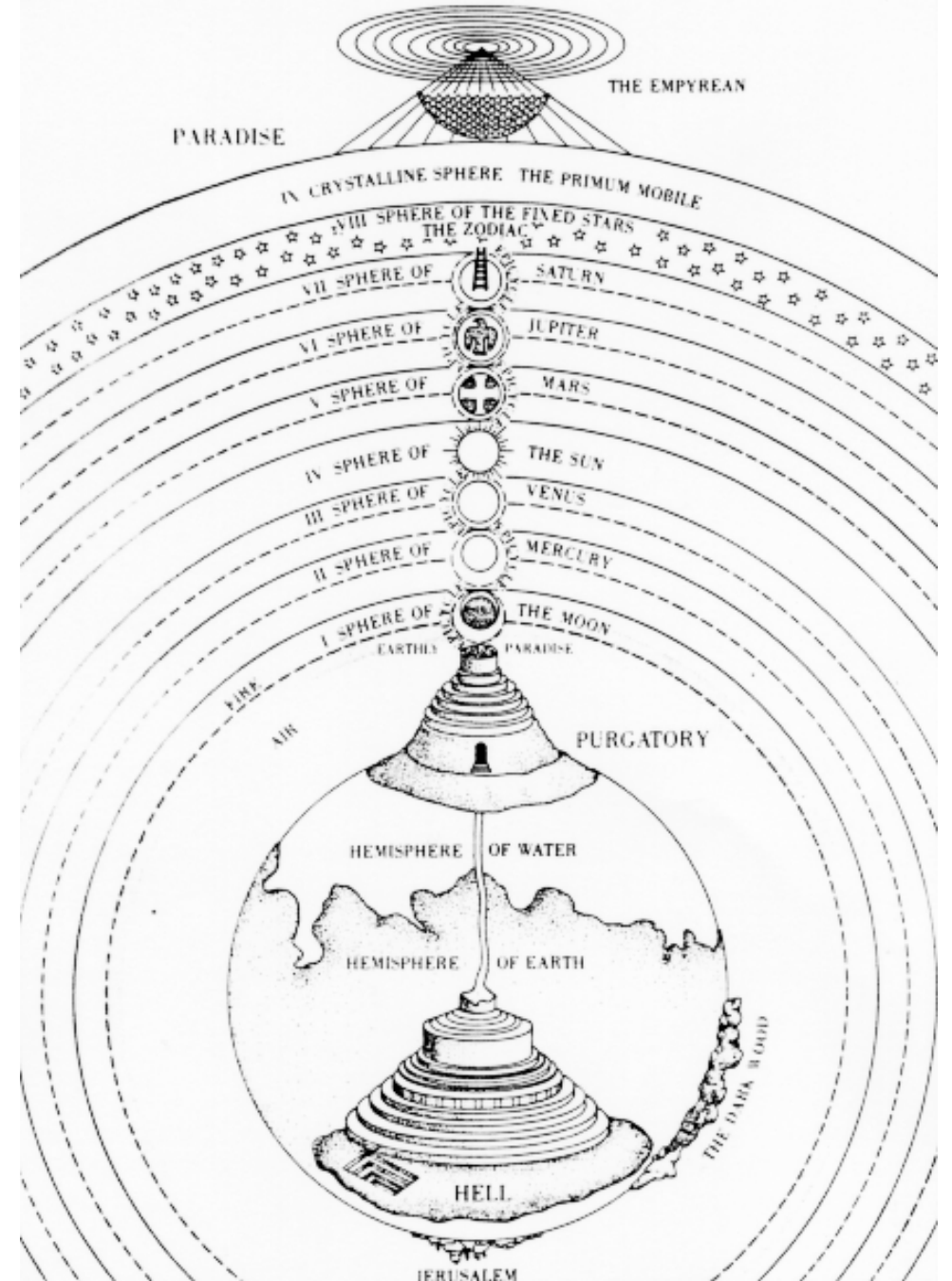
Dante's Cosmos

- For example, each sphere describes a cardinal virtue
- Deficiency of:
 - The moon – inconstancy (lack fortitude)
 - Mercury – the ambitious (virtuous for glory and lack justice)
 - Venus - lovers (whose love lacked Temperance)
- Example of:
 - Sun - the prudent, whose wisdom lighted the way
 - Mars – Men of fortitude
 - Jupiter – Kings of Justice
 - Saturn – The temperate (contemplative)



Dante's Cosmos

- Much of Dante's physical cosmology merges religious doctrine of the time into the Ptolemaic system with scientific additions that parallel the recent re-discovery of Aristotle.
- For example,
 - The spherical Earth
 - changing constellations with latitude
 - varying time zones
- Dante's mimicry of the supernatural in the physical world represents the Platonic viewpoint of the physical world being a copy of the world of Forms.
 - The planetary spheres copy the angelic hierarchies that rotate around God (mimicked again in the circles of Hell as a parody that rotates around Satan).
 - The geocentric Universe is an imperfect copy of the Empyrean, a theocentric Universe, where angels power the motion of the planets and revolve around God, as the planets revolve around Earth



Canto I: Invocation

- Very long, the poem's action only begins on line 37
- What is the first line in reference to?
 - “The glory of Him who moves all things.”
- He beseeches Apollo
- Desires to wear the laurel
- Key prophecy:
 - “A tiny spark can result in a great flame: / perhaps, following after me, with better voices, others will pray so that Cyrrha will reply.” ll. 34-36



Dante Alighieri - Wikipedia
en.wikipedia.org



Dante Alighieri | Biography &...
britannica.com



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squaducation.com



Books by Dante Alighieri on Google Play
play.google.com



Dante Alighieri | Poetry Foundation
poetryfoundation.org



Dante
history



Canto I

- Action of the canto:
 - “To signify transhumanizing *per verba* is impossible.” 70
 - “If I was solely that part of me which you / created last, O Love who cover the heavens, / you know, for you raised me up with your light.” 73-75
 - Dante “The wonder of the sound and the great / light kindled a desire in me to know their / cause, never felt with such sharpness.” 82-84
 - Beatrice “You are making yourself swell / with false imaginings, so that you do not see / what shaking it off would show.” 88-90
 - “Wherefore she, after a pitying sigh, directed her eyes at me with the expression that a mother has over a delirious child.” 100-102

Canto II

- What do you notice?
 - Form / content?
- In groups, discuss the apostrophe
 - How is this apostrophe to the reader different from previous ones?
- In groups, discuss Dante's question and what Beatrice's answer is.
 - What do you notice that is particular about the method with which Beatrice answers?

Canto VI

- Of central import in this Canto:
 - The attempt to bridge the Christian and Roman roles in Western History
 - Codex Justinianus, made between 527 and 534 CE, was a compilation of Roman legislation since Hadrian (emperor 117-138 CE)
 - A codification of Roman law
 - The codex was lost and wasn't substantially restored until near the end of the 12th century
 - It had an enormous role in the civic formation of the Europe,
 - from the formation of Universities
 - to Napoleonic Code, which is the basis for most continental European law

The Formation of Universities and the Codex

- The University of Bologna (the West's first university, 1088) began as a law school teaching the *ius gentium* or *Roman law of peoples*:
 - it was in demand across Europe for those defending the right of incipient nations against empire and church
- Bologna's claim as the oldest extant 'university' in the West, is based on its autonomy, a key element of the institution of 'university':
 - it is the oldest continuously operating institution independent of kings, emperors or any kind of direct religious authority
- The first lecture given was by Irnerius, an Italian jurist:
 - who commenced teaching Emperor Justinian's codification of Roman law



The Formation of Universities and Humanism

- FROM WIKIPEDIA
- “All over Europe, rulers and city governments began to create universities to satisfy a European thirst for knowledge, and the belief that society would benefit from the scholarly expertise generated from these institutions.”
- “The emergence of humanism was essential to this understanding of the possible utility of universities as well as the revival of interest in knowledge gained from ancient Greek texts.”
- “The rediscovery of Aristotle’s works—more than 3000 pages of it would eventually be translated—fuelled a spirit of inquiry into natural processes that had already begun to emerge in the 12th century. Some scholars believe that these works represented one of the most important document discoveries in Western intellectual history.”

The Formation of Univer

- FROM WIKIPEDIA
- “All over Europe, rulers and city governments sought to satisfy a European thirst for knowledge, and to benefit from the scholarly expertise generated by universities.”
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