

1046-01-557

Nathan Sidoli*, nathan.sidoli@utoronto.ca. *Drawing diagrams and making arguments in Greek mathematics.*

Almost all of our evidence for Greek mathematical activity is derived from medieval manuscripts written many centuries after the original composition of the treatises they purport to transmit. Moreover, the activity of manuscript transmission was essentially scholastic and literary and may have often been far removed from the activities through which ancient mathematics was produced and taught. Indeed, in the ancient texts there is evidence for different types of mathematical activity such as oral presentation, material practices of problem solving and clearly literary practices, such calculation by tables. In this talk, I offer some speculations about Greek mathematics as a human activity and use these ideas in turn to explain some of the distinctive features of the Greek mathematical texts, as they have come down to us. (Received September 08, 2008)