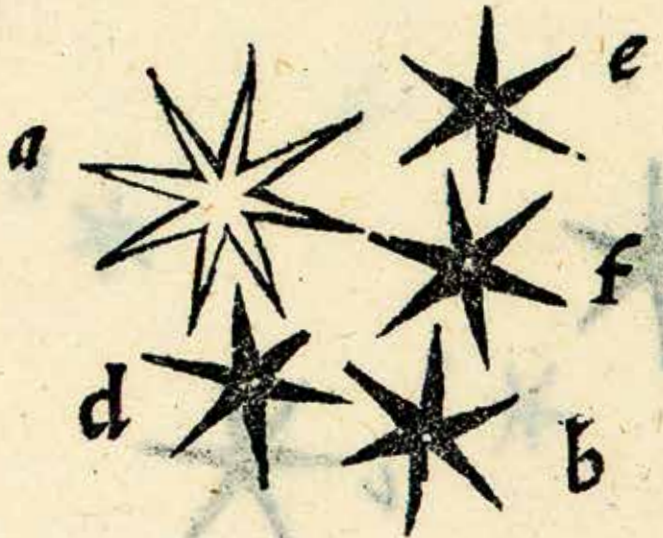
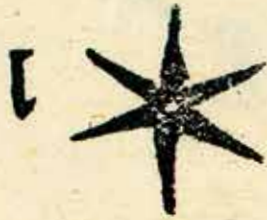


▣ Vegliai le stelle vivide
nei pelaghi del cielo ... / I watched
the bright stars in the deep sea
of the sky ...
[Dino Campana, 1928]



DONDE



cosmic pages

atlanti stellari negli osservatori
astronomici italiani / star atlases
in italian astronomical observatories

a cura di / edited by
ileana chinnici, mauro gargano

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Questo catalogo è il risultato di un censimento degli atlanti stellari conservati negli Osservatori astronomici italiani e raccoglie una selezione dei più noti. Esso è parte del progetto omonimo finanziato da INAF per la valorizzazione del proprio patrimonio storico. Gli atlanti qui presentati sono fruibili digitalmente all'interno della mostra virtuale *Look up! Sfoggia il cielo con un dito* (lookup.inaf.it) insieme a una selezione di mappe di oggetti celesti. Uno speciale ringraziamento va a tutti i colleghi INAF che hanno collaborato alla realizzazione di questo volume e agli autori che hanno gentilmente accettato di contribuire alla redazione dei saggi e delle schede.

This catalogue is the result of a survey of the star atlases which are preserved in the Italian Astronomical Observatories and collects a selection of the most known. It is part of the project having the same name which has been financed by INAF for the exploitation of its astronomical heritage. Star atlases here presented can be digitally explored through the virtual exhibition *Look up! Sfoggia il cielo con un dito* (lookup.inaf.it) jointly to a selection of maps of celestial objects. Special thanks to all colleagues from INAF who have collaborated to the publication of this volume and to the authors who have kindly contributed with the redaction of the texts.





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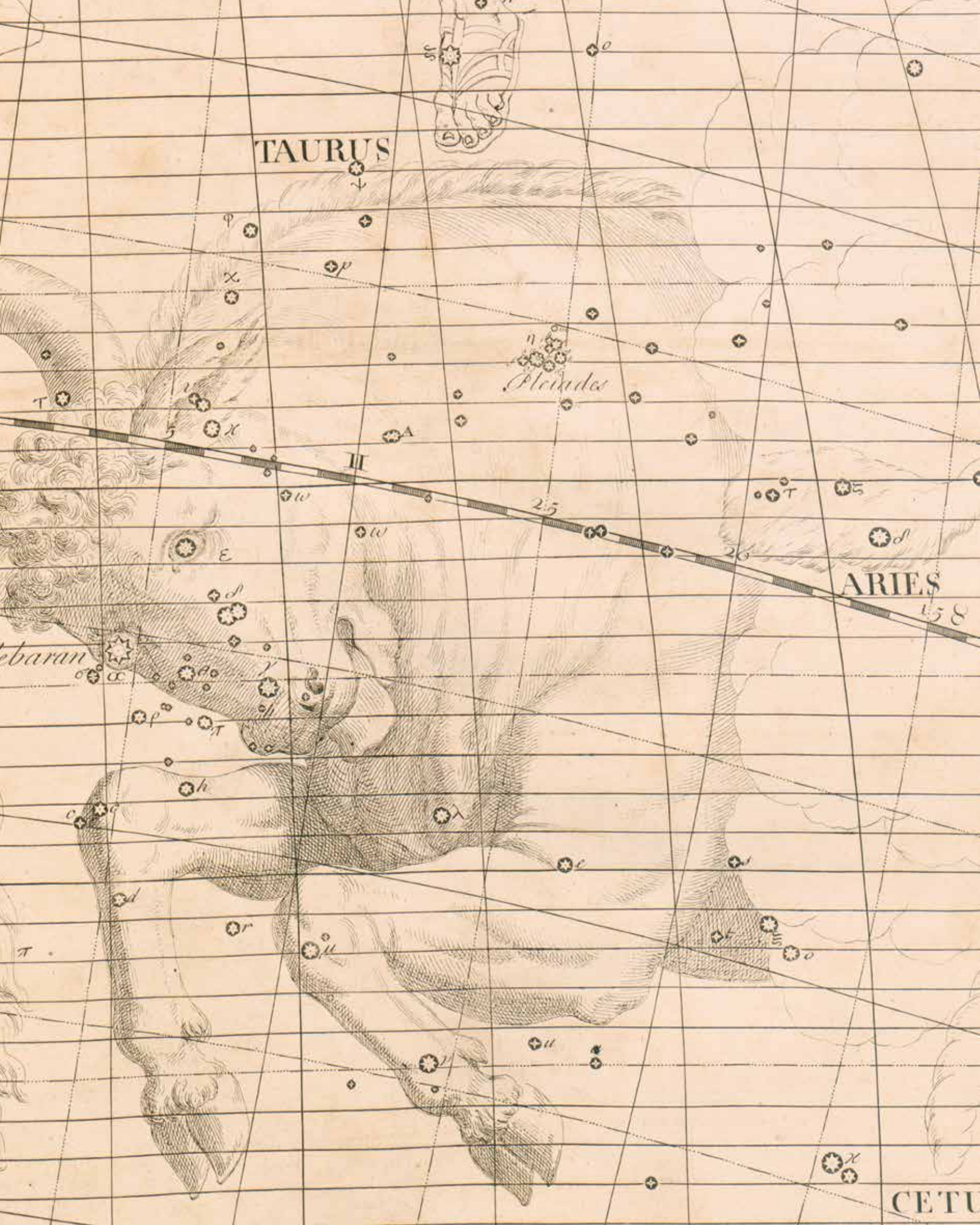
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Foreword

Marco Tavani

President

of the National Institute for Astrophysics

For some years now, the National Institute for Astrophysics (INAF) has carried out numerous activities aimed at bringing the public closer to science, by opening up its rich historical heritage, consisting of instruments, archival documents and ancient books, preserved in the astronomical observatories throughout the national territory. This stems from the awareness that historical scientific heritage is able to recount the development of scientific achievements, generating opportunities for combining science with the other fields of human knowledge. Indeed, the historical approach makes it possible to contextualise the activity of scientists, distancing the idea of an abstract science and humanizing it. Furthermore, through a transversal vision of knowledge, history aids in understanding the role played by science in society, measuring its practical effects in terms of increased well-being generated by scientific progress, when observed with a time horizon of at least half a century. All that makes it possible to strike several cords of human sensitivity, on the one hand allowing the potential audience to be greatly expanded, on the other by encouraging individuals to seek a deeper understanding.

Gazing at and interpreting the sky has always been one of man's essential instincts, but celestial atlases did not become tools for astronomers' scientific investigation until the sixteenth century. Starting from 1609, astronomical observations were no longer conducted with the naked eye but using the telescope. The celestial spheres thus revealed many details, painstakingly illustrated in works

of rare beauty where science, art and myth combine.

Johann Bayer's *Uranometria*, in particular, opened the so-called Golden Age of the history of celestial cartography, thanks to the improved accuracy of star positions obtained from the catalogues reduced by the best observers, like Tycho Brahe, as well as to the spectacular aesthetics achieved in the depictions of the constellations. With the development of astronomical technologies, more and more stars were added to atlases, as shown by the wonderful works of Johannes Hevelius, John Flamsteed or Johann Elert Bode. The large star catalogues that paved the way for the complete surveys made today with satellites and space telescopes, started appearing in the early nineteenth century.

The National Institute for Astrophysics holds in its libraries a collection of historical celestial atlases (stellar, cometographies, selenographies), of extraordinary scientific and iconographic relevance.

The publication of this catalogue highlights and popularise some of the most important star atlases, with the hope that knowledge of the past may encourage all those who gaze at the sky to gain further insights into the fascinating world of astronomy.