Copernicus Essay, Research Paper

Nicolas Copernicus 1473-1543

Copernicus was born in Poland in 1473, he started his education at Cracow

University. There he studied mathematics and optics. From here he went to Italy,

where he was appointed as a canon in the cathedral of Frauenburg, where he spent

a comfortable academic life studding. Copernicus had some small hobbies while at

the cathedral, he painted, and frequently translated Greek poetry into Latin.

One other hobby that just wasn’t small enough to be called a hobby to most of us

was astronomy. He made investigations quietly and alone, without any help. He

observed from a turret on a protective wall around a cathedral, he also looked

with his naked eye rather than with a telescope. He was one of the founders of

modern astronomy. Copernicus died in 1543 of a cerebral hemorrhage. In 1530

right before Copernicus died he managed to published his work, De Revolutionibus.

Which said that the earth rotated on its axis once daily and traveled around the

sun once yearly. This might no sound very controversial but at this time the

church and its followers believed in the Ptolemiac theory, which stated that the

universe was a closed space bounded by a spherical envelope beyond which there

was nothing. (Landry 1999) Copernicus?s works went against the church, and

most scientific beliefs. This may be one reason why Copernicus didn?t publish

his work until his deathbed. Another reason may be that Copernicus was a huge

perfectionist, and continuously redid his works over and over to get them right.

(Field 1995) So you can see why Copernicus wasn?t in any big rush to have the

world know about his theory. On one hand he would cause a Nicolas Copernicus

tramoundous stir in the church, and all the scientific community. He would?ve

most likely have been fired from the comfortable church position he had for many

years, and could?ve given him a bad name. If it hadn?t been for George

Rheticus, a 25-year-old German mathematics professor Copernicus?s might have

never publiched his work. (Field 1995) Rheticus stayed with Copernicus for two

years, and convinced him to release his work. ?His work the Copernicus’s

heliostatic cosmology involved giving several distinct motions to the Earth. It

was consequently considered implausible by the vast majority of his

contemporaries, and by most astronomers and natural philosophers of succeeding

generations before the middle of the seventeenth century. Its only defenders

included Johannes Kepler (1571 -1630) and Galileo Galilei (1564- 1642). Strong

theoretical underpinning for the Copernican theory was provided by Newton’s

theory of universal gravitation (1687).? (Field 1995) So Copernicus?s whole

argument stated that the planets and the Earth were in orbit around the sun, and

the moon was in orbit around the Earth. This is called the The Heliocentric

System: Nicolas Copernicus In conclusion Copernicus said that the Sun was the

center of the universe, and went against all known knowledge, religion, and

teachings. He took all his observations with the naked eye and with no help.

Many disregarded his book and his theory, which went against everything that the

church believed in. However if it wasn?t for Copernicus, modern astronomy

would have never made advances as far as it has to today. Copernicus?s hard

work and strength is why he is one of the most important founders of modern

astronomy.

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