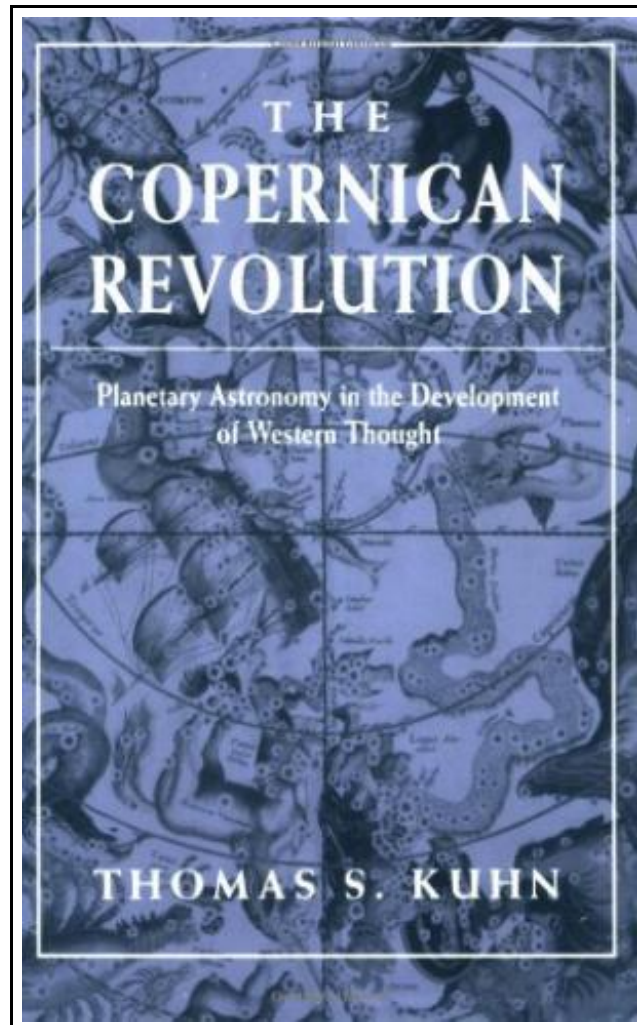


The Copernican Revolution Planetary Astronomy in the Development of Western Thought



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(Prof. Buford Ziemann)

THE COPERNICAN REVOLUTION PLANETARY ASTRONOMY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF WESTERN THOUGHT



Harvard University Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 320 pages. Dimensions: 9.1in. x 6.0in. x 1.1in. For scientist and layman alike this book provides vivid evidence that the Copernican Revolution has by no means lost its significance today. Few episodes in the development of scientific theory show so clearly how the solution to a highly technical problem can alter our basic thought processes and attitudes. Understanding the processes which underlay the Revolution gives us a perspective, in this scientific age, from which to evaluate our own beliefs more intelligently. With a constant keen awareness of the inseparable mixture of its technical, philosophical, and humanistic elements, Mr. Kuhn displays the full scope of the Copernican Revolution as simultaneously an episode in the internal development of astronomy, a critical turning point in the evolution of scientific thought, and a crisis in Western man's concept of his relation to the universe and to God. The book begins with a description of the first scientific cosmology developed by the Greeks. Mr. Kuhn thus prepares the way for a continuing analysis of the relation between theory and observation and belief. He describes the many functions--astronomical, scientific, and nonscientific--of the Greek concept of the universe, concentrating especially on the religious implications. He then treats the intellectual, social, and economic developments which nurtured Copernicus' break with traditional astronomy. Although many of these developments, including scholastic criticism of Aristotle's theory of motion and the Renaissance revival of Neoplatonism, lie entirely outside of astronomy, they increased the flexibility of the astronomer's imagination. That new flexibility is apparent in the work of Copernicus, whose *DE REVOLUTIONIBUS ORBIUM CAELESTIUM* is discussed in detail both for its own significance and as a representative scientific innovation. With a final analysis of Copernicus' life work--its reception and its contribution to a new scientific concept of...



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