

Conversations with Galileo

Conversation I: Galileo defends Copernicanism against Aristotelians and Tychonists

Copernicus is simpler	but Copernicus has lots of epicycles too
Cop explains stations and retrogradations	Ptol accounts for them and Tycho explains them too
<i>After telescopic discoveries (1610):</i>	
Mtns on moon and sunspots show that the planets are like the earth, not diff	this is OK with some late Aris'ns: moon is bumpy, sunspots could be due to moons around the sun
Moons of Jupiter show that earth is like other planets in having moons	OK with some Aris'ns who are willing to use telescope
All phases of Venus (viewed by telescope) can be explained	Tycho can explain all phases of Venus too; Ptol can't explain one of the phases Galileo observes
<i>In conclusion:</i>	
Copernicus is beautiful, satisfying	but Copernicanism requires quasi infinite universe, contradicts all known physics, 2000 yrs of tradition
Galileo at work on a new physics	we don't need a new physics or a new astronomy! Such arrogance! Let's get him in trouble with Church.

Conversation II: Galileo vs *Bellarmino* (1616), then the *papal investigation* (1633)

1615, Galileo in Letter to Grand Duchess; conversation(s) with *Bellarmino* in 1616

Nature and the Bible derive equally from God—cannot be in contradiction (93) *I agree.*
Bible speaks obscurely in parts, e.g. to accommodate capacities of the unrefined masses (92). *Agreed*
Demonstrated truths of nature should take precedence in biblical interpretation (93). *I suppose so*
I hold the authority of the Church supreme on matters of faith (91) *Glad to hear that....*
but how the heavens go is not a matter of faith and morals. *No! evtg in the Bible pertains to faith.*

Aug interprets biblical passages implying a flat earth to respect the demonstrated fact of spherical earth (105); similarly we should reconcile passages implying stationary earth with Copernicanism.

But no Church father supports these new interpretations; indeed there is unanimous agreement of the Church fathers on a literal interpretation of Joshua.

That's because the Church fathers hadn't thought of the possibility of the motion of the earth!

In any case you haven't proved the Copernican theory. We cannot challenge the traditional interpretation on the basis of a conjecture.

But I have proved heliocentrism: demonstration from the tides (Dialogue) *not convincing*

Telescopic evidence *does not prove heliocentrism, only responds to some objections*

Better explanation of stations and retrogradations *not a proof—Tycho explains them just as well*

Heliocentrism will be proven soon enough. *No. There is probably no way to demonstrate which of heliocentrism or geoheliocentrism is true. Human reason will not be able to establish that, so why bother reinterpreting the Bible over an excessively arrogant claim for the powers of reason?*

Augustine warns of the danger of hastily rejecting something that later proves to be true (88, 105)—you run the risk of a scandal to the Church *To allow a change to traditional interpretation on the basis of an arrogant conjecture would be scandalous in itself!*

In 1633 (Bellarmine is dead; conversation with Inquisitors): *You disobeyed the decree of 1616 forbidding support of the Copernican theory.*

But I have a certificate from Bellarmine explicitly allowing me to discuss Copernicanism as a hypothesis. *But we have found in the files an unsigned injunction ordering you to stop discussing Copernicanism. In any case you supported Copernicanism not as a conjecture but as fact in your Dialogue. You also mocked the Pope's position that reason cannot establish the truth of the matter. We condemn you of "vehement suspicion of heresy."*

I apologize for my error and abjure.