

# Tartaglia Encyclopedia Article

## Tartaglia

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# Tartaglia

**1499-1557**

Italian mathematician, born Nicolò Fontana, whose *La nuova scienza* (1537) was the first book in history on the science of ballistics. The latter had come to be increasingly important to military forces armed with guns and cannons, and Tartaglia's work was highly influential; however, he incorrectly stated that a ball falls straight downward after being propelled forward from a cannon. As a mathematician, Tartaglia is best known for his partial solution to the problem of cubic equations, a discovery that later led him into a dispute with Girolamo Cardano (1501-1576) and Cardano's assistant Ludovico Ferrari (1522-1565). Interestingly, Cardano published his own work on ballistics and other subjects, *De subtilitate*, seven years after Tartaglia's.