ENERGY-STABLE TIME DISCRETIZATIONS FOR THE PHASE-FIELD CRYSTAL EQUATION

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Modeling of phase-transitions has garnered a lot of interest in recent years, and the solution to these problems through the use of phase-field methods looks very promising. Unfortunately, the phase-field framework as a method, leads to nonlinear and high-order partial differential equations \cite{1}. These equations, not easily solved using standard numerical methods, have lead to interesting numerical algorithms to handle them, that look to ensure different problem-related properties such as conservation of mass and energy-stability. Among the methods that have been tried out in finite element settings, Isogeometric Analysis (IGA) \cite{2} has stood out for the ease with which the higher-order, globally continuous basis functions can be generated.

In this work, we analyze different possible discretizations using IGA to solve the phase-field crystal equation, a nonlinear, time-dependent, sixth-order partial differential equation. Using arguments from \cite{3}, we are able to prove energy-stability and second-order accuracy in time. Comparisons are done against the state of the art \cite{4}, and their behaviour in terms of convergence in a free-energy sense is analyzed. Implementation was done using PetIGA, a high performance Isogeometric Analysis framework. It is heavily based on PETSc, and designed to handle non-linear, time-dependent problems \cite{5}. Two-dimensional and three-dimensional examples are presented, involving crystalline growth.

REFERENCES

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