

## Proposal for the “Simon Marius 1573 – 1624” Anniversary

Simon Marius, the margraval court astronomer in the Franconian town of Ansbach, straddled the gulf between antiquity and the modern era. As a contemporary of Johannes Kepler, he was aware of the current discourse on astronomy. Starting in 1609, he was one of the first to make sensational telescopic observations. However, when he recognised the Jupiter system, it provoked a plagiarism controversy with Galileo Galilei, which could only be settled at the beginning of the 20th century. Johannes Kepler, however, used Marius' values to check his third planetary law.

Studying Marius gives a reason to cast a spotlight on all the arguments in the controversial discussion on the model of the heavens: Moon, mountains, comets, sunspots, novae, Jupiter's moons, the phases of Venus, and fixed star parallax. What does this mean for the sizes, distances, and movements of the celestial bodies and which model would make better predictions and thus “save” the phenomena? Answering these questions led Marius to reject the Ptolemaic system, but he was not yet prepared to adopt heliocentrism. His reasons for this were scientifically comprehensible and quite reasonable for the time. Too many mundane experiences could not be reconciled with a rotating Earth orbiting the Sun. As is well known, Isaac Newton solved these problems on a theoretical level with a new physics in 1687, but by then Marius had already been dead for over 60 years.

Next year is the 450th anniversary of the birth of the margraval court astronomer Simon Marius and the following year the 400th anniversary of his death. The Simon Marius Society is taking the two anniversaries as an opportunity to commemorate the southern German astronomer in 2024 and is proposing an international anniversary year under the title "Simon Marius 1573 - 1624". We invite observatories and planetariums, national and international associations, and institutions of professional science as well as amateur astronomy public institutions and individuals to participate with lectures, exhibitions, publications and much more.

After kick-off events in the "Marius cities" of Gunzenhausen, Ansbach and Nuremberg, a conference on the topic of "The struggle for the heliocentric system" is envisaged and a street in Nuremberg is to be named after Marius. On the Marius Portal, a new menu "Letters and Portraits" will be activated, the core of which will be the reproduction of all preserved letters. In the programme item "Preserve and Disseminate", in addition to an appeal to libraries to digitise Marius' holdings, the text of the *Mundus Iovialis* is to be stored deep in the world's oldest salt mine in the form of ceramic tablets and also broadcast into space via the radio system of the Deutsches Museum.

On the wish list is a special postage stamp and the theatre sketch "Simon on the Couch" deals with the manifold slights and defeats the Franconian astronomer had to put up with throughout his life and beyond. Marius' wife Felicitas ensures that the man finally receives professional help and drags him to a therapist of our time.

Ultimately, the theme of all activities is the development of science using the example of the Copernican turn: new instruments, surprising observations, innovative models, and a reason-oriented discussion of arguments can be excellently traced in the work of the court astronomer Marius, which is why a piece of the history of science can be explicated through his life and work.

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