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Animation of Early Cosmological Models GREGORY TOPASNA, Virginia Military Institute — Early Greek and renaissance models of the solar system are usually presented as diagrams in most astronomy textbooks. While the intent of such diagrams is to illustrate how these models attempted to account for the motion of the planets, the static nature of the diagrams typically leaves students nonplussed and are often only viewed as mere curiosities. However, animating these earlier models vividly demonstrates the early attempts at cosmology and can reflect some of the accuracies our ancestors were able to achieve. While the complexity of some models may at first seem to make animation a difficult task, we show how such models can be written in a basic mathematical form suitable for animation in FlashMX. While these models are not extremely precise they are accurate enough to show the motion of celestial bodies and have an impact that static images alone can not achieve.

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