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## Abstracts

Duncan J. Melville, Editor

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The purpose of this department is to give sufficient information about the subject matter of each publication to enable users to decide whether to read it. It is our intention to cover all books, articles, and other materials in the field.

*Books for abstracting and eventual review should be sent to this department.* Materials should be sent to Duncan J. Melville, Department of Mathematics, Computer Science and Statistics, St. Lawrence University, Canton, NY 13617, U.S.A. (e-mail: [dmelville@stlawu.edu](mailto:dmelville@stlawu.edu)).

Readers are invited to send reprints, autoabstracts, corrections, additions, and notices of publications that have been overlooked. Be sure to include complete bibliographic information, as well as transliteration and translation for non-European languages. We need volunteers willing to cover one or more journals for this department.

In order to facilitate reference and indexing, entries are given abstract numbers which appear at the end following the symbol #. A triple numbering system is used: the first number indicates the volume, the second the issue number, and the third the sequential number within that issue. For example, the abstracts for Volume 40, Number 1, are numbered: 40.1.1, 40.1.2, 40.1.3, etc.

The initials in parentheses at the end of an entry indicate the abstractor. In this issue there are abstracts by Amy Ackerberg-Hastings, Janet L. Beery (Redlands, CA), Laura Martini, Kim Plofker, and Duncan J. Melville.

### General

Barnett, Janet; Clark, Kathy; Klyve, Dominic; Lodder, Jerry; Otero, Danny; Scoville, Nick; and White, Diana. A Series of Mini-projects from **TR**ansforming **I**nstruction in **U**ndergraduate **M**athematics via **P**rimary **H**istorical **S**ources. *MAA Convergence* (June 2017), 1 p., electronic only. TRIUMPHS team members explain their motivation and announce plans for a series of short student projects. (JLB) #45.1.1

Brentjes, Sonja. Practicing history of mathematics in Islamic societies in 19th-century Germany and France, in #45.1.14, pp. 25–52. The author argues that 19th-century German and French historians of Islamic mathematics developed three methodological strategies: a scientific history of mathematics; engagement with primary sources, and connection with a cultural narrative. The last strategy was later discarded, only to be revived more recently in a more sophisticated variant. (DJM) #45.1.2

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Bullynck, Maarten. The history of mathematics in the progress of mankind. Modifying the narrative around 1800, in #45.1.14, pp. 9–23. Around 1800 the author sees a decisive shift in the historiography of mathematics by French and German historians from the encyclopedic approach of the eighteenth century to a narrative based on the concept of progress of mankind. (DJM) #45.1.3

Chemla, Karine; and Virbel, Jacques, eds. *Texts, Textual Acts and the History of Science (Archimedes: New Studies in the History and Philosophy of Science and Technology 42)*. Cham: Springer, 2015, ix+430 pp. This volume contains papers addressing manifold topics in the history of science from the perspective of a textual acts theory, similar to speech act theory. The papers with the most mathematical content are abstracted separately as: #45.1.5; #45.1.20; #45.1.23; #45.1.28; and #45.1.96. (DJM) #45.1.4

Chemla, Karine; and Virbel, Jacques. Prologue: Textual acts and the history of science, in #45.1.4, pp. 1–46. The authors explain the theoretical perspective underlying the papers in this collected volume and emphasize the text of texts, as opposed to recent concerns with diagrams, etc. (DJM) #45.1.5

Clark, Kathy. See #45.1.1.

Cohen, H. Floris. The “mathematization of nature”: The making of a concept, and how it has fared in later years, in #45.1.14, pp. 143–160. The author traces the development of the concept of the “mathematization of nature” as an analytic tool for interpreting the events of the “scientific revolution” of the seventeenth century from its use by the pioneers Dijksterhuis, Burtt, and Koyré in the 1920s, through a subsequent “unceasing process of meaning dilution”, to current attempts at rehabilitation. (DJM) #45.1.6

Devlin, Keith. *Finding Fibonacci. The Quest to Rediscover the Forgotten Mathematical Genius who Changed the World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017, vi+241 pp. An engaging and personal account of the author’s long quest to discover information about the elusive Fibonacci. See the review by E.J. Barbeau in *Mathematical Reviews* 3616557. (DJM) #45.1.7

Durand, Antonin. Mathematicians and politics: New research scenarios? *Lettera Matematica* 4 (3–4) (2017), 161–165. From the summary: “This article draws a general analysis of the way the position of a mathematician can be used in the political field to found a legitimating discourse, some kind of expertise, or to claim a specific way to consider political questions.” (LM) #45.1.8

Garcia, Ronaldo. See #45.1.17.

Gray, Jeremy. Histories of modern mathematics in English in the 1940s, 50s, and 60s, in #45.1.14, pp. 161–183. The author explores the presentation of the history of mathematics in general works, principally aimed at mathematics students, published during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s, taking in the works of Boyer, Coolidge, Cajori, Eves, and Kline. (DJM) #45.1.9

Høyrup, Jens. Embedding: Multipurpose device for understanding mathematics and its development, or empty generalization? *Gaṇita Bhāratī* 38 (1) (2016), 1–29. With reference to the definition of “embedding” as involving “all types of clauses occurring as subordinate parts of a superordinate clause”, the reviewer explains that “[t]he author investigates whether ‘embedding’ as a technical concept [...] can be applied to (a) the construction of place-value numeral systems, (b) the development of algebraic symbolisms, and (c) the discussion whether scientific revolutions ever take place in mathematics or new conceptualizations always include what preceded them.” See the review by Godofredo Iommi Amunátegui in *Mathematical Reviews* 3561520. (KP) #45.1.10

Huffman, Cynthia. Mathematical treasures at the Linda Hall Library. *MAA Convergence* (Jan. 2017), 4 pp., electronic only. A tour of the mathematics collections available at the rare book library in Kansas City, Missouri. (JLB) #45.1.11

Klyve, Dominic. See #45.1.1.

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