

Joseph Fourier



1768-1830

Jean Baptiste Joseph Fourier (March 21, 1768 – May 16, 1830) was a French mathematician and physicist who is best known for initiating the investigation of Fourier series and their application to problems of heat flow. The Fourier transform is also named in his honor. Fourier went with Napoleon on his Eastern expedition in 1798, and was made governor of Lower Egypt. He also contributed several mathematical papers to the Egyptian Institute which Napoleon founded at Cairo, with a view of weakening English influence in the East. After the British victories and the capitulation of the French under General Menou in 1801, Fourier returned to France, and was made prefect of Grenoble, and it was while there that he made his experiments on the propagation of heat.