

# Table of Contents

<b>About the Author</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>VII</b>
<b>Chapter I. Points and lines in the plane</b>	<b>1</b>
I.1. In which setting and in which plane are we working? And right away an utterly simple problem of Sylvester about the collinearity of points	1
I.2. Another naive problem of Sylvester, this time on the geometric probabilities of four points . . . . .	6
I.3. The essence of affine geometry and the fundamental theorem . . . . .	12
I.4. Three configurations of the affine plane and what has happened to them: Pappus, Desargues and Perles . . . . .	17
I.5. The irresistible necessity of projective geometry and the construction of the projective plane . . . . .	23
I.6. Intermezzo: the projective line and the cross ratio . . . . .	28
I.7. Return to the projective plane: continuation and conclusion . . . . .	31
I.8. The complex case and, better still, Sylvester in the complex case: Serre's conjecture . . . . .	40
I.9. Three configurations of space (of three dimensions): Reye, Möbius and Schläfli . . . . .	43
I.10. Arrangements of hyperplanes . . . . .	47
I. XYZ . . . . .	48
Bibliography . . . . .	57
<b>Chapter II. Circles and spheres</b>	<b>61</b>
II.1. Introduction and Borsuk's conjecture . . . . .	61
II.2. A choice of circle configurations and a critical view of them . . . . .	66
II.3. A solitary inversion and what can be done with it . . . . .	78
II.4. How do we compose inversions? First solution: the conformal group on the disk and the geometry of the hyperbolic plane . . . . .	82
II.5. Second solution: the conformal group of the sphere, first seen algebraically, then geometrically, with inversions in dimension 3 (and three-dimensional hyperbolic geometry). Historical appearance of the first fractals . . . . .	87
II.6. Inversion in space: the sextuple and its generalization thanks to the sphere of dimension 3 . . . . .	91
II.7. Higher up the ladder: the global geometry of circles and spheres . . . . .	96
II.8. Hexagonal packings of circles and conformal representation . . . . .	103

II.9. Circles of Apollonius . . . . .	113
II. XYZ . . . . .	116
Bibliography . . . . .	137
<b>Chapter III. The sphere by itself: can we distribute points on it evenly?</b>	<b>141</b>
III.1. The metric of the sphere and spherical trigonometry . . . . .	141
III.2. The Möbius group: applications . . . . .	147
III.3. Mission impossible: to uniformly distribute points on the sphere $S^2$ : ozone, electrons, enemy dictators, golf balls, virology, physics of condensed matter . . . . .	149
III.4. The kissing number of $S^2$ , alias the hard problem of the thirteenth sphere	170
III.5. Four open problems for the sphere $S^3$ . . . . .	172
III.6. A problem of Banach–Ruziewicz: the uniqueness of canonical measure	174
III.7. A conceptual approach for the kissing number in arbitrary dimension	175
III. XYZ . . . . .	177
Bibliography . . . . .	178
<b>Chapter IV. Conics and quadrics</b>	<b>181</b>
IV.1. Motivations, a definition parachuted from the ladder, and why . . .	181
IV.2. Before Descartes: the real Euclidean conics. Definition and some classical properties . . . . .	183
IV.3. The coming of Descartes and the birth of algebraic geometry . . . .	198
IV.4. Real projective theory of conics; duality . . . . .	200
IV.5. Klein’s philosophy comes quite naturally . . . . .	205
IV.6. Playing with two conics, necessitating once again complexification .	208
IV.7. Complex projective conics and the space of all conics . . . . .	212
IV.8. The most beautiful theorem on conics: the Poncelet polygons . . . .	216
IV.9. The most difficult theorem on the conics: the 3264 conics of Chasles	226
IV.10. The quadrics . . . . .	232
IV. XYZ . . . . .	242
Bibliography . . . . .	245
<b>Chapter V. Plane curves</b>	<b>249</b>
V.1. Plain curves and the person in the street: the Jordan curve theorem, the <i>turning tangent theorem</i> and the isoperimetric inequality . . . . .	249
V.2. What is a curve? Geometric curves and kinematic curves . . . . .	254
V.3. The classification of geometric curves and the degree of mappings of the circle onto itself . . . . .	257
V.4. The Jordan theorem . . . . .	259
V.5. The turning tangent theorem and global convexity . . . . .	260
V.6. Euclidean invariants: length (theorem of the peripheral boulevard) and curvature (scalar and algebraic): Winding number . . . . .	263

V.7.	The algebraic curvature is a characteristic invariant: manufacture of rulers, control by the curvature . . . . .	269
V.8.	The four vertex theorem and its converse; an application to physics . . . . .	271
V.9.	Generalizations of the four vertex theorem: Arnold I . . . . .	278
V.10.	Toward a classification of closed curves: Whitney and Arnold II . . . . .	281
V.11.	Isoperimetric inequality: Steiner's attempts . . . . .	295
V.12.	The isoperimetric inequality: proofs on all rungs . . . . .	298
V.13.	Plane algebraic curves: generalities . . . . .	305
V.14.	The cubics, their addition law and abstract elliptic curves . . . . .	308
V.15.	Real and Euclidean algebraic curves . . . . .	320
V.16.	Finite order geometry . . . . .	328
V. XYZ	. . . . .	331
Bibliography	. . . . .	336

## **Chapter VI. Smooth surfaces** **341**

VI.1.	Which objects are involved and why? Classification of compact surfaces . . . . .	341
VI.2.	The intrinsic metric and the problem of the shortest path . . . . .	345
VI.3.	The geodesics, the cut locus and the recalcitrant ellipsoids . . . . .	347
VI.4.	An indispensable abstract concept: Riemannian surfaces . . . . .	357
VI.5.	Problems of isometries: abstract surfaces versus surfaces of $\mathbb{E}^3$ . . . . .	361
VI.6.	Local shape of surfaces: the second fundamental form, total curvature and mean curvature, their geometric interpretation, the <i>theorema egregium</i> , the manufacture of precise balls . . . . .	364
VI.7.	What is known about the total curvature (of Gauss) . . . . .	373
VI.8.	What we know how to do with the mean curvature, all about soap bubbles and lead balls . . . . .	380
VI.9.	What we don't entirely know how to do for surfaces . . . . .	386
VI.10.	Surfaces and genericity . . . . .	391
VI.11.	The isoperimetric inequality for surfaces . . . . .	397
VI. XYZ	. . . . .	399
Bibliography	. . . . .	403

## **Chapter VII. Convexity and convex sets** **409**

VII.1.	History and introduction . . . . .	409
VII.2.	Convex functions, examples and first applications . . . . .	412
VII.3.	Convex functions of several variables, an important example . . . . .	415
VII.4.	Examples of convex sets . . . . .	417
VII.5.	Three essential operations on convex sets . . . . .	420
VII.6.	Volume and area of (compacts) convex sets, classical volumes: Can the volume be calculated in polynomial time? . . . . .	428
VII.7.	Volume, area, diameter and symmetrizations: first proof of the isoperimetric inequality and other applications . . . . .	437

VII.8.	Volume and Minkowski addition: the Brunn-Minkowski theorem and a second proof of the isoperimetric inequality . . . . .	439
VII.9.	Volume and polarity . . . . .	444
VII.10.	The appearance of convex sets, their degree of badness . . . . .	446
VII.11.	Volumes of slices of convex sets . . . . .	459
VII.12.	Sections of low dimension: the concentration phenomenon and the Dvoretzky theorem on the existence of almost spherical sections . . . . .	470
VII.13.	Miscellany . . . . .	477
VII.14.	Intermezzo: can we dispose of the isoperimetric inequality? . . . .	493
	Bibliography . . . . .	499
<b>Chapter VIII. Polygons, polyhedra, polytopes</b>		<b>505</b>
VIII.1.	Introduction . . . . .	505
VIII.2.	Basic notions . . . . .	506
VIII.3.	Polygons . . . . .	508
VIII.4.	Polyhedra: combinatorics . . . . .	513
VIII.5.	Regular Euclidean polyhedra . . . . .	518
VIII.6.	Euclidean polyhedra: Cauchy rigidity and Alexandrov existence .	524
VIII.7.	Isoperimetry for Euclidean polyhedra . . . . .	530
VIII.8.	Inscribability properties of Euclidean polyhedra; how to encage a sphere (an egg) and the connection with packings of circles . . .	532
VIII.9.	Polyhedra: rationality . . . . .	537
VIII.10.	Polytopes ( $d \geq 4$ ): combinatorics I . . . . .	539
VIII.11.	Regular polytopes ( $d \geq 4$ ) . . . . .	544
VIII.12.	Polytopes ( $d \geq 4$ ): rationality, combinatorics II . . . . .	550
VIII.13.	Brief allusions to subjects not really touched on . . . . .	555
	Bibliography . . . . .	558
<b>Chapter IX. Lattices, packings and tilings in the plane</b>		<b>563</b>
IX.1.	Lattices, a line in the standard lattice $\mathbb{Z}^2$ and the theory of continued fractions, an immensity of applications . . . . .	563
IX.2.	Three ways of counting the points $\mathbb{Z}^2$ in various domains: pick and Ehrhart formulas, circle problem . . . . .	567
IX.3.	Points of $\mathbb{Z}^2$ and of other lattices in certain convex sets: Minkowski's theorem and geometric number theory . . . . .	573
IX.4.	Lattices in the Euclidean plane: classification, density, Fourier analysis on lattices, spectra and duality . . . . .	576
IX.5.	Packing circles (disks) of the same radius, finite or infinite in number, in the plane (notion of density). Other criteria . . . . .	586
IX.6.	Packing of squares, (flat) storage boxes, the grid (or beehive) problem	593
IX.7.	Tiling the plane with a group (crystallography). Valences, earthquakes	596
IX.8.	Tilings in higher dimensions . . . . .	603

IX.9. Algorithmics and plane tilings: aperiodic tilings and decidability, classification of Penrose tilings . . . . .	607
IX.10. Hyperbolic tilings and Riemann surfaces . . . . .	617
Bibliography . . . . .	620
<b>Chapter X. Lattices and packings in higher dimensions</b>	<b>623</b>
X.1. Lattices and packings associated with dimension 3 . . . . .	623
X.2. Optimal packing of balls in dimension 3, Kepler's conjecture at last resolved . . . . .	629
X.3. A bit of risky epistemology: the four color problem and the Kepler conjecture . . . . .	639
X.4. Lattices in arbitrary dimension: examples . . . . .	641
X.5. Lattices in arbitrary dimension: density, laminations . . . . .	648
X.6. Packings in arbitrary dimension: various options for optimality . . . . .	654
X.7. Error correcting codes . . . . .	659
X.8. Duality, theta functions, spectra and isospectrality in lattices . . . . .	667
Bibliography . . . . .	673
<b>Chapter XI. Geometry and dynamics I: billiards</b>	<b>675</b>
XI.1. Introduction and motivation: description of the motion of two particles of equal mass on the interior of an interval . . . . .	675
XI.2. Playing billiards in a square . . . . .	679
XI.3. Particles with different masses: rational and irrational polygons . . . . .	689
XI.4. Results in the case of rational polygons: first rung . . . . .	692
XI.5. Results in the rational case: several rungs higher on the ladder . . . . .	696
XI.6. Results in the case of irrational polygons . . . . .	705
XI.7. Return to the case of two masses: summary . . . . .	710
XI.8. Concave billiards, hyperbolic billiards . . . . .	710
XI.9. Circles and ellipses . . . . .	713
XI.10. General convex billiards . . . . .	717
XI.11. Billiards in higher dimensions . . . . .	728
XI.XYZ Concepts and language of dynamical systems . . . . .	730
Bibliography . . . . .	735
<b>Chapter XII. Geometry and dynamics II: geodesic flow on a surface</b>	<b>739</b>
XII.1. Introduction . . . . .	739
XII.2. Geodesic flow on a surface: problems . . . . .	741
XII.3. Some examples for sensing the difficulty of the problem . . . . .	743
XII.4. Existence of a periodic trajectory . . . . .	751
XII.5. Existence of more than one, of many periodic trajectories; and can we count them? . . . . .	757
XII.6. What behavior can be expected for other trajectories? Ergodicity, entropies . . . . .	772

XII.7. Do the mechanics determine the metric? . . . . . 779

XII.8. Recapitulation and open questions . . . . . 781

XII.9. Higher dimensions . . . . . 781

Bibliography . . . . . 782

**Selected Abbreviations for Journal Titles 785**

**Name Index 789**

**Subject Index 795**

**Symbol Index 827**