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Kirchhoff Plates and	Large Deformation
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Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	The 3D-deformation energy2.1General differential geometry in 3D2.2Deformation energy	1 2 3
3	Basic differential geometry of shells3.1The initial mid surface3.2The initial shell3.3The plate as an exception of a shell	5 5 6 7
4	 Kirchhoff assumption and the deformed plate 4.1 Differential geometry of the deformed shell	7 7 8
5	Plate energy and boundary conditions5.1The resulting Kirchhoff deformation energy5.2Boundary conditions	9 10 11
6	Numerical Example6.1Plate deflection6.2Bending dominated plate deformation	12 12 15

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1 Introduction

In the simulation of deformations of plates it is well known that we have to use a special treatment of the thickness dependence. Therewith we achieve a reduction of dimension from 3D to 2D.

For linear elasticity and small deformations several techniques are well established to handle the reduction of dimension and achieve acceptable numerical results. In the case of large deformations of plates with non-linear material behaviour there exist different problems. For example the analytical integration over the thickness of the plate is not possible due to the non-linearities arising from the material law and the large deformations themselves. There are several possibilities to introduce a hypothesis for the treatment of the plate thickness from the strong Kirchhoff assumption on one hand up to some hierarchical approaches on the other hand.

In this preprint we consider a model of using the Kirchhoff assumption. So first we give a short overview in useful differential geometry and explain the hypothesis mathematically.

The following section treats with the approximate solution of the PDE, we concern with. The preprint ends with some numerical examples.

2 The 3D-deformation energy

In the entire paper we use the Einstein summation convention. Furthermore we understand a second order tensor as a pair of two vectors, for example A^1A^2 or similar. In general, it is any linear combination of such pairs. Accordingly tensors of higher order are built in the same manner. By the way we can consider a vector as a first order tensor.

Some calculation rules are defined for second order tensors. So the dot product maps the (3-dimensional) vector functions U onto vector functions again:

$$(\mathbf{A}^{1}\mathbf{A}^{2}) \cdot \mathbf{U} = \mathbf{A}^{1}(\mathbf{A}^{2} \cdot \mathbf{U})$$

 $\mathbf{U} \cdot (\mathbf{A}^{1}\mathbf{A}^{2}) = \mathbf{A}^{2}(\mathbf{A}^{1} \cdot \mathbf{U}).$

The trace is defined as $tr(\mathbf{A}^1\mathbf{A}^2) = \mathbf{A}^1 \cdot \mathbf{A}^2$ and the transposed tensor as $(\mathbf{A}^1\mathbf{A}^2)^{\tau} = \mathbf{A}^2\mathbf{A}^1$. The double dot product between two second order tensors is a scalar function. It is defined by

$$\boldsymbol{A}^{1}\boldsymbol{A}^{2}:\boldsymbol{A}^{3}\boldsymbol{A}^{4}=(\boldsymbol{A}^{2}\cdot\boldsymbol{A}^{3})(\boldsymbol{A}^{1}\cdot\boldsymbol{A}^{4}).$$

Throughout this paper we display 2nd order tensors by gently rolled capital letters. Vectors are written in bold and matrices in underlined types. Therefor we