

The Rising Movement of Geocentrism in the Modern World: A Reaction Paper

The geocentric model places Earth at the center of the universe, with all other objects in space moving around it. This view dominated science for over a thousand years. In the 16th century, Copernicus proposed that Earth actually orbits the Sun. Galileo's observations and Newton's laws later confirmed this heliocentric model, and it became the accepted scientific view. Yet surprisingly, a small group has emerged in recent decades arguing we should return to geocentrism. This paper examines this modern geocentric movement, who leads it, why they believe what they believe, and how scientists have responded.

The return of geocentric ideas began with specific people in the late 20th century. In 1967, Walter van der Kamp, a Dutch-Canadian writer, started distributing papers questioning heliocentric theory. He founded the Tychonian Society and published regular bulletins claiming that Galileo's work had not truly disproven geocentrism (Faulkner, n.d.). His efforts created the foundation for an organized movement.

In 1976, Gerardus Bouw, who has a PhD in astronomy, joined the cause and brought academic credentials to the movement. Bouw argued that geocentrism was not just one possible view of the cosmos, but a requirement of biblical faith (Faulkner, n.d.). Modern geocentrists typically support a modified version of Tycho Brahe's model. In this system, the Sun and Moon orbit Earth while the planets orbit the Sun, with Earth staying still at the center (Faulkner, n.d.).

The movement gained wider public attention in 2014 with "The Principle," a documentary by Robert Sungenis and Rick DeLano. The film included interviews with well-known physicists like Lawrence Krauss and Michio Kaku. However, these scientists later said they had been misled about the documentary's true purpose and did not support its geocentric message (Wikipedia contributors, 2025a). Sungenis, who wrote the three-volume book "Galileo Was Wrong," has become one of the movement's most visible figures, though his other writings have drawn criticism from groups like the Southern Poverty Law Center (Wikipedia contributors, 2025b).

The main reason behind modern geocentrism is religious, not scientific. Supporters argue for reading the Bible literally when it describes Earth as fixed and unmoving (Christianity Knowledge Base, 2024). From their view, accepting that Earth orbits the Sun is the first step toward secularism, evolution, and the weakening of religious authority. Some geocentrists claim that the real attack on religious worldviews started not with Darwin's evolution but with Copernicus moving Earth from the center of the universe (Faulkner, n.d.).

This religious commitment requires rejecting large parts of modern physics. If Earth sits at the center, the entire universe must spin around it once every 24 hours. This creates a major problem: objects more than a few billion kilometers away would need to move faster than light, which violates Einstein's relativity and basic physics principles (Dutch, n.d.). Physicist Steve Dutch points out that in a geocentric system, Jupiter and Saturn would move at significant fractions of light speed as they circle Earth daily. This should produce observable effects that we simply do not see in our measurements.

Scientists have universally rejected modern geocentrism as lacking evidence and logical consistency. Notably, even young Earth creationist organizations like Answers in Genesis and the Institute for Creation Research explicitly reject geocentric claims (Christianity Knowledge Base,

2024). These groups, while disagreeing with evolutionary biology and Earth's age, recognize that supporting geocentrism would damage their credibility and lacks scientific basis.

The controversy around "The Principle" shows the concerns critics have raised. Multiple scientists who appeared in the film said they were deceived about its purpose. Lawrence Krauss publicly condemned the documentary, saying he had no idea his interview would be used to support geocentrism and called the premise scientifically baseless (NPR, 2014). Kate Mulgrew, who narrated the film, apologized and said she had been "misinformed" about the project and would not have participated if she had known about Sungenis's involvement (NPR, 2014).

There is an important difference that sometimes confuses this debate. In physics, any reference frame can be used to describe motion, including one centered on Earth. However, this mathematical possibility does not mean Earth actually sits at the center of the universe. As Dutch (n.d.) explains, using Earth as a mathematical reference point is like using any random location for calculations. There is a fundamental difference between coordinate systems used for mathematical convenience and actual physical reality.

The continued existence of the geocentrism movement in the 21st century raises questions about how belief systems interact with evidence. Horgan (2016) discusses what he calls "neo-geocentrism," linking it to basic human psychology, particularly our tendency to see ourselves as central and our desire for cosmic importance. Throughout history, humans have sought to understand their place in the universe, and the idea that we occupy a special, central position feels naturally appealing.

However, the scientific method was developed precisely because human intuition can mislead us. Our senses tell us the Sun moves across the sky while we stay still. For thousands of years, this seemed obviously true. Only through careful observation, mathematical modeling, and willingness to question what seemed certain did humanity discover that our planet rotates and orbits the Sun.

The rejection of established physics and astronomy based on particular religious interpretations raises concerns. The evidence supporting heliocentric cosmology is not just theoretical but has been proven through practical use. Space missions to other planets succeed because their paths are calculated using heliocentric principles. The spacecraft arrive at their destinations with remarkable accuracy. GPS satellites work correctly only when calculations account for Earth's rotation, orbit, and even relativistic effects. These technological achievements would be impossible if the underlying model of the cosmos were fundamentally wrong.

The geocentrism debate also raises questions about how to read religious texts. Many religious scholars and believers accept heliocentric cosmology without seeing any threat to their faith. They understand that ancient texts used everyday language, describing celestial events as they appear from a human viewpoint rather than making technical astronomical claims (Faulkner, n.d.). Modern speakers still say the Sun "rises" and "sets" without endorsing geocentrism. Context and literary style matter in interpretation.

The movement also shows challenges in scientific literacy and public understanding of how science works. Science is not a collection of unchangeable rules but a method for systematically studying nature and improving our understanding based on evidence. The willingness to revise or abandon theories when evidence requires it is science's strength, not its weakness. The shift from geocentrism to heliocentrism demonstrates this process.

The modern geocentrism movement, while small in numbers, offers a revealing look at the tension between religious literalism and scientific consensus. The movement's persistence shows that people sometimes prioritize their beliefs over evidence, especially when core elements of identity or worldview seem threatened.

While respecting individuals' rights to their beliefs, the rejection of physics, astronomy, and the scientific method based on specific religious interpretations has troubling implications for scientific literacy and rational discussion. The universe revealed by modern cosmology, far from making humans less significant, offers a deeper sense of wonder. We live on a planet orbiting an ordinary star in one galaxy among billions, yet conscious life has emerged with the ability to understand its cosmic context. Human significance comes not from occupying the geometric center of the universe but from our consciousness, our relationships, our moral capacity, and our ability to seek understanding.

The geocentrism movement will likely remain on the edges of both mainstream science and mainstream religion. Nevertheless, it serves as a reminder of the ongoing importance of scientific education, critical thinking, and intellectual honesty. Understanding not only scientific conclusions but also scientific methods, the nature of evidence, and how knowledge claims are evaluated remains essential in an age where both information and misinformation spread rapidly. The geocentrism debate ultimately shows that following evidence wherever it leads, even when it challenges deeply held beliefs, represents not just good science but intellectual integrity.

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