

Interfaces: modeling, analysis, numerics

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Preface

These lecture notes are dedicated to the mathematical modeling, analysis and computation of interfaces and free boundary problems appearing in geometry and in various applications, ranging from crystal growth, tumor growth, biological membranes to porous media, two-phase flows, fluid-structure interactions, and shape optimization. Classical methods from partial differential equations as well as from differential geometry, together with modern methods like the theory of maximal regularity or measure theoretic approaches, now allow for a systematic mathematical theory for interfaces and free boundary problems in many settings. Also, numerical methods based on parametric approaches, level sets or phase fields are now mature enough to deal with interesting phenomena. However, in many applications, quite complex couplings between equations on the interface and equations in the surrounding bulk phases appear, which are still not well understood so far.

We first give an introduction to classical methods from differential geometry and systematically derive the governing equations from physical principles. Then we will analyze parametric approaches to interface evolution problems and derive numerical methods which will be thoroughly analyzed. In addition, implicit descriptions of interfaces such as phase field and level set methods will be analyzed. Finally, we will discuss numerical methods for complex interface evolutions and will focus on two phase flow problems as an important example of such evolutions.

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Contents

1	Introduction	9
1.1	Grain boundary motion	10
1.2	Melting and solidification	10
1.3	Flow problems with interfaces	12
1.4	Curvature energies and biomembranes	13
2	Some notions from differential geometry	15
2.1	What is a surface?	15
2.2	Integration and differentiation on a surface	17
2.3	Weingarten map	20
2.4	Signed distance function and canonical extension	24
2.5	Integration by parts on manifolds	26
2.6	Evolving surfaces	31
2.7	Normal velocity and normal time derivative	33
2.8	Velocity fields and material time derivatives	34
2.9	Jacobi's formula for the derivative of the determinant	35
2.10	A transport theorem	36
2.11	Reynolds transport theorem	37
3	Modeling	39
3.1	Gradient flows	40
3.1.1	Gradient flows in \mathbb{R}^n	40
3.1.2	Minimizing movements for gradient flows	40
3.2	First variation of area	41
3.3	Mean curvature flow as a gradient flow	42
3.4	Anisotropic energies and their gradient flows	43
3.5	The gradient flow of the Willmore functional	47
3.6	The Stefan problem	48
3.6.1	Governing equations in the bulk	50
3.6.2	Another transport theorem	51
3.6.3	Governing equations on the interface	51
3.7	Mathematical modeling of two-phase flows	55
3.7.1	Conservation of mass for individual species	56
3.7.2	Conservation of momentum	56
3.7.3	Jump condition at the interface	57

3.7.4	Surface tension	57
3.7.5	Conditions on the free surface Γ	64
3.7.6	The overall two-phase flow system	65
3.7.7	Formal energy estimate	66
3.7.8	Contact angle	68
3.8	Phase field models	72
3.8.1	The Ginzburg–Landau energy	73
3.8.2	Phase field models as gradient flows	73
4	Parametric approaches for geometric evolution equations and interfaces	79
4.1	Curve shortening flow	79
4.1.1	Local and global existence	79
4.1.2	Spatial discretization and error analysis	83
4.1.3	Fully discrete scheme and stability	85
4.2	Fully discrete anisotropic curve shortening flow	87
4.3	Mean curvature flow	90
4.3.1	Some properties of solutions	90
4.3.2	Existence of solutions in the graph case	93
4.3.3	Existence in the general parametric case	95
4.3.4	Discretization	97
4.4	Elastic flow for curves	100
4.4.1	Long time existence	100
4.4.2	Stability for the semi-discrete problem	104
4.5	A general strategy for interface problems	107
5	Implicit approaches for interfaces	111
5.1	A way to handle topological changes: the level set method	111
5.2	Viscosity solutions for mean curvature flow	113
5.3	An existence theorem for viscosity solutions	114
5.4	Level set approach for numerically solving curvature flow	115
5.5	Relating phase field and sharp interface energies	118
5.6	Solving interface evolution problems in a BV-setting	120
5.7	Phase field models for two-phase flow	123
5.8	Existence theory for the Cahn–Hilliard equation	127
5.9	Sharp interface limit of the Cahn–Hilliard equation	133
5.9.1	The governing equations	133
5.9.2	Outer expansions	134
5.9.3	Inner expansions	135
5.10	How to discretize the Cahn–Hilliard equation?	138
5.10.1	The time discrete setting	139
5.10.2	The fully discrete setting	139
5.10.3	Existence of solutions to the fully discrete system	140
5.10.4	An energy inequality in the fully discrete setting	142

6	Numerical methods for complex interface evolutions	145
6.1	Introduction and general remarks about the different methods	145
6.2	Interface capturing	147
6.2.1	Level set methods	147
6.2.2	Phase field methods	148
6.3	Interface tracking	149
6.3.1	Mesh moving approaches (fitted approaches)	149
6.3.2	Front tracking approaches (unfitted approaches)	150
6.4	Two phase flow	154
6.4.1	Mesh moving	154
6.4.2	Level set method for two phase flow	166
7	Exercises	175
	Bibliography	178