

Foreword

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The course at Berkeley was greatly inspired in content and style by Victor Guillemin, whose masterly teaching of beautiful courses on topics related to symplectic geometry at MIT, I was lucky enough to experience as a graduate student. I am very thankful to him!

That course also borrowed from the 1997 Park City summer courses on symplectic geometry and topology, and from many talks and discussions of the symplectic geometry group at MIT. Among the regular participants in the MIT informal symplectic seminar 93-96, I would like to acknowledge the contributions of Allen Knutson, Chris Woodward, David Metzler, Eckhard Meinrenken, Elisa Prato, Eugene Lerman, Jonathan Weitsman, Lisa Jeffrey, Reyer Sjamaar, Shaun Martin, Stephanie Singer, Sue Tolman and, last but not least, Yael Karshon.

Thanks to everyone sitting in Math 242 in the Fall of 1997 for all the comments they made, and especially to those who wrote notes on the basis of which I was better able to reconstruct what went on: Alexandru Scorpan, Ben Davis, David Martinez, Don Barkauskas, Ezra Miller, Henrique Bursztyn, John-Peter Lund, Laura De Marco, Olga Radko, Peter Příbík, Pieter Collins, Sarah Packman, Stephen Bigelow, Susan Harrington, Tolga Etgü and Yi Ma.

I am indebted to Chris Tuffley, Megumi Harada and Saul Schleimer who read the first draft of these notes and spotted many mistakes, and to Fernando Louro, Grisha Mikhalkin and, particularly, João Baptista who suggested several improvements and careful corrections. Of course I am fully responsible for the remaining errors and imprecisions.

The interest of Alan Weinstein, Allen Knutson, Chris Woodward, Eugene Lerman, Jiang-Hua Lu, Kai Cieliebak, Rahul Pandharipande, Viktor Ginzburg and Yael Karshon was crucial at the last stages of the preparation of this manuscript. I am grateful to them, and to Michèle Audin for her inspiring texts and lectures.

Finally, many thanks to Faye Yeager and Debbie Craig who typed pages of messy notes into neat \LaTeX , to João Palhoto Matos for his technical support, and to Catriona Byrne, Ina Lindemann, Ingrid März and the rest of the Springer-Verlag mathematics editorial team for their expert advice.

Ana Cannas da Silva

*Berkeley, November 1998
and Lisbon, September 2000*

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