

Preface

This book grew out of sets of notes that were provided for students attending the 45-hours elective graduate course *Capita Selecta in Geometry* in 2003 and in 2005 at Ghent University, Belgium. In 2003, the main object of the course was to discuss the Moufang Property for generalized quadrangles, and local versions of it such as being translation with respect to a point or a line. In 2005, the main object was the theory of finite translation generalized quadrangles. In both years, the lecturers were the authors of this book. The audience consisted of undergraduate students, Ph.D. students and post-docs of the research group *Incidence Geometry* at Ghent University. We thank them for their interest and their questions that forced us, once in a while, to review some mathematical details and arguments.

The research needed to write a monograph like the present one is financed by a number of organizations. First of all, we are indebted to the Research Council of Ghent University for awarding a GOA grant *Incidence Geometry*. We also would like to thank the Fund for Scientific Research — Flanders (Belgium) FWO for financial support (research money, Ph.D.-grants, post-doc positions, travel support) and the Institute for Science and Technology IWT for providing Ph.D.-grants. We thank our secretary Sonia Surmont for typing large parts of the manuscript. Finally, a warm “thank you” to all our colleagues and friends in the research group *Incidence Geometry* for the wonderful atmosphere.

J. A. Thas, K. Thas and H. Van Maldeghem
Ghent, March 2006