1046-01-282   **Thomas Drucker*** (`druckert@uww.edu`), Dept. of Math. and Comp. Sciences, University of
Wisconsin–Whitewater, Whitewater, WI 53190. *Did Geometry Need Saving From
Bourbaki?* Preliminary report.

Siobhan Roberts' biography of H.S.M. Coxeter has in its subtitle the phrase 'The Man Who Saved Geometry'. The author suggests that Bourbaki was the threat from which geometry was most in need of saving. In particular, negative statements from Coxeter about Bourbaki are used to suggest that he played a heroic role in bringing down the Bourbaki monster. This talk makes two claims. First, Coxeter was taking aim at something of a travesty of Bourbaki, although it was not a travesty entirely without foundation. Secondly, the failure of Bourbaki, as Leo Corry suggests in his history of algebra and mathematical structures, can be attributed to internal difficulties with the Bourbakist program. Coxeter's accomplishments do not require being set against Bourbaki in order to be admired. (Received August 25, 2008)

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