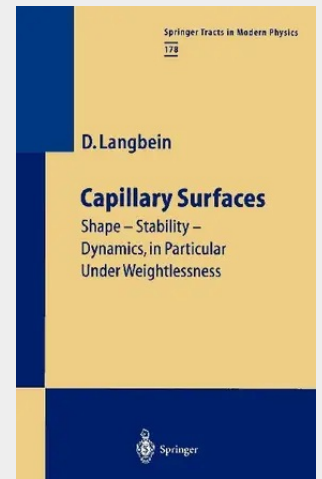


Capillary Surfaces

Even today flying into space is an undertaking at the borderline of what is currently feasible. A very complex assembly of sophisticated machinery is needed in order to reach orbit and return from there to Earth safely. A11 astronaut knows that only if the rocket engines, inertial navigation platforms, hydraulic systems; generators of electrical power, attitude control systems, life support systems, computers, data transmission equipment, heat shields and many other components work flawlessly can he or she accomplish a mission in good health. In other words there is risk, but the odds are better than even. How else could a man or a woman see the incredible beauty of our planet Earth from a distance? Take the combination of its colours, white and blue. It is so breathtakingly stunning, that most likely not even a poet could find words to adequately describe it. There is the curved line of the horizon with an incredibly black sky above it. At first sight it is evident how endless and empty the universe actually is. The Earth's horizon is fringed with a royal blue seam, our atmosphere. Its beauty and fragility are thrilling, and seen from orbit it is instantly apparent that there is not much air around us.

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