

FORSCHUNGSKOLLOQUIUM ZUR WISSENSCHAFTSGESCHICHTE

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Practical geometry in sixteenth-century France

Throughout the sixteenth century, there was a strong development of practical geometry, which can be attested by the great number of treatises that were then published on this discipline throughout Europe, particularly in France. This development was concomitant with the publication of a large number of different editions and commentaries of Euclid's *Elements*, which was traditionally regarded as a canonical source for the teaching of mathematics in the Renaissance and often as the theoretical pendant of practical geometry, in spite of its also containing certain practical aspects. Now, while the Euclidean tradition offered a rather stable representation of geometry and of its aim and content, treatises of practical geometry (some of which were written by commentators of Euclid's *Elements*) differed from one another, sometimes to a great extent, in their form, their content and the representation they conveyed of the nature and finality of practical geometry. In considering the French tradition of Renaissance practical geometry, our aim is to give a synthetic overview of the similarities and differences between its representative treatises, notably with regards to their structure and content, their intention and aimed readership, as well as to their expression of the epistemological status of practical geometry and its relation to theoretical geometry.

Dr. Angela Axworthy has a PhD in philosophy (2011, C.E.S.R., Tours, France) and is a post-doctoral research fellow at the Technische Universität Berlin, in the framework of the Berlin Center for the History of Knowledge. She was previously research fellow at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin (2012–2016). Her research focuses on Renaissance epistemology of mathematics. Her current themes of investigation are the epistemology of geometry in the Renaissance Euclidean tradition, the sixteenth-century treatises of practical geometry and medieval and Renaissance geocentric cosmology. She is the author of *Le Mathématicien renaissant et son savoir. Le statut des mathématiques selon Oronce Fine*, Paris, Classique Garnier, 2016.

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