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Mathematics in the thought of Nicholas Cusanus

The famous 15th-century cardinal appears on at least one list of “great” mathematicians; on the other hand his contemporary Regiomontanus dismissed his efforts in mathematics as “ridiculous”. But whatever his technical competence, it is quite certain that Cusanus’s perception of mathematics coloured deeply his influential views on such issues as the limits of human knowledge and the relation of man to God. I shall try to sketch from both perspectives—the technical and the philosophical—the place of mathematics in the world-view of this fascinating figure.