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The First Fresnel Memoir

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In the historical development of the research on diffraction, it is commonly referred to that two theories had been proposed, one by Thomas Young and the other by Augustin Fresnel. It appears less pointed that the first 1816 Fresnel's *Mémoire* describes the diffraction as an edge effect, like in Young's Bakerian lecture, but also agrees with the pioneering works of XVIII Century French authors. A first consideration about the diffraction phenomenon is to consider it as an "edge effect" by an attractive or repulsive force at/near the edge. The Fresnel contribution is here revisited.

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