

Contents

A. The "classical" Plateau problem for disc-type minimal surfaces.

I. Existence of a solution

1. The parametric problem	5
2. A variational principle	7
3. The direct methods in the calculus of variations	12
4. The Courant–Lebesgue Lemma and its consequences	16
5. Regularity	22
Appendix	29

II. Unstable minimal surfaces

1. Ljusternik–Schnirelman theory on convex sets in Banach spaces	33
2. The mountain-pass lemma for minimal surfaces	41
3. Morse theory on convex sets	52
4. Morse inequalities for minimal surfaces	60
5. Regularity	66
6. Historical remarks	78

B. Surfaces of prescribed constant mean curvature.

III. The existence of surfaces of prescribed constant mean curvature spanning a Jordan curve in \mathbb{R}^3

1. The variational problem	91
2. The volume functional	94
3. "Small" solutions	100
4. Heinz' non-existence result	104
5. Regularity	105

IV. Unstable $H -$ surfaces

1. $H -$ extensions	111
2. Ljusternik–Schnirelman and Morse theory for "small" $H -$ surfaces	116
3. Large solutions to the Dirichlet Problem	121
4. Large solutions to the Plateau problem: "Rellich's conjecture"	127

References

141