Nicole D'oresme Encyclopedia Article

Nicole D'oresme

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c. 1325-1382

French mathematician who developed an early type of coordinate geometry and discussed Earth's rotation. In *Questiones super libros Aristotelis de anima* (c. 1370), Oresme addressed Aristotle's ideas concerning the earth's motion. Aristotle had claimed that the planet is stationary, but Oresme—before he went back on his first position, the correct one—initially stated that a daily rotation would be both feasible and explainable in physical terms. *Questiones* also examines the speed and reflective qualities of light. In about 1375 Oresme wrote a work on ballistics.