

Contents

Part I. Introduction to the Geometry of Surfaces and to Minimal Surfaces

Chapter 1. Differential Geometry of Surfaces in Three-Dimensional Euclidean Space	3
1.1 Surfaces in Euclidean Space	4
1.2 Gauss Map, Weingarten Map. First, Second and Third Fundamental Form. Mean Curvature and Gauss Curvature ..	9
1.3 Gauss's Representation Formula, Christoffel Symbols, Gauss–Codazzi Equations, Theorema Egregium, Minding's Formula for the Geodesic Curvature	24
1.4 Conformal Parameters, Gauss–Bonnet Theorem	33
1.5 Covariant Differentiation. The Beltrami Operator	39
1.6 Scholia	47
Chapter 2. Minimal Surfaces	53
2.1 First Variation of Area. Minimal Surfaces	54
2.2 Nonparametric Minimal Surfaces	58
2.3 Conformal Representation and Analyticity of Nonparametric Minimal Surfaces	62
2.4 Bernstein's Theorem	66
2.5 Two Characterizations of Minimal Surfaces	72
2.6 Parametric Surfaces in Conformal Parameters. Conformal Representation of Minimal Surfaces. General Definition of Minimal Surfaces	75
2.7 A Formula for the Mean Curvature	78
2.8 Absolute and Relative Minima of Area	82
2.9 Scholia	86

Chapter 3. Representation Formulas and Examples of Minimal Surfaces .	91
3.1 The Adjoint Surface. Minimal Surfaces as Isotropic Curves in \mathbb{C}^3 . Associate Minimal Surfaces	93
3.2 Behavior of Minimal Surfaces Near Branch Points	104
3.3 Representation Formulas for Minimal Surfaces	111
3.4 Björling's Problem. Straight Lines and Planar Lines of Curvature on Minimal Surfaces. Schwarzian Chains	124
3.5 Examples of Minimal Surfaces	141
3.5.1 Catenoid and Helicoid	141
3.5.2 Scherk's Second Surface: The General Minimal Surface of Helicoidal Type	146
3.5.3 The Enneper Surface	151
3.5.4 Bour Surfaces	155
3.5.5 Thomsen Surfaces	156
3.5.6 Scherk's First Surface	156
3.5.7 The Henneberg Surface	166
3.5.8 Catalan's Surface	171
3.5.9 Schwarz's Surface	182
3.6 Complete Minimal Surfaces	183
3.7 Omissions of the Gauss Map of Complete Minimal Surfaces .	190
3.8 Scholia	200
Color Plates	229

Part II. Plateau's Problem

Chapter 4. The Plateau Problem and the Partially Free Boundary Problem	239
4.1 Area Functional Versus Dirichlet Integral	246
4.2 Rigorous Formulation of Plateau's Problem and of the Minimization Process	251
4.3 Existence Proof, Part I: Solution of the Variational Problem .	255
4.4 The Courant–Lebesgue Lemma	260
4.5 Existence Proof, Part II: Conformality of Minimizers of the Dirichlet Integral	263
4.6 Variant of the Existence Proof. The Partially Free Boundary Problem	275
4.7 Boundary Behavior of Minimal Surfaces with Rectifiable Boundaries	282
4.8 Reflection Principles	289
4.9 Uniqueness and Nonuniqueness Questions	292
4.10 Another Solution of Plateau's Problem by Minimizing Area .	299
4.11 The Mapping Theorems of Riemann and Lichtenstein	305
4.12 Solution of Plateau's Problem for Nonrectifiable Boundaries .	314

4.13	Plateau's Problem for Cartan Functionals	320
4.14	Isoperimetric Inequalities	327
4.15	Scholia	335
Chapter 5. Stable Minimal- and H -Surfaces		365
5.1	H -Surfaces and Their Normals	367
5.2	Bonnet's Mapping and Bonnet's Surface	371
5.3	The Second Variation of F for H -Surfaces and Their Stability	376
5.4	On μ -Stable Immersions of Constant Mean Curvature	382
5.5	Curvature Estimates for Stable and Immersed cmc-Surfaces	389
5.6	Nitsche's Uniqueness Theorem and Field-Immersions	395
5.7	Some Finiteness Results for Plateau's Problem	407
5.8	Scholia	420
Chapter 6. Unstable Minimal Surfaces		425
6.1	Courant's Function Θ	426
6.2	Courant's Mountain Pass Lemma	438
6.3	Unstable Minimal Surfaces in a Polygon	442
6.4	The Douglas Functional. Convergence Theorems for Harmonic Mappings	450
6.5	When Is the Limes Superior of a Sequence of Paths Again a Path?	461
6.6	Unstable Minimal Surfaces in Rectifiable Boundaries	463
6.7	Scholia	472
6.7.1	Historical Remarks and References to the Literature	472
6.7.2	The Theorem of the Wall for Minimal Surfaces in Textbooks	473
6.7.3	Sources for This Chapter	474
6.7.4	Multiply Connected Unstable Minimal Surfaces	474
6.7.5	Quasi-Minimal Surfaces	474
Chapter 7. Graphs with Prescribed Mean Curvature		493
7.1	H -Surfaces with a One-to-One Projection onto a Plane, and the Nonparametric Dirichlet Problem	494
7.2	Unique Solvability of Plateau's Problem for Contours with a Nonconvex Projection onto a Plane	508
7.3	Miscellaneous Estimates for Nonparametric H -Surfaces	516
7.4	Scholia	529
Chapter 8. Introduction to the Douglas Problem		531
8.1	The Douglas Problem. Examples and Main Result	532
8.2	Conformality of Minimizers of D in $\mathcal{C}(\Gamma)$	538

8.3	Cohesive Sequences of Mappings	552
8.4	Solution of the Douglas Problem	561
8.5	Useful Modifications of Surfaces	563
8.6	Douglas Condition and Douglas Problem.....	568
8.7	Further Discussion of the Douglas Condition	578
8.8	Examples	581
8.9	Scholia	584
Problems		587
Appendix 1. On Relative Minimizers of Area and Energy		589
Appendix 2. Minimal Surfaces in Heisenberg Groups		597
Bibliography		599
Index		681