

**Michael H. Shank \***

## **Regiomontanus as a physical astronomer \*\***

REGIOMONTANUS'S *Defense of Theon against George of Trebizond* (1460s–70s) is a lengthy manuscript critique of George's equally lengthy commentary on Ptolemy's *Almagest* (1452). Intended for publication on Regiomontanus's own press, the work remained in manuscript at his death and into the 21st century. While the *Defense's* attacks on George of Trebizond are primarily arithmetical and geometrical, they also reveal in the heat of controversy several of Regiomontanus's physical concerns, including his insistence on a three-dimensional astronomy with physical coherence.

Against this background, this paper will summarize his outlook, and bring together his discussions of, and scattered clues about his views on, the causes of the celestial motions, the nature of the spheres, and their organization in space.

---

\* University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI, USA; email: [mhshank@wisc.edu](mailto:mhshank@wisc.edu).

\*\* The full text of this paper was published in *Journal for the History of Astronomy*, Vol. 38 Part 3, August 2007, No. 132, p. 325–349.