

# Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<b>xi</b>
<b>1 The Importance of Astrophysical Distance Measurements</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 The Distance to the Galactic Centre	2
1.1.1 Early Determinations of $R_0$	3
1.1.2 Modern Results	6
1.2 The Distance to the Large Magellanic Cloud	11
1.3 Benchmarks Beyond the Magellanic Clouds: the 3D Universe on Large(r) Scales	15
Bibliography	22
<b>2 The Solar Neighbourhood</b>	<b>31</b>
2.1 Geometric Parallax Measurements	31
2.1.1 Trigonometric Parallax	31
2.1.2 Astrometric Advances: Space-Based Missions and Interferometry	33
2.1.3 Secular and Statistical Parallaxes: Moving Groups Method	39
2.2 Dynamical Parallax	42
2.2.1 Mass–Luminosity Relations	46
2.3 Spectroscopic and Photometric Parallaxes	50
Bibliography	55
<b>3 From the Milky Way to the Local Group</b>	<b>63</b>
3.1 Basic Stellar Physics as the Key to Understanding Distance Measurements to Local Group Galaxies	63
3.1.1 Stellar Evolution Through the Hertzsprung–Russell Diagram	63
3.1.2 From Two to Multiple Stellar Populations	68
3.2 Open and Globular Cluster Hertzsprung–Russell Diagrams	70
3.2.1 Main–Sequence and Subdwarf Fitting	70
3.2.2 Red Clump Stars	72
3.2.3 The (Zero–Age) Horizontal Branch Level	74
3.3 Giants and Supergiants as Standard Candles	76
3.3.1 The Tip of the Red Giant Branch	76
3.3.2 The Red Giant Branch Bump	78
3.3.3 Supergiants as Standard Candles	80
3.4 White Dwarf Sequences	83
3.5 Period–Density Relations	84
3.5.1 The Baade–Wesselink Method	85
3.5.2 Classical Cepheid Variables	87

3.5.3	Mira Variables	90
3.5.4	W Virginis and Other ‘Population II’ Cepheids	93
3.5.5	RR Lyrae Stars	95
3.5.6	Dwarf and Anomalous Cepheids	97
3.6	Novae as Standard Candles	98
3.7	Geometric Methods	100
3.7.1	Planetary Nebula Expansion Parallaxes	101
3.7.2	Supernova Light Echoes	102
3.7.3	Eclipsing Binary Stars	106
3.7.4	Maser-Based Distance Determinations	108
3.8	Pulsars: Distance Measurements Outside the ‘Classical’ Wavelength Range	110
	Bibliography	114
<b>4</b>	<b>Reaching Virgo Cluster Distances and Beyond</b>	<b>135</b>
4.1	The Hubble Space Telescope Key Project	135
4.2	Surface Brightness Fluctuations	136
4.3	The Globular Cluster Luminosity Function	140
4.3.1	Elliptical Versus Spiral Galaxy GCLFs	141
4.3.2	The Stellar Population Mix	144
4.3.3	GCLF and GCMF Universality Through Dynamical Evolution	144
4.4	The Planetary Nebulae Luminosity Function	148
4.4.1	Applicability	149
4.4.2	Physical Basis	150
4.5	The Tully–Fisher Relation	151
4.5.1	Wavelength Dependence	152
4.5.2	The Scatter in the Tully–Fisher Relation	154
4.6	Distance Indicators Specific to Elliptical Galaxies	156
4.7	The Colour–Magnitude Relation	161
4.8	HII Regions as Distance Indicators?	164
	Bibliography	165
<b>5</b>	<b>From Nearby Galaxy Clusters to Cosmological Distances</b>	<b>175</b>
5.1	Cosmological Redshifts	175
5.1.1	Determination of the Current Expansion Rate of the Universe	175
5.1.2	Redshift Surveys and Peculiar Velocities	176
5.1.3	The Prevailing Cosmological Model	179
5.2	Supernovae as Beacons	186
5.2.1	Type Ia Supernovae	188
5.2.2	Type II-P Supernovae	197
5.2.3	A Link to Gamma-Ray Bursts as Standard Candles?	207
5.3	Indirect Techniques to Measure $H_0$	210
5.3.1	Gravitational Lensing: Time Delays	210
5.3.2	The Sunyaev–Zel’dovich Effect	215
5.3.3	Anisotropies in the Cosmic Microwave Background	222
5.3.4	The Drive for Improved Accuracy	225
	Bibliography	227

<b>6</b>	<b>Systematic Uncertainties and Common Pitfalls</b>	<b>243</b>
6.1	Common Biases	244
6.1.1	Extinction: Spatial Distribution and Wavelength Dependence	244
6.1.2	Parallaxes: Lutz–Kelker Bias	246
6.1.3	Malmquist Bias	251
6.2	High Versus Low Values of the Hubble Constant: Science or Philosophy?	255
	Bibliography	259
<b>7</b>	<b>Promises and Prospects</b>	<b>267</b>
7.1	The Way Forward: Where Are Significant Gains Achievable?	267
7.2	The Pleiades Distance Controversy	270
7.3	X-Ray Scattering Haloes	273
7.4	Standard Sirens: Listening to Gravitational Waves	276
7.5	Three-Dimensional Mapping of Redshifted Neutral Hydrogen	280
7.6	The Present-Day Distance Ladder	283
	Bibliography	285
	<i>Glossary</i>	<b>293</b>
	<i>Figure Credits</i>	<b>305</b>
	<i>Index</i>	<b>309</b>

