

*Science et Représentations*  
**Colloque International en mémoire de Pierre Souffrin**

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*Not a limit of art but of nature*

*Cardano and Galileo on the suction lift of water*

Although their ideas on matter and void were quite different, both Cardano and Galileo believed that the power of suction is limited and saw primarily in it not a limit of art but of nature. After having contrasted Cardano's and Galileo's thoughts on this subject, I turn to the experiments in the field made with suction lift pumps and siphons. I argue that these experiments were instrumental not only for the development of the conception that the forces of nature are limited and measurable but also for the evolution of Galileo's ideas on the cohesion of matter.