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VISUALIZATION OF ANCIENT COSMOLOGICAL MODELS: A PRESENTATION OF COMPLETED WORK AND SOME DIFFICULTIES (HENRY MENDELL)

A good visualization is an essential part of understanding ancient astronomical models. There are two principal forms, geometrical models and spread sheets, where each should reveal their technique of construction. Such visualizations are principally pedagogical, but they can also serve as research tools. As part of Topoi 1, Group-D, Sebastian Szczepanski and I developed software for the visualization of ancient cosmological theories. These included the 4th cent. BCE planetary models of Eudoxus, Aristotle, and Calippus, as well as the basic planetary models of Ptolemy's *Almagest*. Because the visualizations are open source and written in HTML- 5, they have a higher likelihood of surviving than many other potential platforms. Most important is the flexibility of the program that allows the user to modify all the parameters, to reveal or hide or even eliminate components of a model, to focus in on certain features of the model, or to change views. In the Ptolemaic models, which are coordinated to Julian, Gregorian, and Egyptian calendars, one may set the clock to where one wishes and see the results. I shall also discuss some issues in the development of a spread sheet presentations of ancient astronomy.
