

Graph Theory Between The World Wars

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We focus on the development of graph theory in the interwar period. In the 1930s, there were still many mathematicians who did not regard graph theory as a serious discipline, owing partly to the fact that many results in this field were originally inspired by problems of recreational mathematics. However, the publication of the first textbook of graph theory in 1936, which presented it as a completely rigorous discipline with applications in linear algebra and set theory, helped to change this attitude. Meanwhile, some important results that are now classified as belonging to graph theory were formulated in the language of topological structures. Finally, one should not forget that numerous developments in graph theory grew out of purely practical problems, such as the construction of electricity networks, or the enumeration of chemical compounds.