



The Parametric Lambda Calculus

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Dimensions: 9.1in. x 6.1in. x 0.7in. The A-calculus was invented by

Church in the 1930s with the purpose of supplying a logical

foundation for logic and mathematics 25. Its use by Kleene as a

coding for computable functions makes it the first

programming language, in an abstract sense, exactly as the

Thuring machine can be considered the first computer machine

57. The A-calculus has quite a simple syntax (with just three

formation rules for terms) and a simple operational semantics

(with just one operation, substitution), and so it is a very basic

setting for studying computation properties. The first contact

between A-calculus and real programming languages was in the

years 1956-1960, when McCarthy developed the LISP

programming language, inspired from A-calculus, which is the

first functional programming language, i.e., where functions

are first-class citizens 66. But the use of A-calculus as an abstract

paradigm for programming languages started later as the work

of three important scientists: Strachey, Landin and Böhm. This

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