Johann Bernoulli
Lezing 2017

Mathematics in times of crisis and war

Norbert Schappacher
(Université de Strasbourg)

Maandag 3 April, 19.30
Aula Academiegebouw, Broerstraat 5, Groningen
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Aula van het Academiegebouw, Broerplein 5, Groningen

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Samenvatting At the beginning of the 20th century mathematics was struck by a foundational crisis which actually picked up strong political overtones after the end of World War I. The Dutch mathematician L.E.J. Brouwer played a major part in the ensuing debates.

About ten years after the end of World War I an economic crisis hit Europe and reshaped the political landscape. The goal of the talk is to explain how this new, critical situation had a surprising effect even on some of the most pure parts of mathematical research like Algebraic Geometry. This will also give us the opportunity to look at the mathematical research of B.L. van der Waerden in the 1920s and 1930s, who in 1928, at the age of 25, was appointed professor of mathematics at the University of Groningen.

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