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Chairman: K.Aa. Strand

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

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After urging you all to briefness, I should set a good example. I welcome you all: participating colleagues and all IAU members and guests, especially those from our host commissions 25, 33 and 45. I thank you all: the contributors to today's events, to the members of the Organizing Committee, to the Presidents of the sponsoring Commissions, IAU officials and all those who are not here today but have helped to make the arrangements for today's discussion.

To assist with the direction of our work I have asked Prof. K. Aa Strand, Prof. T. Elvius and Prof. B. Bok to preside over Parts One, Two and Three. Questions and comments may be made to the invited speakers and to the discussion contributors at the end of each Part of our program.

We shall be considering the different stellar populations encountered as one moves away from the galactic plane towards the polar caps, namely the disc and the halo populations. We know that at our eccentric position in the galaxy this disc has a thickness of some 1000 parsecs while the galactic halo extends several thousands of parsecs. The research work discussed today will help us to discern and distinguish these stellar populations.

Basically there are two problems under discussion. One involves the "missing mass" especially in the solar neighborhood. And while we are occupied with this problem so close to home we shall recall that this problem is not limited to our own galaxy, as the rotational curves of other galactic systems have demonstrated. This problem of "missing mass" even occurs in clusters of galaxies, as studies of the Coma group have indicated. So we are not alone with our problem.

The second problem concerns the variation in the luminosity function and the different stellar populations and different chemical abundances encountered at higher z distances from the plane of the galaxy.

We should not be surprised that the luminosity function may not be the same as that found at $z = 10$ pcs. The photographs of nearby galaxies, the pioneering studies of Oort and later by Bok and MacRae and later still by McCuskey and by Luyten have indicated this for our own galactic system. Evidence of how and why all this occurred is still to be explored and we are still in the early stages of studies of galactic structure and evolution. Now, "*Ad laborem*" and again my thanks.