

A Regularity Theorem for Curvature Flows

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1. Introduction

The regularity theory of minimal surfaces and minimizers of other elliptic functional is well known, due to DeGiorgi [DG], Federer and Fleming [FF], Reifenberg [R] and F. Almgren [A]. However the only regularity theory of evolutionary problem is due to K. Brakke [B] about mean curvature flow of unit density surfaces. Here we prove a regularity theory for general surface flows with a similar density condition (Section 2, Definition 9). The evolutions that we deal with do not necessarily come from a gradient flow of some functionals. This is the generalization of the paper [W2] where the corresponding elliptic problem was studied.

The equations that we consider are the following

$$(1.1) \quad V_t - F(\text{II}, v) = 0,$$

where V_t is the normal velocity, II is the second fundamental form of a surface S and v is its normal. We assume that F is uniformly elliptic along the solution surface and Lipschitz in v and linear in II . Precise definitions of these terms are in Section 2.

The first example of this kind of equations is

$$(1.2) \quad V_t - F(\text{II}, v) = V_t - \text{tr}\text{II},$$

whereas the corresponding solutions are the surfaces moving with their mean curvature.

The main result in this paper is to show that S is regular if it is flat enough and has density close to 1. One of the main difficulties is that the area of S does not make sense.

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