

## Tycho Brahe witnesses the supernova of the year 1572

A brilliant new star appeared on the sky in early November 1572. The new star outshined all other stars in brightness and was even visible during daylight. It was widely observed by astronomers all around the world and it helped to change our understanding of the Universe forever. Precise measurements of the star position by the great Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe reported in his book "Stella Nova" revealed that the star was located far beyond the Moon. This was inconsistent with the Aristotelian tradition that the "Eighth Sphere" of stars would be unchangeable and eternal. This tradition had dominated western thinking for nearly 2000 years. The supernova of 1572 was therefore a cornerstone in the history of science. It set the stage for the work of Kepler, Galileo, Newton and others and is today known as *Tycho's supernova*.

The engraving shows Tycho Brahe observing the new star in the Cassiopeia constellation (upper left corner). It appeared in the Historical book "Astronomie Populaire" by Camille Flammarion (Paris, 1884).



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