Contents

Chapter I. The Direct Methods in the Calculus of Variations 1

1. Lower Semi-continuity 2

Degenerate Elliptic Equations, 4 — Minimal Partitioning Hypersurfaces, 6 — Minimal Hypersurfaces in Riemannian Manifolds, 7 — A General Lower Semi-continuity Result, 8

2. Constraints 13

Semilinear Elliptic Boundary Value Problems, 14 — Perron's Method in a Variational Guise, 16 — The Classical Plateau Problem, 19

3. Compensated Compactness 25

Applications in Elasticity, 29 — Convergence Results for Nonlinear Elliptic Equations, 32 — Hardy Space Methods, 35

4. The Concentration-Compactness Principle 36

Existence of Extremal Functions for Sobolev Embeddings, 42

5. Ekeland's Variational Principle 51

Existence of Minimizers for Quasi-convex Functionals, 54

6. Duality 58

Hamiltonian Systems, 60 — Periodic Solutions of Nonlinear Wave Equations, 65

7. Minimization Problems Depending on Parameters 69

Harmonic Maps with Singularities, 71

Chapter II. Minimax Methods 74

1. The Finite Dimensional Case 74

2. The Palais-Smale Condition 77

3. A General Deformation Lemma 81

Pseudo-gradient Flows on Banach Spaces, 81 — Pseudo-gradient Flows on Manifolds, 85

4. The Minimax Principle 87

Closed Geodesics on Spheres, 89

5. Index Theory 94

Krasnoselskii Genus, 94 — Minimax Principles for Even Functionals, 96 — Applications to Semilinear Elliptic Problems, 98 — General Index Theories, 99 — Ljusternik-Schnirelman Category, 100 — A Geometrical S^1-Index, 101 — Multiple Periodic Orbits of Hamiltonian Systems, 103

6. The Mountain Pass Lemma and its Variants 108

Applications to Semilinear Elliptic Boundary Value Problems, 110 — The Symmetric Mountain Pass Lemma, 112 — Application to Semilinear Equations with Symmetry, 116

7. Perturbation Theory 118

Applications to Semilinear Elliptic Equations, 120

8. Linking 125

Applications to Semilinear Elliptic Equations, 128 — Applications to Hamiltonian Systems, 130

9. Parameter Dependence 137

10. Critical Points of Mountain Pass Type 143

Multiple Solutions of Coercive Elliptic Problems, 147

11. Non-differentiable Functionals 150

12. Ljusternik-Schnirelman Theory on Convex Sets 162

Applications to Semilinear Elliptic Boundary Value Problems, 166

Chapter III. Limit Cases of the Palais-Smale Condition 169

1. Pohožaev's Non-existence Result 170

2. The Brezis-Nirenberg Result 173

Constrained Minimization, 174 — The Unconstrained Case: Local Compactness, 175 — Multiple Solutions, 180

3. The Effect of Topology 183

A Global Compactness Result, 184 — Positive Solutions on Annular-Shaped Regions, 190

4. The Yamabe Problem 194

The Variational Approach, 195 — The Locally Conformally Flat Case, 197 — The Yamabe Flow, 198 — The Proof of Theorem 4.9 (following Ye [1]), 200 — Convergence of the Yamabe Flow in the General Case, 204 — The Compact Case $u_\infty > 0$, 211 — Bubbling: The Case $u_\infty \equiv 0$, 216

5. The Dirichlet Problem for the Equation of Constant Mean Curvature 220

Small Solutions, 221 — The Volume Functional, 223 — Wente's Uniqueness Result, 225 — Local Compactness, 226 — Large Solutions, 229

6. Harmonic Maps of Riemannian Surfaces 231

The Euler-Lagrange Equations for Harmonic Maps, 232 — Bochner identity, 234 — The Homotopy Problem and its Functional Analytic Setting, 234 — Existence and Non-existence Results, 237 — The Heat Flow for Harmonic Maps, 238 — The Global Existence Result, 239 — The Proof of Theorem 6.6, 242 — Finite-Time Blow-Up, 253 — Reverse Bubbling and Nonuniqueness, 257

Appendix A 263

Sobolev Spaces, 263 — Hölder Spaces, 264 — Imbedding Theorems, 264 — Density Theorem, 265 — Trace and Extension Theorems, 265 — Poincaré Inequality, 266

Appendix B 268

Schauder Estimates, 268 — L^p-Theory, 268 — Weak Solutions, 269 — A Regularity Result, 269 — Maximum Principle, 271 — Weak Maximum Principle, 272 — Application, 273

Appendix C 274

Fréchet Differentiability, 274 — Natural Growth Conditions, 276

References 277

Index 301