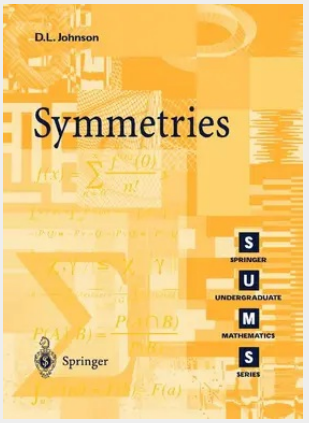
Johnson

Symmetries

". many eminent scholars, endowed with great geometric talent, make a point of never disclosing the simple and direct ideas that guided them, subordinating their elegant results to abstract general theories which often have no application outside the particular case in question. Geometry was becoming a study of algebraic, differential or partial differential equations, thus losing all the charm that comes from its being an art." H. Lebesgue, Ler;ons sur les Constructions Geometriques, Gauthier Villars, Paris, 1949. This book is based on lecture courses given to final-year students at the Uni versity of Nottingham and to M.Sc. students at the University of the West Indies in an attempt to reverse the process of expurgation of the geometry component from the mathematics curricula of universities. This erosion is in sharp contrast to the situation in research mathematics, where the ideas and methods of geometry enjoy ever-increasing influence and importance. In the other direction, more modern ideas have made a forceful and beneficial impact on the geometry of the ancients in many areas. Thus trigonometry has vastly clarified our concept of angle, calculus has revolutionised the study of plane curves, and group theory has become the language of symmetry.

This is a popular topic so there are many textbooks in this area. However, this book is written in a style that is down-to-earth and fun to read so it will also appeal to those such as mechanical engineers, architects, physicists etc. who need to understand three-dimensional geometry, symmetry and trigonometry, but who are put off by the abstract treatment usual in other textbooks.



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