

Ruth Moufang Encyclopedia Article

Ruth Moufang

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Ruth Moufang

1905-1977

German mathematician who made contributions to theoretical and applied geometry, and became the first German woman with a doctorate to be employed in industry. Moufang earned a Ph.D. in projective geometry and introduced certain planes and non-associative algebraic systems that bear her name. Despite her extraordinary skills, the Nazi minister of education prohibited Moufang from teaching anywhere because of her gender. Thus restricted, she turned to industrial mathematics, the only area in which she could apply her knowledge, and focused on elasticity theory. In 1946, after the Nazi defeat, she was granted a professorship in Frankfurt.