

Accepted Manuscript

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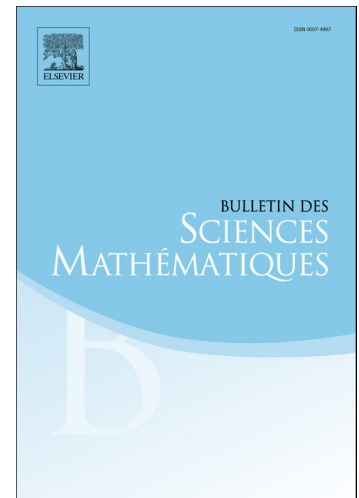
PII: S0007-4497(18)30008-3
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bulsci.2018.01.001>
Reference: BULSCI 2739

To appear in: *Bulletin des Sciences Mathématiques*

Received date: 30 January 2016

Please cite this article in press as: R. Albuquerque, A fundamental differential system of 3-dimensional Riemannian geometry, *Bull. Sci. math.* (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bulsci.2018.01.001>

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A fundamental differential system of 3-dimensional Riemannian geometry

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January 10, 2018

Abstract

We briefly recall a fundamental exterior differential system of Riemannian geometry and apply it to the case of three dimensions. Here we find new global tensors and intrinsic invariants of oriented Riemannian 3-manifolds. In particular, we develop the study of ∇Ric . The exterior differential system leads to a remarkable Weingarten type equation for immersed surfaces in hyperbolic 3-space. A new independent proof for low dimensions of the structural equations gives new insight on the intrinsic exterior differential system.

Key Words: tangent sphere bundle, Riemannian metric, structure group, Euler-Lagrange system, 3-manifold.

MSC 2010: Primary: 58A32; Secondary: 58A15, 53C20, 53C28

1 A fundamental differential system

This article presents the fundamental exterior differential system of Riemannian geometry introduced in [7], now developed on the 3-dimensional case.

The intrinsic structure found in [7] consists, in general, on a natural set of differential forms $\alpha_0, \dots, \alpha_n$ existing on the total space \mathcal{S} of the unit tangent sphere bundle $SM \rightarrow M$ of any given oriented Riemannian $n + 1$ -manifold M . It is well-known that \mathcal{S} is a contact Riemannian manifold with the Sasaki metric.

The theory applied to Riemannian surfaces is classical, as we shall recall next, considering the case $n = 1$. Indeed, the famous structural equations due to Cartan give a global coframing on \mathcal{S} , the total space of the tangent circle bundle over a surface M , with contact 1-form θ and two 1-forms α_0 and α_1 . Denoting by c the Gauss curvature of M , we find the following equations e.g. in [22, pp. 168–169]:

$$\begin{aligned} d\theta &= \alpha_1 \wedge \alpha_0, \\ d\alpha_0 &= \theta \wedge \alpha_1 & d\alpha_1 &= c \alpha_0 \wedge \theta. \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

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