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Orb: On the Movements of the Earth

Orb: On the Movements of the Earth (Japanese: チ。 ―地球の運動について―, Hepburn: *Chi: Chikyū no Undō ni Tsuite*^[a]) is a Japanese manga series written and illustrated by Uoto. It was serialized in Shogakukan's *seinen* manga magazine *Weekly Big Comic Spirits* from September 2020 to April 2022, with its chapters collected in eight *tankōbon* volumes. Set in 15th-century Europe, the series follows the dangerous journeys of scholars who risk their lives to pursue research on the forbidden heliocentric theory.

A 25-episode anime television series adaptation produced by Madhouse aired from October 2024 to March 2025.

By February 2025, the manga had over 5 million copies in circulation.

Plot

In 15th-century Europe,^[b] the Church tightly controls information, and dissent from its doctrine is heresy, punishable by death. Rafal, a child prodigy with a passion for astronomy, is raised by his adoptive father, Potocki, who urges him to study theology. However, Rafal's life changes when he is coerced by Hubert, a heretic scholar, into assisting with research on the Earth's movements. Initially skeptical, Rafal confirms the heliocentric model through his own calculations. Their secret work is discovered by Inquisitor Nowak, who finds Rafal's sketches. Hubert sacrifices himself, giving Rafal a pendant and taking the blame, leading to his execution. Rafal continues the research in secret but is confronted by Potocki, who warns him of the dangers, citing his own past struggles. When Rafal refuses to stop, Potocki reports him to Nowak. At his trial, Rafal refuses to recant and is sentenced to death. Before his execution, he commits suicide using smuggled poppy seeds, and his body is burned.

A decade later, duellists Oczy and Gras are tasked with guarding a heretic during transport, accompanied by Nowak. Gras, an amateur astronomer, records Mars' movements and expects it to complete its revolution. However, Mars unexpectedly retrogrades, frustrating Gras. The heretic reveals the location of a box containing astronomical research and gives Oczy the pendant before dying. Oczy and Gras retrieve the box but lose Gras when a bridge collapses. Oczy seeks help from Badeni, a demoted priest, who agrees to study the box's contents if Oczy continues Gras' observations. They discover the research on heliocentrism and seek collaborators, enlisting Jolenta, a scholar's assistant, and Piast, a Ptolemaic model researcher. After Piast's death, Badeni completes the theory. However, Nowak investigates, leading to the arrest and execution of Badeni and Oczy. Jolenta, revealed to be Nowak's daughter, is spared by a sympathetic inquisitor, who fakes her death. Meanwhile, Badeni's parish priest discovers he transcribed Oczy's diary on vagabonds' heads.

Twenty-five years later, Schmidt, captain of the Heretic Liberation Force, retrieves Oczy's book under Jolenta's orders. Draka, a Romani woman, finds the book and burns it, reciting its contents to Jolenta in exchange for access to a printing press. When Nowak's forces attack, Jolenta sacrifices herself, allowing Draka and Schmidt to escape. Schmidt's group is betrayed, and they sacrifice themselves to help Draka reach Antoni, a bishop. Draka convinces Antoni to publish the heliocentric research, but Nowak intervenes, killing Antoni and burning the church. Draka fatally wounds Nowak before succumbing to her injuries. In his final moments, Nowak hallucinates Rafal and realizes his role as the villain of heliocentrism. Draka sends a letter via carrier pigeon before dying.

In 1468, a baker's assistant, Albert Brudzewski, refuses to enroll in university until a priest encourages him. As a child, Albert loved astronomy and shared his observations with his father, who introduced him to Rafal, a fanatical scholar. Rafal took Albert to a gathering of scholars but later murdered Albert's father for refusing to support his forbidden research. Rafal was captured, and Albert, traumatized, initially abandoned astronomy. After speaking with the priest, Albert enrolls in university. At one point, he would happen upon Draka's letter being delivered to Potocki's former address which inspires him to study heliocentrism. After teaching at university for twenty years, he writes a commentary on an astronomy textbook in 1482, influencing future scholars including a young Nicolaus Copernicus in 1491.

Characters

Part 1

Rafal (ラファウ, *Rafau*)

Voiced by: Maaya Sakamoto^[4]

A young prodigy who skipped a grade and entered university at the age of 12. Rafal has always excelled by making rational decisions. However, his interest was piqued by the beauty of the heliocentric theory, leading him to delve into extensive research on the subject. His eventual suicide to evade persecution is what drives the plot forward.

Nowak (ノヴァク, *Novaku*)

Voiced by: Kenjiro Tsuda^[4]

An inquisitor who lacks a specific ideology, but believes it is his duty to protect the peace of the world, including his daughter, even if it means resorting to cruel actions.

Hubert (フベルト, *Fuberuto*)

Voiced by: Show Hayami^[4]

A heretic is imprisoned for his forbidden research. In order to be released and continue his work, he feigned a change of heart. However, after meeting Rafal, Hubert revealed the truth about his research; the heliocentric theory.

Potocki (ポトツキ, *Pototsuki*)

Voiced by: Kōichi Makishima^[5]

Rafal's foster father was the one who asked him to give up studying astronomy and instead focus on theology when he entered university.

Part 2

Oczy (オクジー, *Okuji*)

Voiced by: Katsuyuki Konishi^[6]

A champion fighter with excellent eyesight, but a fear of looking at the sky. His mindset is overwhelmingly negative, with no expectations for the world and a desire to reach heaven as soon as possible.

Gras (グラス, *Gurasu*)

Voiced by: Minoru Shiraishi^[6]

Oczy's comrade. Unlike with Oczy, his outlook is overwhelmingly positive even in times of despair, which he attributes to his fascination with Mars.

Badeni (バデーニ, *Badēni*)

Voiced by: Yuichi Nakamura^[6]

A monk sets out on a quest to find the "best moment of his life". In his pursuit of knowledge, he disregards the rules of the church, leading to his eyes being burned and his subsequent banishment to a rural village.

Damian (ダミアン)

Voiced by: Yōji Ueda^[7]

A young inquisitor, who recruits Nowak for help in his investigation against heretics.

Jolenta (ヨレンタ, *Yorenta*)

Voiced by: Saya Hitomi,^[6] Toa Yukinari (adult)^[7]

A research assistant in the field of astronomy, she was accepted into a facility led by a renowned cosmologist. However, she is currently feeling disheartened as she is not given the opportunity to conduct research to her full potential due to her gender. She is revealed to be Nowak's daughter, and she is unaware that Nowak is an inquisitor.

Kolbe (コルベ, *Korube*)

Voiced by: Nobunaga Shimazaki^[8]

Jolenta's colleague. As women are looked down on, he publishes Jolenta's research in his name.

Count Piast (ピャスト伯, *Pyasuto Haku*)

<i>Orb: On the Movements of the Earth</i>
 <div>First <i>tankōbon</i> volume cover, featuring Rafal</div>
チ。 ―地球の運動について― <div>(<i>Chi: Chikyū no Undō ni Tsuite</i>)</div>
Genre
 <u>Historical</u> ^{[1]}
 <u>Mystery</u> ^{[2]}
 <u>Science fiction</u> ^{[2]}
Manga
Written by
<u>Uoto</u>
Published by
<u>Shogakukan</u>
English publisher
<u>NA</u> : <u>Seven Seas Entertainment</u>
Magazine
<i>Weekly Big Comic Spirits</i>
Original run
September 14, 2020 – April 18, 2022
Volumes
8
Anime television series
Directed by
<u>Kenichi Shimizu</u>
Written by
<u>Shingo Irie</u>
Music by
<u>Kensuke Ushio</u>
Studio
<u>Madhouse</u>
Licensed by
<u>Netflix</u>
Original network
<u>NHK General TV</u>
Original run
October 5, 2024 – March 15, 2025
Episodes
25

Voiced by: Shinya Fukumatsu^[8] Daisuke Namikawa^[9] (young)
An astronomer who leads the research group Jolenta belongs to. Despite being a believer in geocentrism, he has devoted his life to learning the truth about the universe.

Antoni (アントニ)
Voiced by: Satoshi Mikami^[10]
A bishop, who is both arrogant and deeply devoted to the church. He views Nowak's inquisition as a threat to the church's future. Unlike Nowak, he is willing to adapt to changes.

Part 3

Draka (ドゥラカ, *Duraka*)
Voiced by: Miyuri Shimabukuro^[11]
The daughter of a nomadic tribe, this talented woman has made a significant contribution to the development of her village. Her strong belief in "earning money until her worries disappear" stems from her personal experience of losing her father at a young age.

Schmidt (シュミット, *Shumitto*)
Voiced by: Satoshi Hino^[11]
The captain of the Heresy Liberation Squad is a naturalist who seeks to revive a god that has been corrupted by human morality. Currently, his focus is on weakening the orthodox faction of the C Church.

Lewandowski (レヴァンドロフスキ, *Revandorofusuki*)
Voiced by: Fuminori Komatsu^[7]
A reserved older member of the Heresy Liberation Squad, and close friend of Schmidt.

Frei (フライ, *Furai*)
Voiced by: Yūya Uchida^[7]
A younger member of the Heresy Liberation Squad, and direct subordinate of Schmidt.

Dhruv (ドゥルーヴ, *Durūbu*)
Voiced by: Tomomichi Nishimura^[7]
Draka's uncle. He raises Draka as her only blood relative left after her father's death. While he teaches Draka to live with conviction, he will do anything to survive.

Final part

Albert Brudzewski (アルベルト・ブルゼフスキ, *Aruberuto Buruzefusuki*)
Voiced by: Shōya Ishige^[12] Atsumi Tanezaki^[13] (young)
A young man works at a bakery, where he assists with various tasks. He used to have a passion for learning, but after a particular incident, he lost his interest in academics.

Media

Manga

Written and illustrated by Uoto, *Orb: On the Movements of the Earth* was serialized in Shogakukan's *seinen* manga magazine *Weekly Big Comic Spirits* from September 14, 2020,^{[14][15]} to April 18, 2022.^{[16][17]} Shogakukan collected its chapters in eight *tankōbon*, released from December 11, 2020,^[18] to June 30, 2022.^[19]

Seven Seas Entertainment has licensed the manga for English publication, releasing the manga in a 2-in-1 omnibus edition.^{[20][21]}

Volumes

No.	Original release date	Original ISBN	English release date	English ISBN
1	December 11, 2020 ^[18]	<u>978-4-09-860778-5</u>	November 21, 2023 ^[22]	<u>979-8-88843-262-4</u>
2	January 12, 2021 ^[23]	<u>978-4-09-860801-0</u>	November 21, 2023 ^[22]	<u>979-8-88843-262-4</u>
3	March 30, 2021 ^[24]	<u>978-4-09-860878-2</u>	March 19, 2024 ^[25]	<u>979-8-88843-341-6</u>
4	June 30, 2021 ^[26]	<u>978-4-09-861071-6</u>	March 19, 2024 ^[25]	<u>979-8-88843-341-6</u>
5	September 30, 2021 ^[27]	<u>978-4-09-861146-1</u>	August 20, 2024 ^[28]	<u>979-8-88843-581-6</u>
6	December 28, 2021 ^[29]	<u>978-4-09-861206-2</u>	August 20, 2024 ^[28]	<u>979-8-88843-581-6</u>
7	March 30, 2022 ^[30]	<u>978-4-09-861260-4</u>	December 17, 2024 ^[31]	<u>979-8-88843-582-3</u>
8	June 30, 2022 ^[19]	<u>978-4-09-861317-5</u>	December 17, 2024 ^[31]	<u>979-8-88843-582-3</u>

Anime

In June 2022, an anime adaptation produced by Madhouse was announced.^[32] It was later revealed to be a television series directed by Kenichi Shimizu and written by Shingo Irie, with Masanori Shino designing the characters, and Kensuke Ushio composing the music.^[6] The series aired for 25 episodes from October 5, 2024, to March 15, 2025, on NHK General TV.^{[33][34]} The opening theme song is "Kaijū" (怪獣; 'Monster'), performed by Sakanaction,^[6] while the first ending theme song is "Aporia" (アポリア), and the second ending theme song is "Hebi" (へび; 'Serpent'), both performed by Yorushika.^{[35][11]} Netflix licensed the series for worldwide simulcast.^[36]

Episodes

No.	Title ^[37] ^[38]	Directed by ^[c]	Storyboard by ^[c]	Original release date ^[39]
1	"Heliocentrism. How About That?" <div>Transliteration: "Chidōsetsu, to Demo Yobō ka" (Japanese: 『地動説』、とても呼ぼうか)</div>	Kotono Watanabe	Kenichi Shimizu	October 5, 2024 ^[d]
2	"And Now... I'm Going to Move the Earth" <div>Transliteration: "Ima Kara, Chikyū o Ugokasu" (Japanese: 今から、地球を動かす)</div>	Hiromichi Matano	Kenichi Shimizu	October 5, 2024 ^[d]
3	"I... Believe in Heliocentrism" <div>Transliteration: "Boku wa, Chidōsetsu o Shinjitemasu" (Japanese: 僕は、地動説を信じてます)</div>	Masato Miyoshi	Kenichi Shimizu	October 12, 2024
4	"The Fact That This World is Far More Beautiful Than Heaven" <div>Transliteration: "Kono Chikyuu wa, Tengoku Nanka Yori mo Utsukushii" (Japanese: この地球は、天国なんかよりも美しい)</div>	Asami Kawano	<u>Hiroshi Kōjina</u>	October 19, 2024
5	"Even If I Die... This World Will Continue" <div>Transliteration: "Watashi ga Shindemo Kono Sekai wa Tsuzuku" (Japanese: 私が死んでもこの世界は続く)</div>	Masato Miyoshi	Junichi Sakata	October 26, 2024
6	"Move... The World" <div>Transliteration: "Sekai o, Ugokase" (Japanese: 世界を、動かせ)</div>	Kotono Watanabe	Tao Hazuki	November 2, 2024
7	"Matters of the Truth" <div>Transliteration: "Shinri no Tamenara" (Japanese: 真理のためなら)</div>	Hiroki Mori	<u>Koji Sawai</u>	November 9, 2024
8	"We Must Become Icarus" <div>Transliteration: "Ikarosu ni Naraneba" (Japanese: イカロスにならねば)</div>	Kotono Watanabe	Kotono Watanabe	November 16, 2024
9	"This is What It Means... To Learn Something, I Think" <div>Transliteration: "Kitto Sore ga, Nanika o Shiru to iu Kotoda" (Japanese: きっとそれが、何かを知ることだ)</div>	Asami Kawano	Asami Kawano	November 23, 2024
10	"Truth" <div>Transliteration: "Chi" (Japanese: 『知』)</div>	Hiromichi Matano	Kenichi Shimizu	November 30, 2024
11	"Terror" <div>Transliteration: "Chi" (Japanese: 『血』)</div>	Masatoyo Takada	Masatoyo Takada	December 7, 2024
12	"Heliocentrism is My Faith" <div>Transliteration: "Ore wa, Chidōsetsu o Shinkō Shi Teru" (Japanese: 俺は、地動説を信仰してる)</div>	Asami Kawano	Kenichi Shimizu	December 14, 2024
13	"Freedom" <div>Transliteration: "Jiyū o" (Japanese: 『自由』を)</div>	Masateru Matsumura	Kenichi Shimizu	December 21, 2024
14	"Tonight's Sky..." <div>Transliteration: "Kyō no Kono Sora wa" (Japanese: 今日のこの空は)</div>	Kotono Watanabe	Kotono Watanabe	December 28, 2024
15	"Is it... My Turn?" <div>Transliteration: "Watashi no, Banna no Ka?" (Japanese: 私の、番なのか?)</div>	Masato Miyoshi	Koji Sawai	January 4, 2025
16	"It's Time to Begin the Operation" <div>Transliteration: "Kōdō o Kaishi Suru" (Japanese: 行動を開始する)</div>	Asami Kawano	Asami Kawano	January 11, 2025
17	"I Could Make a Lot of Money with This Book... Maybe" <div>Transliteration: "Kono Hon de Dai Kasegi Dekiru, Kamo" (Japanese: この本で大稼ぎできる、かも)</div>	Hiromichi Matano	Koji Sawai	January 18, 2025
18	"To Liberate Information" <div>Transliteration: "Jōhō o Kaihō Suru" (Japanese: 情報を解放する)</div>	Mitsuyuki Masuhara	Koji Sawai	January 25, 2025
19	"Wandering is How You Find What's Right" <div>Transliteration: "Mayoi no Naka ni Rinri ga Aru" (Japanese: 迷いの中に倫理がある)</div>	Hiroki Mori	Kotono Watanabe	February 1, 2025
20	"I Love Heliocentrism" <div>Transliteration: "Watashi wa, Chidōsetsu o Aishite Iru" (Japanese: 私は、地動説を愛している)</div>	Masataka Takada	Masataka Takada	February 8, 2025
21	"The Times Are Changing" <div>Transliteration: "Jidai wa Kawaru" (Japanese: 時代は変わる)</div>	Tomoya Kitagawa	Tomoya Kitagawa	February 15, 2025
22	"Neither of You Will be Known to History" <div>Transliteration: "Kimi-ra wa Rekishi no Tōjō Jinbutsu Janai" (Japanese: 君らは歴史の登場人物じゃない)</div>	Asami Kawano	Kenichi Shimizu	February 22, 2025
23	"Comrades" <div>Transliteration: "Onaji Jidai o Tsukutta Nakama" (Japanese: 同じ時代を作った仲間)</div>	Hiroki Mori	Kenichi Shimizu	March 1, 2025
24	"Thaumazein" <div>Transliteration: "Thaumazein o" (Japanese: タウマゼインを)</div>	Masamitsu Isoma	Asami Kawano	March 8, 2025
25	"Question" <div>(Japanese: ?)</div>	Asami Kawano	<u>Yoshiaki Kawajiri</u>	March 15, 2025

Other

The manga was featured in the music video for Amazarashi's song "1.0" on March 30, 2022, with the video showing lyrics using letterpress printing on art from the series.^[40] It was also featured in the music video for Amazarashi's song "Cassiopeia Mooring" (カシオピア係留所, *Kashiopia Keiryū-sho*), released on June 30, 2022, with characters from the series and their dialogue being projected onto the planetarium of the Itabashi Science and Education Museum in Tokyo.^[41]

Reception

By February 2025, the manga had over 5 million copies in circulation.^[42] The manga was recommended by manga artists Hitoshi Iwaaki and Shin Takahashi.^{[43][44]} *Chi* was nominated for the 14th Manga Taishō in 2021 and placed second with 67 points;^{[45][46]} it was nominated for the 15th edition in 2022 and placed fifth with 59 points.^{[47][48]} It was nominated for the Next Manga Award in 2021 and placed tenth in the print category.^[49] The series ranked 37th on the 2021 "Book of the Year" list by *Da Vinci* magazine;^[50] it ranked 21st on the 2022 list.^[51] It ranked second on Takarajimasha's *Kono Manga ga Sugoi!* 2022 list of best manga for male readers.^[52] It won the Mandō Kobayashi Manga Grand Prix 2021, created by comedian and manga enthusiast Kendo Kobayashi.^[53] The manga was nominated for the 67th Shogakukan Manga Award in the general category in 2021;^[54] it was also nominated for the 68th edition in the same category in 2022.^[55] The series ranked fifth on the Nationwide Bookstore Employees' Recommended Comics of 2022.^[56] The manga was nominated for the 46th Kodansha Manga Award in the general category in 2022.^[57] The series won the 26th Tezuka Osamu Cultural Prize in 2022.^{[58][59]} The manga won the 54th Seiun Award in the Best Comic category in 2023.^{[60][61]}

Notes

- a.

The *kana* "chi" can represent not only the *kanji* for "Earth; ground" (地), but also "wisdom; knowledge" (知), and "blood" (血).^[3]
- b.

While not directly mentioned, it is heavily implied through several references that the series took place in modern-day Poland.
- c.

Production staff information is taken from the ending credits of each episode.
- d.

Episodes 1 and 2 premiered back-to-back.

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