

Appendix D

Normal Graphs

In this chapter to set up the scalar problem which is equivalent to (MCF) we use a similar framework to that seen in [12]. We shall see that a quasi-linear parabolic partial differential equation can be obtained which is equivalent up to tangential diffeomorphisms.

The scalar problem shall be derived in a general setting, with the base surface being any smooth surface.

Suppose that we have a family $(M_t)_{t \in [0, T]}$ of n -dimensional sub-manifolds of \mathbb{R}^{n+1} evolving by (MCF), that is there exists a family of immersions $\mathbf{F} : M_r^n \subset \mathbb{R}^{n+1} \times [0, T] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{n+1}$ satisfying

$$\frac{d\mathbf{F}}{dt}(\mathbf{p}, t) = \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{F}(\mathbf{p}, t)), \quad (\mathbf{p}, t) \in M_r^n \times [0, T]$$

such that $M_t = \mathbf{F}(\cdot, t)(M_r^n)$.

We are going to investigate a special class of surfaces, the so called normal graphs (over M_r^n). These are immersions of the form

$$\mathbf{F}(\mathbf{q}, t) = \mathbf{q} + \rho(\mathbf{q}, t)\boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{q}), \quad \mathbf{q} \in M_r^n, t \in [0, T]$$

for some scalar function ρ , which we call the graph height (above M_r^n). Our aim is to derive the parabolic PDE describing the evolution of the graph height of the evolving surfaces.

D.1 Preliminaries

Consider a foliation of \mathbb{R}^{n+1} , given by the smooth level sets of a function $\sigma : \mathbb{R}^{n+1} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$, defining the leaves

$$M_r^n = \{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^{n+1} : \sigma(\mathbf{x}) = r\}, \quad r > 0$$

We may express the outward unit normal at $\mathbf{q} \in M_r^n$ by

$$\boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{q}) = \frac{\overline{\nabla}\sigma(\mathbf{q})}{|\overline{\nabla}\sigma(\mathbf{q})|}$$

Upon these level sets, we consider the immersion $\mathbf{X} : M_r^n \times (-\delta, \delta) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{n+1}$, $\delta > 0$ defined by

$$\mathbf{X}(\mathbf{q}, \varepsilon) = \mathbf{q} + \varepsilon \boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{q})$$

If we choose δ sufficiently small, then \mathbf{X} is a smooth diffeomorphism onto its image \mathcal{R}_r . It is convenient to consider $\mathbf{X}^{-1} = (\mathbf{S}, \Lambda)$, where $\mathbf{S} : \mathcal{R}_r \rightarrow M_r^n$ and $\Lambda : \mathcal{R}_r \rightarrow (-\delta, \delta)$ where $\mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x})$ is the unique closest point in M_r^n to $\mathbf{x} \in \mathcal{R}_r$ and $\Lambda(\mathbf{x})$ is the signed distance from M_r^n to $\mathbf{x} \in \mathcal{R}_r$. Define the vector $\boldsymbol{\omega}$ by

$$\boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{x}) = \overline{\nabla} \Lambda(\mathbf{x}), \quad \mathbf{x} \in \mathcal{R}_r$$

which is a unit vector since $|\overline{\nabla} \Lambda| = 1$. Furthermore, since $M_r^n = \Lambda^{-1}(\cdot)\{0\}$, this unit vector, ambiently defined on all of \mathcal{R}_r , gives the normal vector to M_r^n at $\mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x})$.

Now, we choose a sufficiently smooth function (representing height above the foliation) $\rho : M_r^n \times [0, T] \rightarrow (-\delta, \delta)$. and let $\Phi_\rho : \mathcal{R}_r \times [0, T] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be the function defined by

$$\Phi_\rho(\mathbf{x}, t) = \Lambda(\mathbf{x}) - \rho(\mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x}), t)$$

Thus we have for each $t \in [0, T)$ the smooth level sets

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{M}_t &= \Phi_\rho^{-1}(\cdot, t)\{0\} \\ &= \{\mathbf{x} \in \mathbb{R}^{n+1} : \Phi_\rho(\mathbf{x}, t) = 0\} \end{aligned}$$

Now, consider the immersion $\tilde{\mathbf{F}} : M_r^n \times [0, T] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{n+1}$ defined by

$$\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t) = \mathbf{X}(\mathbf{q}, \rho(\mathbf{q}, t))$$

then we have $\tilde{M}_t = \tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\cdot, t)(M_r^n)$. We are now going to force \tilde{M}_t to be a family of surfaces satisfying the evolution equation

$$\left(\frac{d\tilde{\mathbf{F}}}{dt}(\mathbf{q}, t) \right)^\perp = \mathbf{H}(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)), \quad (\mathbf{q}, t) \in M_r^n \times [0, T)$$

The flow defined by this equation is equivalent to (MCF), up to tangential diffeomorphisms, in a way we will now make clear.

Let $\varphi : M_r^n \times [0, T] \rightarrow M_r^n$ be a diffeomorphism satisfying

$$\overline{\nabla}_{\mathbf{q}} \tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\varphi(\mathbf{p}, t), t) \left(\frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial t}(\mathbf{p}, t) \right) = - \left(\frac{\partial \tilde{\mathbf{F}}}{\partial t}(\varphi(\mathbf{p}, t), t) \right)^\top \quad (\text{D.1})$$

Now, let $\mathbf{F}(\mathbf{p}, t) = \tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\varphi(\mathbf{p}, t), t)$ and compute

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d\mathbf{F}}{dt}(\mathbf{p}, t) &= \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{q}} \tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\varphi(\mathbf{p}, t), t) \left(\frac{\partial \varphi}{\partial t}(\mathbf{p}, t) \right) + \frac{\partial \tilde{\mathbf{F}}}{\partial t}(\varphi(\mathbf{p}, t), t) \\ &= - \left(\frac{d\tilde{\mathbf{F}}}{dt}(\varphi(\mathbf{p}, t), t) \right)^\top + \frac{\partial \tilde{\mathbf{F}}}{\partial t}(\varphi(\mathbf{p}, t), t) \\ &= \left(\frac{\partial \tilde{\mathbf{F}}}{\partial t}(\varphi(\mathbf{p}, t)) \right)^\perp \\ &= \mathbf{H} \left(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\varphi(\mathbf{p}, t)) \right) \\ &= \mathbf{H}(\mathbf{F}(\mathbf{p}, t)) \end{aligned}$$

and thus, we have shown that this is equivalent to a surface $M_t = \mathbf{F}(\cdot, t)(M_r^n)$ evolving by (MCF), up to these tangential diffeomorphisms.

We may now write the normal vector $\boldsymbol{\nu}$ at $\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)$ as

$$\boldsymbol{\nu}(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)) = \frac{\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho(\mathbf{x}, t)}{|\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho(\mathbf{x}, t)|} \Big|_{\mathbf{x}=\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)}$$

and thus the mean curvature H at $\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)$ is

$$H(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)) = \operatorname{div}_{\mathbb{R}^{n+1}} \left(\frac{\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho(\mathbf{x}, t)}{|\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho(\mathbf{x}, t)|} \right) \Big|_{\mathbf{x}=\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)}$$

Now, using (D.1), we obtain

$$\left\langle \frac{d\tilde{\mathbf{F}}}{dt}(\mathbf{q}, t), \boldsymbol{\nu}(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)) \right\rangle = -H(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t))$$

however, we also have

$$\left\langle \frac{d\tilde{\mathbf{F}}}{dt}(\mathbf{q}, t), \boldsymbol{\nu}(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)) \right\rangle = \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t}(\mathbf{p}, t) \left\langle \boldsymbol{\nu}(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)), \boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{q}) \right\rangle$$

which combined with the fact that

$$\left\langle \boldsymbol{\nu}(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)), \boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{q}) \right\rangle = |\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t), t)|^{-1}$$

we obtain the PDE for ρ

Theorem D.1 (Mean Curvature Flow of graph height). *The graph height ρ over a fixed base surface $M_r^n = \sigma^{-1}(\cdot)\{r\}$ of a surface $\tilde{M}_t = \tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\cdot, t)(M_r^n)$ satisfying*

$$\left(\frac{d\tilde{\mathbf{F}}}{dt}(\mathbf{q}, t) \right)^\perp = \mathbf{H}(\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)) \quad (\text{D.2})$$

where

$$\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t) = \mathbf{q} + \rho(\mathbf{q}, t)\boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{q})$$

evolves according to the equation

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t}(\mathbf{q}, t) = -|\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho(\mathbf{x}, t)| \operatorname{div}_{\mathbb{R}^{n+1}} \left(\frac{\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho(\mathbf{x}, t)}{|\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho(\mathbf{x}, t)|} \right) \Big|_{\mathbf{x}=\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)} \quad (\text{D.3})$$

for $(\mathbf{q}, t) \in M_r^n \times [0, T)$, so long as $\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t) \notin \ker \bar{\nabla} \sigma$.

D.2 Uniform Parabolicity

We shall see that under the right circumstances, [D.3](#) is a quasilinear parabolic partial differential equation, in fact with a uniform gradient bound, it is uniformly parabolic. To do this, let us begin by expanding the derivatives. Setting $\mathbf{x} = \tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)$ and $\mathbf{q} = \mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x})$, using the chain rule, we obtain

$$\boldsymbol{\nu}(\mathbf{x}) = \frac{\boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{x}) - \tilde{\nabla} \rho}{\sqrt{1 + |\tilde{\nabla} \rho|^2}}$$

where $\tilde{\nabla} \rho = \langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{q}} \rho, \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_k} \mathbf{S} \rangle \mathbf{e}_k$ and $\bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{q}} \rho = \bar{\nabla} \rho(\mathbf{q}, t)$.

Lemma D.2. *For each $\mathbf{x} \in \mathcal{R}_r$, there exists an orthonormal basis $\{\mathbf{e}_i\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$ of \mathbb{R}^{n+1} such that*

$$\langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_i} \mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x}), \mathbf{e}_j \rangle = \langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_j} \mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x}), \mathbf{e}_i \rangle$$

for all $1 \leq i, j \leq n+1$.

Proof. Arrange $\{\mathbf{e}_i\}_{i=1}^{n+1}$ such that

$$\mathbf{e}_i = \begin{cases} \boldsymbol{\gamma}_i, & i \leq n \\ \boldsymbol{\omega}, & i = n+1 \end{cases}$$

where $\{\boldsymbol{\gamma}_i\}_{i=1}^n$ is an orthonormal basis for $T_{\mathbf{q}} M_r^n$.

We note that \mathbf{S} may be expressed as $\mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x}) = \mathbf{x} - \Lambda(x)\boldsymbol{\omega}(x)$ and compute

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_i} \mathbf{S} &= \mathbf{e}_i - \mathbf{e}_i(\Lambda)\boldsymbol{\omega} - \Lambda \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_i} \boldsymbol{\omega} \\ &= \mathbf{e}_i - \mathbf{e}_i(\Lambda)\boldsymbol{\omega} - \Lambda b_{ik} \boldsymbol{\gamma}_k \end{aligned}$$

where b_{ij} is the second fundamental form of M_r^n at \mathbf{q} .

Now, we observe that $\bar{\nabla}_{\boldsymbol{\omega}} \mathbf{S} = 0$ and that $\bar{\nabla}_{\boldsymbol{\gamma}_i} \mathbf{S} \in T_{\mathbf{q}} M_r^n$ (since $\mathbf{S}(\mathcal{R}_r) = M_r^n$) and compute

$$\langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_i} \mathbf{S}, \mathbf{e}_j \rangle = \delta_{ij} - \Lambda b_{ij}$$

which is clearly symmetric, and thus we have the result. \square

Expanding the second order derivatives, we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t}(\mathbf{q}, t) &= -\Delta_{\mathbb{R}^{n+1}} \Phi_\rho + |\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho|^{-2} \left\langle \bar{\nabla}_{\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho} \bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho, \bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho \right\rangle \\ &= (\delta_{kl} - |\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho|^{-2} \langle \bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho, \mathbf{e}_k \rangle \langle \bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho, \mathbf{e}_l \rangle) \left[\langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_k} \mathbf{S}, \mathbf{e}_i \rangle \langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_l} \mathbf{S}, \mathbf{e}_j \rangle \rho_{ij} \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_k} \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_l} \mathbf{S}, \mathbf{e}_i \rangle \rho_i \right] \\ &\quad + |\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho|^{-2} \left\langle \bar{\nabla}_{\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho} \boldsymbol{\omega}, \bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho \right\rangle - \operatorname{div}_{\mathbb{R}^{n+1}} \boldsymbol{\omega} \end{aligned}$$

remembering of course, that all expressions on the right-hand side are evaluated at $\mathbf{x} = \tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)$.

Thus, we obtain an equation for ρ .

Proposition D.3. *If $(M_t)_{t \in [0, T]}$, $T > 0$ satisfies (D.2) then the graph height $\rho : M_r^n \times [0, T] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ satisfies the scalar evolution equation*

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t}(\mathbf{q}, t) = a^{ij}(\rho, \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{q}} \rho) \rho_{ij} + b^i(\rho, \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{q}} \rho) \rho_i + f(\rho) \quad (\text{D.4})$$

where

$$a^{ij} = (\delta_{kl} - |\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho|^{-2} \langle \bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho, \mathbf{e}_k \rangle \langle \bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho, \mathbf{e}_l \rangle) \langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_k} \mathbf{S}, \mathbf{e}_i \rangle \langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_l} \mathbf{S}, \mathbf{e}_j \rangle$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} b^i &= (\delta_{kl} - |\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho|^{-2} \langle \bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho, \mathbf{e}_k \rangle \langle \bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho, \mathbf{e}_l \rangle) \langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_k} \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_l} \mathbf{S}, \mathbf{e}_i \rangle \\ &\quad - |\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho|^{-2} \left\langle \bar{\nabla}_{\bar{\nabla} \Phi_\rho} \boldsymbol{\omega}, \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_i} \mathbf{S} \right\rangle \end{aligned}$$

and

$$f = -H_{M_{r+\rho}^n(\mathbf{q}, t)}$$

with $H_{M_{r+\rho}^n(\mathbf{q}, t)} = \operatorname{div}_{\mathbb{R}^{n+1}} \bar{\nabla} \Lambda(\mathbf{x})|_{\mathbf{x}=\tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)}$. Note that these derivatives are evaluated at $\mathbf{x} = \tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)$, and thus (may) depend implicitly upon ρ .

It is quite easy to see that this equation is parabolic.

Proposition D.4. *The matrix a^{ij} is positive definite on any compact region of \mathcal{R}_r upon which $|\bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{q}} \rho|$ is bounded above.*

Proof. Recall that the gradient function v defined as usual by

$$v(\mathbf{x}, t) = \langle \boldsymbol{\nu}(\mathbf{x}), \boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{x}) \rangle^{-1}, \quad \mathbf{x} \in M_t, t \in [0, T]$$

measures the angle between the normal vector (or equivalently tangent plane) of the base surface M_r^n at $\mathbf{q} = \mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x})$ and the normal vector (or tangent

plane) of the evolving surface M_t at \mathbf{x} . If this function is bounded above, then the projection of tangent vectors between these planes is non-zero.

On a surface expressed as a normal graph we have

$$v(\mathbf{x}, t) = \sqrt{1 + |\bar{\nabla}\rho(\mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x}), t)|^2}$$

thus, for $\mathbf{x} \in \mathcal{R}_r$, bounding $|\bar{\nabla}_q \rho|$ is equivalent to obtaining a bound on v .

Now, since $a^{ij} = \langle (\bar{\nabla}_{\gamma_i} \mathbf{S})^\top, (\bar{\nabla}_{\gamma_j} \mathbf{S})^\top \rangle$ we can easily see that it is composed only from the contraction of the metric on M_t at \mathbf{x} and the metric of M_r^n at \mathbf{q} . Furthermore, the assumption of bounded gradient implies that these metrics are non-orthogonal. Thus, we have that a^{ij} , the composition of two non-orthogonal positive definite metrics, is itself positive definite. \square

Theorem D.5. *There exists a neighborhood \mathcal{R}_r of M_r^n on which the graph height ρ of a surface $(M_t)_{t \in [0, T]}$ evolving via Equation (D.2) satisfies a quasi-linear parabolic partial differential equation.*

Remark D.6. The region \mathcal{R}_r depends on the principle curvatures of the base surface M_r^n since ([13], [7]) in terms of the normal coordinate basis

$$\mathbf{e}_i = \begin{cases} \gamma_i, & i \leq n \\ \omega, & i = n + 1 \end{cases}$$

we have

$$D^2\Lambda(\mathbf{x}) = \text{diag} \left(\frac{\kappa_1}{1 - \Lambda\kappa_1}, \dots, \frac{\kappa_n}{1 - \Lambda\kappa_n}, 0 \right)$$

where $\{\kappa_i\}_{i=1}^n$ are the principle curvatures of M_r^n at \mathbf{q} . Thus it is clear that if $\rho < \min(\kappa_i^{-1})$ that the setup is valid.

D.3 Cylindrical Case

In the case of cylindrical normal graphs, the signed distance function to the cylinder C_r^n is given by

$$\Lambda(\mathbf{x}) = |\mathbf{x}_{\perp \vartheta}| - r$$

and the closest point projection is

$$\mathbf{S}(\mathbf{x}) = r \left(\frac{\mathbf{x}_{\perp \vartheta}}{|\mathbf{x}_{\perp \vartheta}|} \right) + \langle \mathbf{x}, \vartheta \rangle \vartheta$$

Let $\{\gamma_i\}_{i=1}^n$ be an orthonormal basis for $T_q M_r^n$ with $\gamma_n = \vartheta$ (making the basis in fact normal coordinates) and arrange

$$\mathbf{e}_i = \begin{cases} \gamma_i, & i < n \\ \vartheta, & i = n \\ \omega, & i = n + 1 \end{cases}$$

Now, we compute the first derivatives of the closest point projection

$$\bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_i} \mathbf{S} = \left(\frac{r}{|\mathbf{x}_{\perp \vartheta}|} \right) \mathbf{e}_{i\tau} + \langle \mathbf{e}_i, \vartheta \rangle \vartheta$$

and the second derivatives

$$\bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_i} \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_j} \mathbf{S} = - \left(\frac{r}{|\mathbf{x}_{\perp \vartheta}|^2} \right) [\langle \mathbf{e}_{i\tau}, \mathbf{e}_{j\tau} \rangle \boldsymbol{\omega} + \langle \mathbf{e}_i, \boldsymbol{\omega} \rangle \mathbf{e}_{j\tau} + \langle \mathbf{e}_j, \boldsymbol{\omega} \rangle \mathbf{e}_{i\tau}]$$

Also, we we have that

$$H_{M_{r+\rho}^n} = \frac{n-1}{\rho+r}$$

all of which were evaluated at $\mathbf{x} = \tilde{\mathbf{F}}(\mathbf{q}, t)$.

Set $b_{ij} = \langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{e}_i} \mathbf{S}, \mathbf{e}_j \rangle$, then

$$b_{ij} = \begin{cases} \left(\frac{r}{r+\rho} \right), & i = j < n \\ 1, & i = j = n \\ 0, & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

We also define $\tilde{\nabla} \rho$ by

$$\tilde{\nabla} \rho = \rho_k b_{kl} \mathbf{e}_l$$

and without loss of generality, we may set

$$\langle \bar{\nabla}_{\mathbf{q}} \rho(\mathbf{q}, t), \boldsymbol{\omega}(\mathbf{q}) \rangle = 0, \quad \forall \mathbf{q} \in M_r^n$$

then we have the equation

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t}(\mathbf{q}, t) = a^{ij} \rho_{ij} - \frac{n-1}{\rho+r} - \left(\frac{1}{\rho+r} \right) \left(\frac{|(\tilde{\nabla} \rho)_\tau|^2}{1 + |\tilde{\nabla} \rho|^2} \right) \quad \mathbf{q} \in M_r^n, t \in [0, T] \quad (\text{D.5})$$

where

$$a^{ij} = b_{ik} b_{jl} \left(\delta_{kl} - \frac{\tilde{\nabla}_k \rho \tilde{\nabla}_l \rho}{1 + |\tilde{\nabla} \rho|^2} \right)$$

It is easily seen that (D.5) is a quasilinear parabolic partial differential equation.

