

IEEE TRANSACTIONS ON PLASMA SCIENCE, VOL. 28, NO. 6, DEC 2000

High Performance Computer Methods Applied to Predictive Space Weather Simulations

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Overview

- Introduction
- Michigan Multi-scale MHD Model
- Parallel Implementation: Adaptive Blocks - A High Performance Data Structure
- Parallel Performance
- Applications
- Conclusions & Future Work
- A Little Thoughts

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Introduction to Sun-Earth System

- Above the visible Sun is the Sun's corona, where the solar wind originates. The Sun interacts with the Earth through the solar wind, which is magnetized plasma with superfast speed at hundreds of km/s, interacting with the planets.
- **Why it is important?**
 - Space storms caused by CME's can severely affect satellites orbiting Earth (\$200million AT&T satellite failure on Jan.10, 1997)
 - Also have effects in the lower atmosphere of the earth, causing regional power-grid failures
 - Astronauts are vulnerable to energetic radiation that may occur in certain space station altitudes
- **Space Weather** refers to the conditions in the sun-earth system (from the Sun surface to the Earth's upper atmosphere including the solar wind, magnetosphere, ionosphere and thermosphere, etc.)

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Advanced Numerical MHD Modeling

- Increasing need to develop physics-based, high performance models of the sun-earth system which operates faster than real time and provide reliable predictions
- Michigan adaptive-scale MHD (Magneto-HydroDynamic) model, which models the entire region from the solar surface to the Earth's upper atmosphere.
- Developed with support from the NASA HPC and NSF
- BATS-R-US (Block Adaptive-Tree Solar-Wind Roe-type Upwind Scheme) is based on an ideal MHD equations.
- It's a multi-scale model
 - temporal scales: range over at least 10^5
 - spatial scales: range over at least 10^9
- Three key elements: modern numerical methods, solution-adaptive techniques, and massively parallel implementation.

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The Michigan MHD Model

The model spans multiple scales, from tens of kilometers in the ionosphere to the radius of the Earth (R_E) to the radius of the Sun (R_S), to the Sun-Earth distance (AU)

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Solution Adaptation Techniques

- Equal-sized grid approaches may grossly under-solve much of the problem, while over-resolving relatively uninteresting regions
- A solution adaptive grid is desirable for the disparate length scales.
 - for low-gradient regions, spend less computation
 - for high-gradient regions, elaborate more computation
- Ideal for both sequential algorithm and parallel algorithm

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Parallel Implementation

- Block Adaptive Mesh Refinement (Block-AMR)
- Three-dimensional block of grid cells, typically $8 \times 8 \times 8$ cells
- Initially, all the blocks are at the same level of refinement.
 - If a block needs to be refined (by some suitable criteria), it's replaced by 2^3 sub-blocks.
 - If coarsening is needed, then 8 children is replaced by their parent.

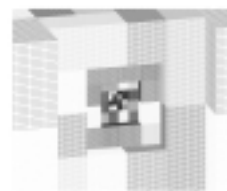
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-A two dimensional Adaptive Block Decomposition.



-A three-dimensional adaptive block decomposition.

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Parallel Implementation - Cont.

- **Domain Decomposition** - Partition the data blocks. All the data blocks look the same to a processor, no matter they are a large block or a small block
- **Communication**: Most computation is done within blocks, inter-block communication is among neighbour blocks.
- **Agglomeration**: combine the neighbour blocks together to reduce the communication time. The No. of blocks/processor depends on the applications
- **Mapping**: The tasks are assigned to each processor equally. If refinement (coarsen) is needed, the load has to be balanced dynamically.

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Parallel Implementation – Cont.

Advantages:

- Refinement is focused on the regions that need it most
- Each block is a uniform grid, which provides natural framework for the numerical approaches & optimizations.
- Locality -- Most computation is done within a data block
- Low communication cost -- Inter-block connectivity is defined using pointers, pointing to the neighbouring blocks
- Load balance -- achieved by balancing the amount of blocks per processor

Disadvantages:

- Choosing the size of the block is important, may introduce load imbalance if the size not properly selected.
- For high-gradient regions, excessive numbers of refined cells can be created, increasing the amount of time&storage space
- Overheads for the dynamic load balancing.

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Parallel Performance

The BATS-R-US code was developed in Fortran 90, with MPI for explicit message passing

Figure 2. Parallel Performance of BATS-R-US code for several parallel architecture
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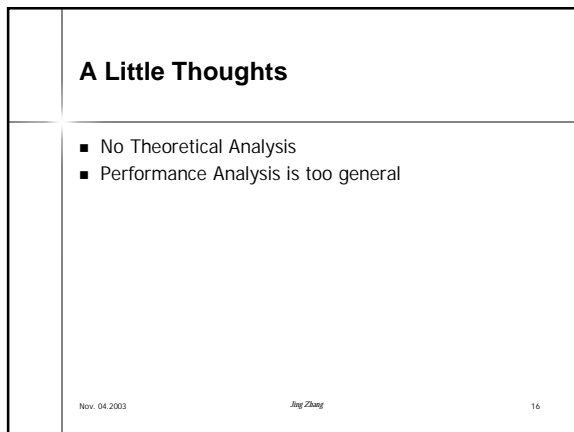
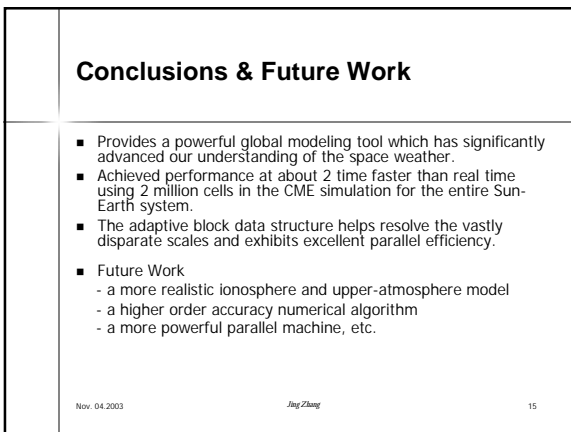
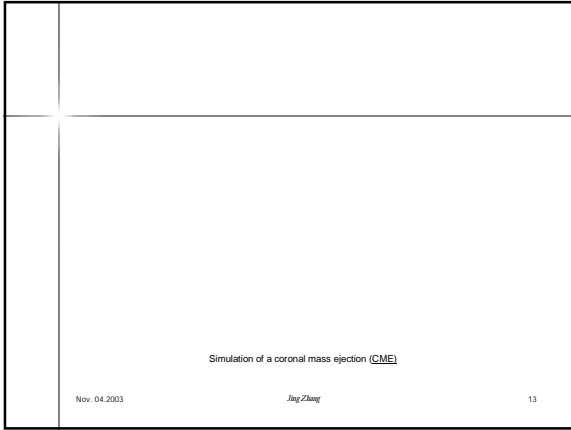
Applications of MHD Model

- Simulation of a CME
- The response of the magnetosphere to the CME
- Solar wind interaction with comets and the origin of cometary x-rays
- Solar wind interaction with Earth
- The interaction of Io with the magnetosphere of Jupiter
- Etc.

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*Thank You
Questions and Comments?*

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