SURFACE GROUPS IN UNIFORM LATTICES OF SOME SEMI-SIMPLE GROUPS

JEREMY KAHN, FRANÇOIS LABOURIE, AND SHAHAR MOZES

Abstract. We show that uniform lattices in some semi-simple groups (notably complex ones) admit Anosov surface subgroups. This result has a quantitative version: we introduce a notion, called $K$-Sullivan maps, which generalizes the notion of $K$-quasi-circles in hyperbolic geometry, and show in particular that Sullivan maps are Hölder. Using this notion, we show a quantitative version of our surface subgroup theorem and in particular that one can obtain $K$-Sullivan limit maps, as close as one wants to smooth round circles. All these results use the coarse geometry of “path of triangles” in a certain flag manifold and we prove an analogue to the Morse Lemma for quasi-geodesics in that context.

1. Introduction

As a corollary of our main Theorem, we obtain the following easily stated result

Theorem A. Let $G$ be a center free, complex semisimple Lie group and $\Gamma$ a uniform lattice in $G$. Then $\Gamma$ contains a surface group.

By a surface group, we mean the fundamental group of a closed connected oriented surface of genus at least 2. We shall see later on that the restriction that $G$ is complex can be relaxed: the theorem holds for a wider class of groups, for instance $\text{PU}(p, q)$ with $q \geq 2p > 0$, and $\text{SO}(p, q)$ with $q \geq 2p > 0$ and $q + p$ even. This theorem is a generalization of the celebrated Kahn–Markovic Theorem [14, 3] which deals with the case of $\text{PSL}(2, \mathbb{C})$ and its proof follows a similar scheme: building pair of pants, gluing them and showing the group is injective, however the details vary greatly, notably in the injectivity part. Let us note that Hamenstädt [13] had followed a similar proof to show the existence of surface subgroups of all rank 1 groups, except $\text{SO}(2n, 1)$, while Kahn and Markovic essentially deals with the case $G = \text{SL}(2, \mathbb{R}) \times \text{SL}(2, \mathbb{R})$ in their Ehrenpreis paper [15].

Finally, let us recall that Kahn–Markovic paper was preceded in the context of hyperbolic 3-manifolds by (non quantitative) results of Lackenby [21] for lattices with torsion and Cooper, Long and Reid [9] in the non uniform case, both papers using very different techniques.

Kahn–Markovic theorem has a quantitative version: the surface group obtained is $K$-quasi-symmetric where $K$ can be chosen arbitrarily close to 1. Our theorem also has a quantitative version that needs some preparation and definitions to be...
stated properly: in particular, we need to define in this higher rank context what is the analog of a quasi-symmetric (or rather almost-symmetric) map.

1.1. Sullivan maps. We make the choice of an $\mathfrak{sl}_2$ triple in $G$, that is an embedding of the Lie algebra of $\mathbb{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$ with its standard generators $(a, x, y)$ into the Lie algebra of $G$. For the sake of simplification, in this introduction, we suppose that this triple has a compact centralizer. Such an $\mathfrak{sl}_2$ triple defines a flag manifold $F$: a compact $G$-transitive space on which the hyperbolic element $a$ acts with a unique attractive fixed point (see Section 2 for details).

Most of the results and techniques of the proof involves the study of the following geometric objects in $F$:

(i) circles in $F$ which are maps from $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$ to $F$ equivariant under a representation of $\mathbb{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$ conjugated to the one defined by the $\mathfrak{sl}_2$ triple chosen above.

(ii) tripods which are triple of distinct point on a circle. Such a tripod $\tau$ defines – in a $G$-equivariant way – a metric $d_\tau$ on $F$.

We can now define what is the generalization of a $K$-quasi-symmetric map, for $K$-close to 1. Let $\zeta$ be a positive number. A $\zeta$-Sullivan map is a map $\xi$ from $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$ to $F$ so that for every triple of pairwise distinct points $T$ in $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$, there is a circle $\eta_T : \mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R}) \to F$ so that

$$\forall x \in \mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R}), \ d_{\eta_T(T)}(\eta_T(x), \xi(x)) \leq \zeta.$$ 

We remark that circles are 0-Sullivan map. Also, we insist that this notion is relative to the choice of some $\mathfrak{sl}_2$ triple, or more precisely of a conjugacy class of $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple. This notion is discussed more deeply in Section 8.

Obviously, for this definition to make sense, $\zeta$ has to be small. We do not require any regularity nor continuity of the map $\xi$. Our first result actually guarantees some regularity:

**Theorem B.** [Hölder property] There exists some positive numbers $\zeta$ and $\alpha$, so that any $\zeta$-Sullivan map is $\alpha$-Hölder.

If we furthermore assume that the map $\xi$ is equivariant under some representation $\rho$ of a Fuchsian group $\Gamma$ acting on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$, we have

**Theorem C.** [Sullivan implies Anosov] There exists a positive number $\zeta$ such that if $\Gamma$ is a cocompact Fuchsian group, $\rho$ a representation of $\Gamma$ in $G$ so that there exists a $\rho$ equivariant $\zeta$-Sullivan map $\xi$ from $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$ to $F$, then $\rho$ is $F$-Anosov and $\xi$ is its limit curve.

When $G = \mathbb{PSL}(2, \mathbb{C})$, $F = \mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{C}) = \partial_{\infty} \mathbb{H}^3$, circles are boundaries at infinity of hyperbolic planes, and the theorems above translate into classical properties of quasi-symmetric maps. We refer to [20, 12] for reference on Anosov representations and give a short introduction in paragraph 8.4.1. In particular recall that Anosov representations are faithful.

1.2. A quantitative surface subgroup theorem. We can now state what is our quantitative version of the existence of surface subgroup in higher rank lattices.

**Theorem D.** Let $G$ be a center free, semisimple Lie group without compact factor and $\Gamma$ a uniform lattice in $G$. Let us choose an $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple in $G$ with a compact centralizer and satisfying the flip assumption (See below) with associated flag manifold $F$.

Let $\zeta$ be a positive number. Then there exists a cocompact Fuchsian group $\Gamma_0$ and a $F$-Anosov representation $\rho$ of $\Gamma_0$ in $G$ with values in $\Gamma$ and whose limit map is $\zeta$-Sullivan.
The flip assumption is satisfied for all complex groups, all rank 1 group except $\text{SO}(1, 2n)$, but not for real split groups. The precise statement is the following. Let $(a, x, y)$ be an $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple and $\zeta_0$ the smallest real positive number so that $\exp(2i\zeta_0 \cdot a) = 1$. We say the $(a, x, y)$ satisfies the flip assumption if the automorphism of $G$, $J_0 := \exp(i\zeta_0 \cdot a)$ belongs to the connected component of a compact factor of the centralizer of $a$. Ursula Hamenstädt also used the flip assumption in [13].

We do hope the flip assumption is unnecessary. However removing it is beyond the scope of the present article: it would involve in particular incorporating generalized arguments from [15] which deal with the (non flip) case of $G = \text{SL}(2, \mathbb{R}) \times \text{SL}(2, \mathbb{R})$.

Finally let us notice that Kahn and Wright have announced a quantitative version of the surface subgroup theorem for non uniform lattice in the case of $\text{PSL}(2, \mathbb{C})$, leaving thus open the possibility to extend our theorem also for non uniform lattices.

1.3. A tool: coarse geometry in flag manifolds. A classical tool for Gromov hyperbolic spaces is the Morse Lemma: quasi-geodesics are at uniform distance to geodesics. Higher rank symmetric spaces are not Gromov hyperbolic but they do carry a version of the Morse Lemma: see Kapovich–Leeb–Porti [16] and Bochi–Potrie–Sambarino [4].

Our approach in this paper is however to avoid as much as possible dealing with the (too rich) geometry of the symmetric space. We will only use the geometry of the flag manifolds that we defined above: circles, tripods and metrics assigned to tripods. In this new point of view, the analogs of geodesics will be coplanar path of triangles: roughly speaking a coplanar path of triangles corresponds to a sequence of non overlapping ideal triangles in some hyperbolic space so that two consecutive triangles are adjacent – see figure 6a. We now have to describe a coarse version of that. First we need to define quasi-tripods which are deformation of tripods: roughly speaking these are tripods with deformed vertices (See Definition 4.1.1 for precisions). Then we want to define almost coplanar sequence of quasi-tripods (See Definition 4.1.6). Finally our main theorem 7.2.1 guarantees some circumstances under which these “quasi-paths” converge "at infinity", that is shrink to a point in $F$.

The Morse Lemma by itself is not enough to conclude in the hyperbolic case and we need a refined version. Our Theorem 7.2.1 is used at several point in the paper: to prove the main theorem and to prove the theorems around Sullivan maps. Although, this theorem requires too many definitions to be stated in the introduction, it is one of the main and new contribution of this paper.

While this paper was in its last stage, we learned that Ursula Hamenstädt has announced existence results for lattices in higher rank group, without the quantitative part of our results, but with other very interesting features.

We thank Bachir Bekka, Yves Benoist, Nicolas Bergeron, Marc Burger, Fanny Kassel, Mahan Mj, Dennis Sullivan for their help and interest while we were completing this project.

1.4. A description of the content of this article. What follows is meant to be a reading guide of this article, while introducing informally the essential ideas. In order to improve readability, an index is produced at the end of this paper.

(i) Section 2 sets up the Lie theory background: it describes in more details $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triples, the flip assumption, and the associated parabolic subgroups and flag manifolds.
(ii) Section 3 introduces the main tools of our paper: tripods. In the simplest case (for instance principal \( \mathfrak{sl}_2 \)-triples in complex simple groups), tripods are just preferred triples of points in the associated flag manifold. In the general case, tripods come with some extra decoration. They may be thought of as generalizations of ideal triangles in hyperbolic planar geometry and they reflect our choice of a preferred \( \mathfrak{sl}_2 \)-triple. The space of tripods admits several actions that are introduced here and notably a shearing flow. Moreover each tripod defines a metric on the flag manifold itself and we explore the relationships between the shearing flow and these metric assignments.

(iii) For the hyperbolic plane, (nice) sequences of non overlapping ideal triangles, where two successive ones have a common edge, converges at infinity. This corresponds in our picture to coplanar paths of tripods. Section 4 deals with "coarse deformations" of these paths. First we introduce quasi-tripods, which are deformation of tripods: in the simplest case these are triples of points in the flag manifold which are not far from a tripod, with respect to the metric induced by the tripod. Then we introduce paths of quasi-tripods that we see as deformation of coplanar paths of tripods. Our goal will be in a later section to show that this deformed paths converge under some nice hypotheses.

(iv) For coplanar paths of tripods (which are sequences of ideal triangles), one see the convergence to infinity as a result of nesting of intervals in the boundary at infinity. This however is the consequence of the order structure on \( \partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2 \) and very specific to planar geometry. In our case, we need to introduce "coarse deformations" of these intervals, that we call slivers and introduce quantitative versions of the nesting property of intervals called squeezing and controlling. In Section 5 and Section 6, we define all these objects and prove the confinement Lemma. This Lemma tells us that certain deformations of coplanar paths still satisfy our coarse nesting properties. These two sections are preliminary to the next one.

(v) In Section 7, we prove one of the main result of the papers, the Limit Point Theorem that gives a condition under which a deformed sequence of quasi-tripods converges to a point in the flag manifold as well as some quantitative estimates on the rate of convergence. This theorem will be used several times in the sequel. Special instances of this theorem may be thought of as higher rank versions of the Morse Lemma. Our motto is to use the coarse geometry of path of quasi-tripods in the flag manifolds rather than quasi-geodesics in the symmetric space.

(vi) In Section 8, we introduce Sullivan curves which are analogs of quasi circles. We show extensions of two classical results for Kleinian groups and quasi-circles: Sullivan curves are Hölder and if a Sullivan curve is equivariant under the representation of of a surface group, this surface group is Anosov – the analog of quasi-fuchsian. In the case of deformation of equivariant curves, we prove an Improvement Theorem that needs a Sullivan curve to be only defined on a smaller set.

(vii) So far, the previous sections were about the geometry of the flag manifolds and did not make use of a lattice or discrete subgroups of \( \Gamma \). We now move to the proof of existence of surface groups, that we shall build by gluing pair of pants together. The next two sections deals with pair of pants: Section 9 introduces the concept of stitched pair of pants that generalizes the idea of
building a pair of pants out of two ideal triangles. We describe the structure of these pairs of pants in a Structure Theorem and using a partially hyperbolic Closing Lemma, we show that "almost closing pair of pants" end up being close to stitched pair of pants. In Kahn–Markovic original paper a central role is played by "triconnected pair of tripods" which are (roughly speaking) three homotopy classes of paths joining two points. In Section 10, we introduce here the analog in our case (under the same name), then describe weight functions. A triconnected pair of tripods on which the weight function is positive, gives rise to a nearby stitched pair of pants. We also study an orientation inverting symmetry.

(viii) We study in the next two sections the boundary data that is needed to describe the gluing of pair of pants. After having introduced biconnected pair of tripods which amounts to forget one of the paths in our triple of paths. In Section 11, we introduce spaces and measures for both triconnected and biconnected pairs of tripods and show that the forgetting map almost preserve the measure using the mixing property of our mixing flow. Then in Section 12, we move more closely to study the boundary data: we introduce the feet spaces and projections which is the higher rank analog to the normal bundle to geodesics and we prove a Theorem that describes under which circumstances a measure is not perturbed too much by a Kahn–Markovic twist.

(ix) In Section 13, we wrap up the previous two sections in proving the Even Distribution Theorem which essentially roughly says that there are the same number pairs of pants coming from "opposite sides" in the feet space. This makes use of the flip assumption which is discussed there with more details (with examples and counter examples).

(x) As in Kahn–Markovic original paper, we use the Measured Marriage Theorem in Section 14 to produce straight surface groups which are pair of pants glued nicely along their boundaries. It now remains to prove that these straight surface groups injects and are Sullivan.

(xi) Before starting that proof, we need to describe in Section 15 a little further the R-perfect lamination and more importantly the accessible points in the boundary at infinity, which are roughly speaking those points which are limits of nice path of ideal triangles with respect to the lamination. This section is purely hyperbolic planar geometry.

(xii) We finally make a connexion with the first part of the paper which leads to the Limit Point Theorem. In Section 16, we consider the nice paths of tripods converging to accessible points described in the previous section, and show that a straight surface (or more generally an equivariant straight surface) gives rise to a deformation of these paths of tripods into paths of quasi-tripods, these latter paths being well behaved enough to have limit points according to the Limit Point Theorem. Then using the Improvement Theorem of Section 8, we show that this gives rise to a limit map for our surface groups that is Sullivan.

(xiii) The last section is a wrap-up of the previous results and finally in an Appendix, we present results and constructions dealing with the Levy–Prokhorov distance between measures.
Contents

1. Introduction 1
   1.1. Sullivan maps 2
   1.2. A quantitative surface subgroup theorem 2
   1.3. A tool: coarse geometry in flag manifolds 3
   1.4. A description of the content of this article 3

2. Preliminaries: $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triples 7
   2.1. $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triples and the flip assumption 7
   2.2. Parabolic subgroups and the flag manifold 8

3. Tripods and perfect triangles 9
   3.1. Tripods 9
   3.2. Tripods and perfect triangles of flags 10
   3.3. Structures and actions 11
   3.4. Tripods and metrics 14
   3.5. The contraction and diffusion constants 17

4. Quasi-tripods and finite paths of quasi-tripods 17
   4.1. Quasi-tripods 18
   4.2. Paths of quasi-tripods and coplanar paths of tripods 20
   4.3. Deformation of coplanar paths of tripods and sheared path of quasi-tripods 21

5. Cones, nested tripods and chords 22
   5.1. Cones and nested tripods 22
   5.2. Chords and slivers 23

6. The confinement Lemma 26

7. Infinite paths of quasi-tripods and their limit points 29
   7.1. Definitions: $\mathcal{Q}$-sequences and their deformations 30
   7.2. Main result: existence of a limit point 30
   7.3. Proof of the squeezing chords theorem 7.2.2 30
   7.4. Proof of the existence of limit points, Theorem 7.2.1 32

8. Sullivan limit curves 33
   8.1. Sullivan curves: definition and main results 34
   8.2. Paths of quasi triods and Sullivan maps 37
   8.3. Sullivan curves and the Hölder property: 41
   8.4. Sullivan curves and the Anosov property 41
   8.5. Improving Hölder derivatives 45

9. Pair of pants from triangles 46
   9.1. Stitched pair of pants 46
   9.2. Structure of a stitched pair of pants 48
   9.3. Closing pant theorem 48
   9.4. Closing lemma for tripods 49
   9.5. Preliminaries 49
   9.6. Proof of Lemma 9.4.1 50
   9.7. Proof of the Structure Pant Theorem 9.2.1 52
   9.8. Proof of the Closing Pant Theorem 9.3.2 52
   9.9. Negatively stitched pair of pants 52

10. Triconnected tripods and pair of pants 52
    10.1. Triconnected pair of tripods and almost Fuchsian pair of pants 53
    10.2. Lift of triconnected and biconnected tripods in the universal cover 53
2. Preliminaries: \(\mathfrak{sl}_2\)-triples

In this preliminary section, we recall some facts about \(\mathfrak{sl}_2\)-triples in Lie groups, the hyperbolic plane and discuss the flip assumption that we need to state our result. We also recall the construction of parabolic groups and the flag manifold whose geometry is going to play a fundamental role in this paper.

2.1. \(\mathfrak{sl}_2\)-triples and the flip assumption. Let \(G\) be a semisimple center free Lie group without compact factors.
Definition 2.1.1. An sl₂-triple [19] is \( s := (a, x, y) \in \mathfrak{g} \) so that \([a, x] = 2x, [a, y] = -2y\) and \([x, y] = a\).

An sl₂-triple \((a, x, y)\) is regular, if \(a\) is a regular element. The centralizer of a regular sl₂-triple is compact.

An sl₂-triple \((a, x, y)\) is even if all the eigenvalues of \(a\) by the adjoint representation are even.

An sl₂-triple \((a, x, y)\) generates a Lie algebra \(\mathfrak{a}\) isomorphic to \(\mathfrak{sl}(2, \mathbb{R})\) so that

\[
a = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}, \quad x = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad y = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.
\]  

(1)

For an even triple, the group whose Lie algebra is \(\mathfrak{a}\) is isomorphic to \(\text{PSL}_2(\mathbb{R})\).

Say an element \(J_0\) of \(G\) is a reflection for the sl₂-triplet \((a, x, y)\), if

- \(J_0\) is an involution and belongs to \(Z(\mathfrak{Z}(a))\)
- \(J_0(a, x, y) = (a, -x, -y)\) and in particular \(J_0\) normalizes the group generated by \(\mathfrak{sl}_2\) isomorphic to \(\text{PSL}_2(\mathbb{R})\), and acts by conjugation by the matrix \(\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}\)

An example of a reflection in the case of complex group is \(J_0 := \exp\left(\frac{i\zeta}{2}\right) \in G\), where \(\zeta\) be the smallest non zero real number so that \(\exp(i\zeta) = 1\).

Definition 2.1.2. [Flip assumption] We say that that the sl₂-triple \(s := (a, x, y)\) in \(G\) satisfies the flip assumption if \(s\) is even and there exists a reflection \(J_0\), so that belongs to the connected component of the identity of \(Z(\mathfrak{Z}(a))\) of \(a\) in \(G\).

In the regular case, we have a weaker assumption:

Definition 2.1.3. [Regular flip assumption] If the even sl₂-triple \(s\) is regular, we say that \(s\) satisfies the regular flip assumption if \(s\) is even and there exists a reflection \(J_0\) which belongs to the connected component of the identity of \(Z(\mathfrak{Z}(a))\).

The flip assumption for the sl₂-triplet \((a^0, x^0, y^0)\) in \(\mathfrak{g}\) will only be assumed in order to prove the even distribution Theorem 13.1.2.

In paragraph 13.2.2, we shall give examples of groups and \(s\)-triples satisfying the flip assumption.

2.2. Parabolic subgroups and the flag manifold. We recall standard facts about parabolic subgroups in real semi-simple Lie groups, for references see [5, Chapter VIII, §3, paragraphs 4 and 5]

2.2.1. Parabolic subgroups, flag manifolds, transverse flags. Let \(s = (a, x, y)\) be an sl₂-triple. Let \(g^1\) be the eigenspace associated to the eigenvalue \(\lambda\) for the adjoint action of \(a\) and let \(\mathfrak{v} = \bigoplus_{\lambda \neq 0} g^1\). Let \(P\) be the normalizer of \(\mathfrak{v}\). By construction, \(P\) is a parabolic subgroup and its Lie algebra is \(\mathfrak{v}\).

The associated flag manifold is the set \(F\) of all Lie subalgebras of \(\mathfrak{g}\) conjugated to \(\mathfrak{v}\). By construction, the choice of an element of \(F\) identifies \(F\) with \(G/P\). The group \(G\) acts transitively on \(F\) and the stabilizer of a point – or flag – \(x\) (denoted by \(P_x\)) is a parabolic subgroup.

Given \(a\), let now \(Q = \bigoplus_{\lambda \neq 0} g^1\). By definition, the normalizer \(Q\) of \(a\) is the opposite parabolic with respect to \(a\). Since in \(\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})\), \(a\) is conjugate to \(-a\), it follows that in this special case opposite parabolic subgroups are conjugate.
Two points $x$ and $y$ of $F$ are \textit{transverse} if their stabilizers are opposite parabolic subgroups. Then the stabilizer $L$ of the transverse pair of points is the intersection of two opposite parabolic subgroups, in particular its Lie algebra is $\mathfrak{g} - \lambda_0$, for the eigenvalue $\lambda_0 = 0$. Moreover, $L$ is the Levi part of $P$.

**Proposition 2.2.1.** The group $L$ is the centralizer of $a$.

\textit{Proof.} Obviously $Z(a)$ and $L$ have the same Lie algebra and $Z(a) \subset L$. When $G = \text{SL}(m, \mathbb{R})$ the result follows from the explicit description of $L$ as block diagonal group. In general, it is enough to consider a faithful linear representation of $G$ to get the result. $\square$

2.2.2. \textit{Loxodromic elements.} We say an element in $G$ is \textit{P-loxodromic}, if it has one attractive fixed point and one repulsive fixed point in $F$ and these two points are transverse. We will denote by $\lambda^-$ the repulsive fixed point of the loxodromic element $\lambda$ and by $\lambda^+$ its attractive fixed point in $F$. By construction, for any non trivial real number $s$, $\exp(sa)$ is a loxodromic element.

2.2.3. \textit{Weyl chamber.} Let $C = Z(L)$ be the centralizer of $L$. Since the 1-parameter subgroup generated by $a$ belongs to $L = Z(a)$, it follows that $C \subset L$ and $C$ is an abelian group. Let $A$ be the (connected) split torus in $C$. We now decompose $V^+$ and $V^-$ under the adjoint action of $A$ as $V^+ = \bigoplus_{\lambda \in R^+} V^\lambda$, where $R^+, R^- \subset A^*$, and $A$ acts on $V^\lambda$ by the weight $\lambda$. The \textit{positive Weyl chamber} is

$$W = \{ b \in A | \lambda(b) > 0 \text{ if } \lambda \in R^+ \} \subset A.$$ 

Observe that $W$ is an open cone that contains $a$.

3. Tripods and perfect triangles

We define here \textit{tripods} which are going to be one of the main tools of the proof. The first definition is not very geometric but we will give more flesh to it.

Namely, we will associate to a tripod a \textit{perfect triangle} that is a certain type of triple of points in a flag manifolds. We will define various actions and dynamics on the space of tripods. We will also associate to every tripod two important objects in $F$: a \textit{circle} (a certain class of embedding of $\text{P}(\mathbb{R})$ in $F$) as well as a metric on $F$.

3.1. \textit{Tripods.} Let $G$ be a semi-simple Lie group with trivial center and Lie algebra $\mathfrak{g}$. Let us fix a group $G_0$ isomorphic to $G$.

\textbf{Definition 3.1.1.} [Tripod] A tripod is an isomorphism from $G_0$ to $G$.

So far the terminology “tripod” is baffling. We will explain in the next section how tripods are related to triple of points in a flag manifolds.

We denote by $G$ the \textit{space of tripods}. To be more concrete, when one chooses $G_0 := \text{SL}_n(\mathbb{R})$ in the case of $G = \text{SL}(V)$, the space of tripods is exactly the set of frames. The space of tripods $G$ is a left principal $\text{Aut}(G)$-torsor as well a right principal $\text{Aut}(G_0)$-torsor where the actions are defined respectively by post-composition and pre-composition. These two actions commute.
3.1.1. Connected components. Let us fix a tripod $\xi_0 \in \mathcal{G}$, that is an isomorphism $\xi_0 : G_0 \to G$. Then the map defined from $G$ to $\mathcal{G}$ defined by $g \mapsto g^* \xi_0 : \mathcal{G}$, realizes an isomorphism from $G$ to the connected component of $\mathcal{G}$ containing $\xi$. Obviously $\text{Aut}(\mathcal{G})$ acts transitively on $\mathcal{G}$. We thus obtain

**Proposition 3.1.2.** Every connected component of $\mathcal{G}$ is identified (as a $G$-torsor) with $G$. Moreover, the number of connected components of $\mathcal{G}$ is equal to the cardinality of $\text{Out}(G)$.

3.1.2. Correct $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triples and circles. Throughout this paper, we fix an $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple $\mathfrak{s}_0 = (a_0, x_0, y_0)$ in $\mathfrak{g}_0$. Let $i_0$ be a Cartan involution that extends the standard Cartan involution of $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$, that is so that

$$i_0(a_0, x_0, y_0) = (-a_0, y_0, x_0).$$

(2)

Let then

- $S_0$ be the connected subgroup of $G_0$ whose Lie algebra is generated by $\mathfrak{s}_0$.
  The group $S_0$ is isomorphic either to $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$ or $\text{PSL}_2(\mathbb{R})$.
- $Z_0$ be the centralizer of $(a_0, x_0, y_0)$ in $G_0$,
- $L_0$ be the centralizer of $a_0$,
- $P_0^+$ be the parabolic subgroup associated to $a_0$ in $G_0$ and $P_0^-$ the opposite parabolic
- $N_0^+$ be the respective unipotent radicals of $P_0^+$.

**Definition 3.1.3.** [Correct $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-Triples] A correct $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple --with respect to the choice of $\mathfrak{s}_0$ -- is the image of $\mathfrak{s}_0$ by a tripod $\tau$. The space of correct $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple forms an orbit under the action of $\text{Aut}(G)$ conjugacy class of $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triples.

A correct $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple $\mathfrak{s}$ is thus identified with an embedding $\xi^\mathfrak{s}$ of $\mathfrak{s}_0$ in $G$ in a given orbit of $\text{Aut}(G)$.

**Definition 3.1.4.** [Circles] The circle map associated to the correct $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple $\mathfrak{s}$ is the unique $\xi^\mathfrak{s}$-equivariant map $\phi^\mathfrak{s}$ from $P^1(\mathbb{R})$ to $F$. The image of a circle map is a circle.

Since we can associate a correct $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple to a tripod, we can associate a circle map to a tripod.

We define a right $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$-action on $\mathcal{G}$ by restricting the $G$ action to $S_0$.

**Definition 3.1.5.** [Coplanar] Two tripods are coplanar is they belong to the same $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$-orbit.

3.2. Tripods and perfect triangles of flags. This paragraph will justify our terminology. We introduce perfect triangles which generalize ideal triangles in the hyperbolic plane and relate them to tripods.

**Definition 3.2.1.** [Perfect triangle] Let $\mathfrak{s} = (a, x, y)$ be a correct $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple. The associated perfect triangle is the triple of flags $t_\mathfrak{s} := (t^-, t^+, t^0)$ which are the attractive fixed points of the 1-parameter subgroups generated respectively by $a$, $-a$ and $a + 2y$. We denote by $T$ the space of perfect triangles.

We represent in Figure (1) graphically a perfect triangle $(t^-, t^+, t^0)$ as a triangle whose vertices are $(t^-, t^+, t^0)$ with an arrow from $t^-$ to $t^+$.

If $G = \text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$, then the perfect triangle associated to the standard $\mathfrak{sl}_2$-triple $(a_0, x_0, y_0)$ described in equation (1) is $(0, \infty, 1)$, the perfect triangle associated to $(a_0, -x_0, -y_0)$ is $(0, \infty, -1)$. As a consequence
Definition 3.2.2. [Vertices of a tripod] Let \( \phi_\tau \) be the circle map associated to a tripod. The set of vertices associated to \( \tau \) is the perfect triangle \( \partial \tau := \phi_\tau(0, \infty, 1) \).

Observe that any triple of distinct points in a circle is a perfect triangle and that, if two tripods are coplanar, their vertices lie in the same circle.

3.2.1. Space of perfect triangles. The group \( G \) acts on the space of tripods, the space of \( s\ell_2 \)-triples and the space of perfect triangles.

Proposition 3.2.3. [Stabilizer of a perfect triangle] Let \( t = (u, v, w) \) be a perfect triangle associated to a correct \( s\ell_2 \)-triple \( s \). Then the stabilizer of \( t \) in \( G \) is the centralizer \( Z_s \) of \( s \).

Proof. Let \( \xi, u, v \) and \( w \) be as above. Denote by \( L_{x,y} \) the stabilizer of a pair of transverse points \( (x, y) \) in \( F \). Let also \( A_{x,y} = L_{x,y} \cap S \), where \( S \) is the group generated by \( s\ell_2 \). Observe that \( A_{x,y} \) is a 1-parameter subgroup. By Proposition 2.2.1, \( L_{x,y} \) is the centralizer of \( A_{x,y} \). Now given three distinct points in the projective line, the group generated by the three diagonal subgroups \( A_{u,v}, A_{v,w} \) and \( A_{u,w} \) is \( SL_2(\mathbf{R}) \). Thus the stabilizer of a perfect triangle is the centralizer of \( s \), that is \( Z_s \). \( \square \)

Corollary 3.2.4. (i) The map \( s \mapsto t_s \) defines a \( G \)-equivariant homeomorphism from the space of correct triples to the space of perfect triangles.

(ii) We have \( \mathcal{T} = G/Z_0 \) and the map \( \partial : G \to \mathcal{T} \) is a (right) \( Z_0 \)-principal bundle.

A perfect triangle \( t \), then defines a correct \( s\ell_2 \)-triple and thus an homomorphism denoted \( \xi^t \) from \( SL_2(\mathbf{R}) \) to \( G \).

It will be convenient in the sequel to describe a tripod \( \tau \) as a quadruple \( (H, t^-, t^+, t^0) \), where \( t = (t^-, t^+, t^0) =: \partial \tau \) is a perfect triangle and \( H \) is the set of all tripods coplanar to \( \tau \). We write
\[
\partial \tau = (t^-, t^+, t^0), \quad \partial^\tau = t^-, \quad \partial^+ \tau = t^+, \quad \partial^0 \tau = t^0.
\]

3.3. Structures and actions. We have already described commuting left \( Aut(G) \) and right \( Aut(G_0) \) actions on \( \mathcal{G} \) and in particular of \( G \) and \( G_0 \).

Since \( Z_0 \) is the centralizer of \( s_0 \), we also obtain a right action of \( SL_2(\mathbf{R}) \) on \( \mathcal{T} \), as well as a left \( G \)-action, commuting together.

We summarize the properties of the actions (and specify some notation) in the following list.

(i) Actions of \( G \) and \( G_0 \)

(a) the transitive left \( G \)-action on \( \mathcal{T} \) is given – in the interpretation of triangles – by \( g(f_1, f_2, f_3) := (g(f_1), g(f_2), g(f_3)) \). Interpreting, perfect triangles as morphisms \( \xi \) from \( SL_2(\mathbf{R}) \) to \( G \) in the class of \( \rho \), then \( g \cdot \xi(x) = g \cdot \xi(x) \cdot g^{-1} \).
(b) The (right)-action of an element $b$ of $G_0$ on $G$ is denoted by $R_b$.
We have the relation $R_g \cdot \tau = \tau(g) \cdot \tau$.

(ii) The right $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$-action on $G$ and $T$ gives rise to a flow, an involution and order 3 symmetry as follows;
(a) The shearing flow $\{\varphi_s\}_{s \in \mathbb{R}}$ is given by $\varphi_s := R_{\exp(s \xi)}$ on $G$. – See Figure (2b). if we denote by $\xi$ the embedding of $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{R})$ given by the perfect triangle $t = (t^-, t^+, t_0^3)$, then

\[ \varphi_s(H,t^-, t^+, t_0^3) := \left( H, t^-, t^+, \exp(sa) \cdot t_0^3 \right), \]
where $a = T\xi(\sigma^0)$ and $Tf$ denote the tangent map to a map $f$. We say that $\varphi_R(t)$ is $R$-sheared from $t$.

(b) The reflection $\sigma : t \mapsto \tilde{t}$ is given on $G$ by $\tilde{t} = \tau \cdot \sigma$, where $\sigma \in \text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$ is the involution defined by $\sigma(0,0,1) = (0,\infty,-1)$. For the point of view of tripods via perfect triangles

\[ \overline{(H, t^+, t^-, t_0^3)} = (H, t^-, t^+, t_0^3), \]
where $t^-, t^+, t_0^3, s_0^3$ form a harmonic division on a circle – See Figure (2b).

With the same notation the involution on $T$ is given by $(t^+, t^-, t_0^3) = (t^-, t^+, s_0^3)$.

(c) The rotation $\omega$ of order 3 – see Figure (2a) – is defined on $G$ by $\omega(t) = \tau \cdot R_{\omega}$, where $R_{\omega} \in \text{PSL}_2(\mathbb{R})$ is defined by $R_{\omega}(0,1,\infty) = (1,\infty,0)$. For the point of view of tripods via perfect triangles

\[ \omega(H,t^-, t^+, t_0^3) = (H, t^+, t^0, t^-), \]

Similarly the action of $\omega$ on $T$ is given by $\omega(t^-, t^+ , t_0^3) = (t^+, t_0^3, t^-)$.

(iii) Two foliations $U^-$ and $U^+$ on $G$ and $T$ called respectively the stable and unstable foliations. The leaf of $U^+$ is defined as the right orbit of respectively $N_0^+$ and $N_0$ (normalized by $Z_0$) and alternatively by

\[ U_+^\tau := U^\tau (\tau), \]
where $U^\tau(\tau)$ is the unipotent radical of the stabilizer of $\partial^\tau$ under the left action of $G$. We also define the central stable and central unstable foliations by the right actions of respectively $P_0^+$ or alternatively by

\[ U^{+,0}_{\tau} := U^{+,0}(\tau), \]
where $U^{+,0}(t)$ is the stabilizer of $\partial^\tau$ under the left action of $G$. Observe that $U^{+,0}(t)$ is both conjugated to $P_0$.

(iv) A foliation, called the central foliation, $L_0$ whose leaves are the right orbits of $L_0$ on $G$, naturally invariant under the action of the flow $\{\varphi_s\}_{s \in \mathbb{R}}$. Alternatively,

\[ L_0^\tau = L_0(\tau), \]
where $L_0(\tau)$ is the stabilizer in $G$ of $(\partial^\tau, \partial^- \tau)$.

Then we have

**Proposition 3.3.1.** The following properties hold:

(i) the action of $G$ commutes with the flow $\{\varphi_s\}_{s \in \mathbb{R}}$, the involution $\sigma$ and the permutation $\omega$.

(ii) For any real number $s$ and tripod $\tau$, $\varphi_s(\tau) = \varphi_{-s}(\tau)$.

(iii) The foliations $U^+$ and $U^-$ are invariant by the left action of $G$. 
(iv) Moreover the leaves of $U^+$ and $U^-$ on $G$ are respectively uniformly contracted (with respect to any left $G$-invariant Riemannian metric) and dilated by the action of $\{R_{\exp(itu)}\}_{t \in \mathbb{R}}$ for $u$ in the interior of the positive Weyl chamber and $t > 0$.

(v) The flow $\{\varphi_t\}_{t \in \mathbb{R}}$ acts by isometries along the leaves of $L_0$.

(vi) We have $\tau \in U^+_{\eta}$ if and only if $\partial^\tau = \partial^\eta$.

Proof. The first three assertions are immediate.

Let us choose a tripod $\tau$ so that $G$ is identified respectively with $G_0$. If $d$ is a left invariant metric associated to a norm $\|\cdot\|_g$ on $g$, the image of $d$ under the right action of an element $g$ is associated to the norm $\|\cdot\|_g$ so that $\|u\|_g = \|\text{ad}(g)\cdot u\|$. The fourth and fifth assertion follow from that description.

For the last assertion, $U^+_{\tau} = U^+_{\eta}$, if and only if the stabilizer of $\partial^\tau$ and $\partial^\eta$ are the same. The result follows.

Corollary 3.3.2. [Contracting along leaves] For any left invariant Riemannian metric $d$ on $G$, there exists a constant $M$ only depending on $G$ so that if $\varepsilon$ is small enough, then for all positive $R$, the following two properties hold:

$$d(u, v) \leq \varepsilon, \quad d(\varphi_R(u), \varphi_R(v)) \leq \varepsilon \quad \Rightarrow \quad \forall t \in [0, R], \quad d(\varphi_t(u), \varphi_t(v)) \leq Me,$$

$$\partial^u = \partial^v, \quad d(u, v) \leq \varepsilon \quad \Rightarrow \quad \forall t < 0, \quad d(\varphi_t(u), \varphi_t(v)) \leq Me.$$ 

3.3.1. A special map. We consider the map $K$ – see Figure (3) – defined from $T$ or $\tilde{G}$ to itself by

$$K(x) := \omega(\tilde{x}).$$

Later on, we shall need the following property of this map $K$. 

Figure 3. The map $K$.
Proposition 3.3.3. For any \((x, y, z)\) in \(\mathcal{T}\), \(K(x, y, z) = (x, z, t)\) for some \(t\) in \(F\). The map \(K\) preserves each leaf of the foliation \(\mathcal{U}^\phi\).

Proof. This follows from the point (vi) in Proposition 3.3.1.

3.4. Tripods and metrics. We denote by \(\text{Sym}(G)\) the symmetric space of \(G\). Let us first recall some facts about totally geodesic spaces \(\text{Sym}(G)\).

Let \(H\) be a subgroup of \(G\). The \(H\)-orbit of a Cartan involution preserving \(h\) is a totally geodesic subspace of \(G\) isometric to \(\text{Sym}(H)\) – we then say of type \(H\).

Any two totally geodesic spaces \(H_1\) and \(H_2\) of the same type are parallel: that is for all \(x_i \in H_i\), inf\((d(x_i, y) \mid y \in H_{i+1})\) is constant and equal by definition to the distance \(h(H_1, H_2)\).

The space of parallel totally geodesic subspaces to a given one is isometric to \(\text{Sym}(Z)\) if \(Z\) is the centralizer of \(H\), and in particular reduced to a point if \(Z\) is compact.

3.4.1. Totally geodesic hyperbolic planes. By assumption (2), if \(\tau\) is a tripod, the Cartan involution

\[ i_\tau := i_0 \circ i_0 \circ \tau^{-1} \]

send the correct \(sl_2\)-triple \((a, x, y)\) associated to tripod \(\tau\) to \((-a, y, x)\). It follows that the image of a right \(\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})\)-orbit gives rise to a totally geodesic embedding of the hyperbolic plane denoted \(\eta_1\) and that we call correct and which is equivariant under the action of a correct \(\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})\).

Observe also that a totally geodesic embedding of \(H^2\) in \(\text{Sym}(G)\) is the same thing as a totally geodesic hyperbolic plane \(H\) in \(\text{Sym}(G)\) with three given points in the boundary at infinity in \(H\).

Let us consider \(H\) the space of correct totally geodesic maps from \(H^2\) to the symmetric space \(\text{Sym}(G)\).

Proposition 3.4.1. The space \(H\) is equipped with a transitive action of \(\text{Aut}(G)\) and a right action of \(\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})\).

We have also have \(\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R}) \times G\) equivariant maps

\[ \mathcal{G} \to H \to \mathcal{T}, \]
\[ \tau \mapsto \eta_\tau \mapsto \partial \tau \]

so that the composition is the map \(\partial\) which associates to a tripod its vertices. Moreover if the centralizer of the correct \(sl_2\)-triple is compact then \(H = \mathcal{T}\).

Proof. We described above that map \(\tau \mapsto \eta_\tau\). By construction this map is \(\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R}) \times G\) equivariant. The map \(\partial\) from \(\mathcal{G}\) to \(\mathcal{T}\) obviously factors through this map.

If the centralizer of a correct \(\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})\) in \(G\), is compact then all correct parallel hyperbolic planes are identical. The result follows.

From this point of view, a tripod \(\tau\) defines

(i) A totally geodesic hyperbolic plane \(H^2_\tau\) in \(S(G)\), with three preferred points denoted \(\tau(0), \tau(\infty), \tau(1)\) in \(\partial_\infty H^2_\tau\).

(ii) An \(\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})\)-equivariant map \(\phi^\tau\) from \(\partial_\infty H^2_\tau\) to \(F\), so that

\[ \phi^\tau((\tau(0), \tau(\infty), \tau(1)) = \partial \tau. \]
3.4.2. Metrics, cones, and projection on the symmetric space.

Definition 3.4.2. [Projection and metrics] We define the projection from $\mathcal{G}$ to $\text{Sym}(\mathcal{G})$ to be the map

$$s : \tau \mapsto s(\tau) := \eta(\tau).$$

In other words, $s(\tau)$ is the orthogonal projection of $\tau(1)$ on the geodesic $[\tau(0), \tau(\infty)]$ – see figure (4). The metric on $\mathfrak{g}$ associated to $s(\tau)$ is denoted by $d_\tau$, and so are the associated metrics on $\mathcal{F}$ – seen as a subset of the Grassmannian in $\mathcal{F}$ – and the right invariant metric on $\mathcal{G}$ defined by

$$d_\tau(g, h) = \sup\{d_\tau(g(x), h(x)) \mid x \in \mathcal{F}\}. \quad (4)$$

Accordingly we denote by $d_0$ the metrics on $\mathfrak{g}_0$ and $\mathcal{G}_0$ associated to our choice of the $\text{sl}_2$-triple $s_0$ in $\mathfrak{g}_0$. As a particular case, a triple $\tau$ of three pairwise distinct points in $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$ defines a metric $d_\tau$ on $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$ – so that $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$ is isometric to $S^1$ – that is called the visual metric of $\tau$. The following properties of the assignment $\tau \mapsto d_\tau$, for $d_\tau$ a metric on $\mathcal{F}$ will be crucial.

(i) For every $g$ in $\mathcal{G}$, $d_\tau(g(x), g(y)) = d_\tau(x, y)$,

(ii) The circle map associated to any tripod $\tau$ is an isometry from $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$ equipped with the visual of $(0, 1, \infty)$ to $\mathcal{F}$ equipped with $d_\tau$.

3.4.3. Elementary properties. We have the two following elementary propositions. Let us equip once and for all $\mathcal{G}$ by a Riemannian metric $d$ invariant under the left action of $\mathcal{G}$, as well as the action of $\omega$. First since $d_\tau$ only depends on $s(\tau)$, As a corollary

Proposition 3.4.3. For all tripod $\tau$: $d_\tau = d_\tau$.

Moreover

Proposition 3.4.4. If the stabilizer of $s$ is compact, $d_\tau$ only depends on $\partial \tau$.

Proof. In that case the map $\eta \mapsto \partial \tau$ is an isomorphism, by Proposition 3.4.1. \hfill \Box

Proposition 3.4.5. [Metric equivalences] For every positive numbers $A$ and $\varepsilon$, there exists a positive number $B$ so that if $\tau, \tau' \in \mathcal{T}$ are tripods and $g \in \mathcal{G}$, then

$$d_\tau(g, \text{Id}) \leq \varepsilon \text{ and } d(\tau, \tau') \leq A \implies d_\tau(g, \text{Id}) \leq B \cdot d(\tau, \tau').$$
Similarly, for all \( u, v \) in \( \mathbf{F} \) and \( g \in \mathbf{G} \)

\[
\begin{align*}
    d(\tau, \tau') &\leq A \quad \implies \quad d_\tau(u, v) \leq B \cdot d_\tau(u, v) , \\
    d(\tau, \mathbf{g} \tau) &\leq \epsilon \quad \implies \quad d_\tau(g, \mathbf{Id}) \leq B \cdot d(\tau, g \tau) ,
\end{align*}
\]

(5)

**Proof.** Let \( U(\epsilon) \) be a compact neighborhood of \( \text{Id} \). The \( \mathbf{G} \)-equivariance of the map \( d : \tau \mapsto d_\tau \) implies the continuity of \( d \) seen as a map from \( \mathbf{G} \) to \( C^1(U(\epsilon) \times U(\epsilon)) \) equipped with uniform convergence. The first result follows. The second assertion follows by a similar argument.

For the inequality (5), let us fix a tripod \( \tau_0 \). The metrics

\[
(g, h) \mapsto d_{\tau_0}(g, h), \quad (g, h) \mapsto d(h^{-1} \cdot \tau_0, g^{-1} \cdot \tau_0) ,
\]

are both right invariant Riemannian metrics on \( \mathbf{G} \). In particular, they are locally bilipschitz and thus there exists some \( B \) so that

\[
d(\tau_0, \mathbf{g} \tau_0) \leq \epsilon \implies d_{\tau_0}(g, \text{Id}) \leq B \cdot d(\tau_0, g \tau_0) = B \cdot d(\tau_0, \mathbf{g} \tau_0) .
\]

We now propagate this inequality to any tripod using the equivariance: writing \( \tau = h \cdot \tau_0 \), we get that assuming \( d(\tau, \mathbf{g} \cdot \tau) \leq \epsilon \), then

\[
d(\tau_0, h^{-1} gh \cdot \tau_0) = d(h \cdot \tau_0, gh \cdot \tau) = d(\tau, \mathbf{g} \cdot \tau) \leq \epsilon .
\]

Thus according to the previous implication,

\[
d_{\tau_0}(h^{-1} gh, \text{Id}) \leq B \cdot d(\tau_0, h^{-1} gh \cdot \tau_0) = B \cdot d(\tau, \mathbf{g} \cdot \tau) .
\]

The result follows from the equalities \( d_{\tau_0}(h^{-1} gh, \text{Id}) = d_{h^{-1} \tau_0}(gh, h) = d_\tau(g, \text{Id}) . \)

As a corollary

**Corollary 3.4.6.** \([\omega \text{ is uniformly Lipschitz}]\) There exists a constant \( C \) so that for all \( \tau \)

\[
\frac{1}{C} d_\tau \leq d_\omega(\tau) \leq d_\tau .
\]

### 3.4.4. Aligning tripods

We explain a slightly more sophisticated way to control tripod distances.

Let \( \tau_0 \) and \( \tau_1 \) are two coplanar tripods associated to a totally geodesic hyperbolic plane \( \mathbf{H}^2 \) and a circle \( C \) identified with \( \partial \omega \mathbf{H}^2 \) so that \( z_1, z_0 \in C \). We say that \( (z_0, \tau_0, \tau_1, z_1) \) are **aligned** if there exists a geodesic \( \gamma \) in \( \mathbf{H}^2 \), passing through \( s(\tau_0) \) and \( s(\tau_1) \) starting at \( z_0 \) and ending in \( z_1 \). In the generic case \( s(\tau_0) \neq s(\tau_1) \), \( z_1 \) and \( z_0 \) are uniquely determined.

We first have the following property which is standard for \( \mathbf{G} = \text{SL}(2, \mathbb{R}) \),

**Proposition 3.4.7.** \([\text{Aligning tripods}]\) There exist positive constants \( K, c \) and \( \alpha_0 \) only depending on \( \mathbf{G} \) so that if \( (z_0, \tau_0, \tau_1, z_1) \) are aligned and associated to a circle \( C \subset \mathbf{F} \) the following holds: Let \( w \in C \) satisfying \( d_{\tau_1}(w, z_1) \leq 3\pi/4 \), then we have

\[
d_{\tau_1}(w, u) \leq \alpha_0 , \quad d_{\tau_1}(w, v) \leq \alpha_0 \quad \implies \quad d_{\tau_0}(u, v) \leq \frac{K}{4} e^{-c d(\tau_0, \tau_1)} \cdot d_{\tau_1}(u, v) .
\]

(6)

**Proof.** There exists a correct \( s_3 \)-triple \( s = (a, x, y) \) fixing the totally geodesic plane \( \mathbf{H}^2_0 \) so that the 1-parameter group \( \lambda_t \) generated by \( a \) fixes \( C \) and has \( z_1 \) as an attractive fixed point and \( z_0 \) as a repulsive fixed point in \( \mathbf{F} \). Let \( t \) the positive number defined by \( \lambda_t(s(\tau_0)) = s(\tau_1) \).

Recall that by construction \( d_\tau \) only depends on \( s(\tau) \). Let \( B \subset C \) be the closed ball of center \( z_1 \) and radius \( 3\pi/4 \) with respect to \( d_{\tau_1} \). Observe that \( B \) lies in the basin of
attraction of $H$ and so does $U$ a closed neighborhood of $B$. In particular, we have that the 1-parameter group $H$ converges $C^1$-uniformly to a constant on $U$. Thus,

$$\exists K_0, d > 0, \forall u, v \in U, \forall t \geq 0, \quad d_{\tau_1}(\lambda_t(u), \lambda_t(v)) \leq K_0 e^{-dt} \cdot d_{\tau_1}(u, v).$$  \tag{7}

Recall that for all $u, v$ in $F$, since $s(\lambda_{-t_1}(\tau_1)) = s(\tau_0)$.

$$d_{\tau_1}(\lambda_{t_1}(u), \lambda_{t_1}(u)) = d_{\lambda_{-t_1}(\tau_1)}(u, v) = d_{\tau_1}(u, v)$$  \tag{8}

Finally, there exists $\alpha > 0$, only depending on $G$ so that for any $w$ in $B$, the ball $B_w$ of radius $\alpha$ with respect to $d_{\tau_1}$ lies in $U$. Thus, combining (7) and (8) we get

$$d_{\tau_0}(u, v) \leq K_0 e^{dt} d_{\tau_1}(u, v).$$

This concludes the proof of Statement (6) since there exists constants $B$ and $C$ so that $d(\tau_0, \tau_1) \leq Bt_1 + C$. \hfill $\square$

3.5. **The contraction and diffusion constants.** The constant $K$ will be called the diffusion constant and $\kappa := K^{-1}$ is called the contraction constant.

4. **Quasi-tripods and finite paths of quasi-tripods**

We now want to describe a coarse geometry in the flag manifold; our main devices will be the following: paths of quasi-tripods and coplanar paths of tripods. Since not all triple of points lie in a circle in $F$, we need to introduce a deformation of the notion of tripods. This is achieved throughout the definition of quasi-tripod 4.1.1.

A **coplanar path of tripods** is just a sequence of non overlapping ideal triangles in some hyperbolic plane such that any ideal triangle have a common edge with the next one. Then a path of quasi-tripods is a deformation of that, such a path can also be described as a model which is deformed by a sequence of specific elements of $G$.

Our goal is the following. The common edges of a coplanar path of tripods, considered as intervals in the boundary at infinity of the hyperbolic plane, defines a sequence of nested intervals. We want to show that in certain circumstances, the corresponding chords of the deformed path of quasi-tripods are still nested in the deformed sense that we introduced in the preceding sections.

One of our main result is then the confinement Lemma 6.0.1 which guarantees squeezing.
4.1. Quasi-tripods. Quasi-tripods will make sense of the notion of a “deformed ideal triangle”. Related notions are defined: sheared quasi-tripods, and the foot map.

Definition 4.1.1. [Quasi-tripods] An \( \varepsilon \)-quasi tripod is a quadruple \( \theta = (\hat{\theta}, \theta^-\theta^+, \theta^0) \in \mathcal{G} \times F^3 \) so that

\[
d_\theta^{\varepsilon}(\hat{\theta}^+\hat{\theta}, \theta^+) \leq \varepsilon, \quad d_\theta^{\varepsilon}(\hat{\theta}^-\hat{\theta}, \theta^-) \leq \varepsilon, \quad d_\theta^{\varepsilon}(\hat{\theta}^0\hat{\theta}, \theta^0) \leq \varepsilon.
\]

The set \( \partial \theta := \{ \theta^+, \theta^-, \theta^0 \} \) is the set of vertices of \( \theta \) and \( \hat{\theta} \) is the interior of \( \theta \). An \( \varepsilon \)-quasi tripod \( \tau \) is reduced if \( \hat{\tau}^\pm = \tau^\pm \).

Obviously a tripod defines an \( \varepsilon \)-quasi tripod for all \( \varepsilon \). Moreover, some of the actions defined on tripods in Paragraph 3.3 extend to \( \varepsilon \)-quasi tripods, most notably, we have an action of a cyclic permutation \( \omega \) of order three on the set of quasi-tripods, given by

\[
\omega(\hat{\theta}, \theta^-, \theta^+, \theta^0) = (\omega(\hat{\theta}), \theta^+, \theta^+, \theta^-).
\]

By Corollary 3.4.6,

Proposition 4.1.2. There is a constant \( M \) only depending on \( \mathcal{G} \), such that if \( \theta \) is an \( \varepsilon \)-quasi tripod then, \( \omega(\theta) \) is an \( M \varepsilon \)-quasi tripod

4.1.1. A foot map. For any positive \( \beta \), let us consider the following \( \mathcal{G} \)-stable set

\[
W_\beta := \{(\tau, a^+, a^-) \mid \tau \in \mathcal{G}, a^+ \in F, \ d_\tau(a^+, \hat{a}^\pm \tau) \leq \beta \} \subset \mathcal{G} \times F^2.
\]

Lemma 4.1.3. There exists positive numbers \( \beta \) and \( M_1 \), a smooth \( \mathcal{G} \)-equivariant map \( \Psi : W_\beta \rightarrow \mathcal{G} \), so that

(i) \( \partial^\pm \Psi(\tau, a^+, a^-) = a^\pm \),

(ii) \( d(\tau, \Psi(\tau, a^+, a^-)) \leq M :\sup(d_\tau(a^+, \hat{a}^\pm \tau)) \).

(iii) \( \Psi \) is \( M_1 \)-Lipschitz.

Proof. For a transverse pair \( a = (a^+, a^-) \) in \( F \), let \( \mathcal{G}_a \) be the set of tripods \( \tau \in \mathcal{G} \) so that \( \hat{\tau}^\pm = a^\pm \) and \( \mathcal{G}_a \) the stabilizer of the pair \( a^+, a^- \). Let us fix (in a \( \mathcal{G} \)-equivariant way) a small enough tubular neighborhood \( N_\beta \) of \( \mathcal{G}_a \) in \( \mathcal{G} \) for all transverse pairs \( a = (a^+, a^-) \) as well as a \( \mathcal{G}_a \)-equivariant projection \( \Pi_a \) from \( N_\beta \) to \( \mathcal{G}_a \). By continuity one gets that for \( \beta \) small enough, if \( (\tau, a^+, a^-) \in W_\beta \) then \( \tau \in N_\beta \). We now define

\[
\Psi(\tau, a^+, a^-) := \Pi_a(\tau) = \psi_1(\tau, a^+, a^-)
\]

By \( \mathcal{G} \)-equivariance, \( \Psi \) is uniformly Lipschitz.

Definition 4.1.4. [Foot map and feet] A map \( \Psi \) satisfying the conclusion of the lemma is called a foot map. For \( \varepsilon \) small enough, we define the feet \( \psi_1(\theta) \), \( \psi_2(\theta) \) and \( \psi_3(\theta) \) of the \( \varepsilon \)-quasi tripod \( \theta = (\hat{\theta}, \theta^-, \theta^+, \theta^0) \) as the three tripods which are respectively defined by

\[
\psi_1(\theta) := \Psi(\hat{\theta}, \theta^-, \theta^+), \quad \psi_2(\theta) := \psi_1(\omega(\theta)), \quad \psi_3(\theta) := \psi_1(\omega^2(\theta)).
\]

Where \( \Psi \) is the foot map defined in the preceding section.

By the last item of Lemma 4.1.3, for an \( \varepsilon \), quasi tripod \( \theta \)

\[
d(\psi_1(\theta), \omega^{j-1}(\hat{\theta})) \leq M_1 \varepsilon,
\]

Observe also that, for \( \varepsilon \) small enough there exists a constant \( M_2 \) only depending on \( \mathcal{G} \), so that for \( \varepsilon \) small enough if \( \theta \) is an \( \varepsilon \)-quasi tripod then

\[
d(\omega(\psi_1(\theta)), \psi_2(\theta)) \leq M_2 \varepsilon, \quad d(\omega(\psi_2(\theta)), \psi_3(\theta)) \leq M_2 \varepsilon.
\]
Using the triangle inequality, this is a consequence of the previous inequality and the assumption that ω is an isometry for d.

4.1.2. Foot map and flow. The following property explains how well the foot map behaves with respect to the flow action.

**Proposition 4.1.5. [Foot and flow]**

There exists positive constants β₁ and M₅ with the following property. Let ε ≤ β₁, let x₀ ∈ G, x₁ := φᵣ(x₀) for some R. Let a = (a⁺, a⁻) be a transverse pair of flags F, so that d₄(a⁺, ∂⁺x₁) ≤ ε, then

\[ d(y₁, φᵣ(y₀)) ≤ M₃ε, \]

where y₁ = Ψ(x₁, a⁺, a⁻).

**Proof.** In the proof M₅ will denote a constant only depending on G.

It is enough to prove the weaker result that there exists z₀, z₁ = φᵣ(z₀) in Gₙ so that d(zᵢ, xᵢ) ≤ M₇ε. Indeed, it first follows that (zᵢ, yᵢ) ≤ M₈ε by the triangle inequality. Secondly, Gₙ is a central leaf of the foliation and the flow acts by isometries on it (see Property (v) of Proposition 3.3.1), it then follows that d(y₁, φᵣ(y₀)) ≤ M₉ε and the result follows.

Observe first that d(xᵢ, yᵢ) ≤ M₆ by definition of a foot map. Assume R > 0. Let x⁺ = ∂⁺x₀ = ∂⁺x₁. Let us first assume that x⁺ = a⁺. Thus by the contraction property

\[ d(φᵣ(x₀), φᵣ(y₀)) ≤ M₂ε. \]

It follows by the triangle inequality that

\[ d(φᵣ(y₀), y₁) ≤ M₅ε. \]

Thus this works with z₀ = y₀, z₁ = φᵣ(z₀).

The same results hold symmetrically whenever x⁻ = a⁻ by taking z₁ = y₁, z₀ = φ⁻ᵣ(z₁).

The general case follows by considering intermediate projections. First (as a consequence of our initial argument) we find w₀ and w₁ = φᵣ(w₀) in G⁺⁺,⁺⁻ with d(w₁, x₁) ≤ M₃ε.

Applying now the symmetric argument with the pair w₀, w₁ and projection on G⁺⁺,⁻⁻ we get z₀ and z₁ := φᵣ(z₀) so that d(w₁, z₁) ≤ M₃ε.

A simple combination of triangle inequalities yield the result. □

4.1.3. Shearing quasi-tripods.

**Definition 4.1.6. [Shearing quasi-tripods]** The ε-quasi tripod θ' is (R, α)-sheared from the ε-quasi tripod θ if

(i) ∂⁺θ = ∂⁺θ'.

(ii) The tripods ψ₁(θ') and φᵣ(ψ₁(θ)) are α-close.

Being sheared is a reciprocal condition:

**Proposition 4.1.7.** If θ' is (R, α)-sheared from θ, then θ is (R, α)-sheared from θ'.

**Proof.** We have d(φᵣ(θ), θ') = d(φᵣ(θ), σ(θ')). Since ∂⁺θ = ∂⁺θ', φᵣ acts by isometries on the orbits of L₀, we get

\[ d(φᵣ(θ), θ') = d(φᵣ(θ), σ(θ')) = d((θ, φᵣ⁻¹(σ(θ'))). \]

But, by Proposition 3.3.1 again, φᵣ⁻¹ ◦ σ = σ ◦ φᵣ. The result follows. □
4.2. Paths of quasi-tripods and coplanar paths of tripods.

4.2.1. Sheared paths of quasi-tripods and their model. Let $R(N) = (R_0, \ldots, R_N)$ be a finite sequence of positive numbers.

**Definition 4.2.1.** [Coplanar paths of tripods] An $R(N)$-sheared coplanar path of tripods is a sequence of tripods $\tau(N) = (\tau_0, \ldots, \tau_N)$ such that $\tau_{i+1}$ is $R_i$-sheared from $\omega^{n_i} \tau_i$, where $n_i \in \{1, 2\}$. The sequence $(n_1, \ldots, n_N)$ is the combinatorics of the path.

We remark that a coplanar path of tripods consists of pairwise coplanar tripods and is totally determined up to the action of $G$ by $R(N)$ and the combinatorics. These coplanar paths of tripods will represent the model situation and we need to deform them.

**Definition 4.2.2.** [Paths of quasi-tripods] An $(R(N), \varepsilon)$-sheared path of quasi-tripods is a sequence of $\varepsilon$-quasi tripods $\theta(N) = (\theta_0, \ldots, \theta_N)$, and such that $\theta_{i+1}$ is $(R_i, \varepsilon)$-sheared from $\omega^{n_i} \theta_i$, where $n_i \in \{1, 2\}$. The sequence $(n_1, \ldots, n_N)$ is the combinatorics of the path.

A model of an $(R(N), \varepsilon)$-sheared path of quasi-tripods is an $R(N)$-sheared coplanar path of tripods with the same combinatorics.

Let us introduce some notation and terminology: $\partial \theta_i$, $\partial \theta_{i+1}$ and $\partial \theta_{i-1}$ have exactly one point in common denoted $x_i$ and called the pivot of $\theta_i$.

**Remarks:** Observe that given a path of quasi-tripods,

(i) There exists some constant $M$, so that any $(R(N), \varepsilon)$-sheared path of quasi-tripods give rise to an $(R(N), M\varepsilon)$-sheared path of quasi-tripods with the same vertices but which are all reduced. In the sequel, we shall mostly consider such reduced paths of quasi-tripods.

(ii) From the previous items, in the case of reduced path, the sequence of triangles $(\theta_0, \ldots, \theta_N)$ is actually determined by the sequence of (not necessarily coplanar) tripods $(\theta_0, \ldots, \theta_N)$.

One immediately have

**Proposition 4.2.3.** Any $(R(N), \varepsilon)$-sheared path of quasi-tripods admits a model which is unique up to the action of $G$.

4.2.2. Coplanar paths of tripods and sequence of chords. To a reduced path of quasi-tripods $\tau(N)$ we associate a path of chords $h(N) = (h_0, \ldots, h_N)$
such that \( h_i := h^x_i \) has \( x_i \) and \( x'_i \) as extremities. Observe, that the subsequence of triangles \((\theta_0, \ldots, \theta_{N-1})\) is actually determined by the sequence of chords \((h_0, \ldots, h_N)\).

In the sequel, by an abuse of language, we shall call the sequence of chords \( h^\varepsilon(N) \) a path of quasi-tripods as well.

Observe that for a coplanar path of tripods the associated path of chords is so that \((h_i, h_{i+1})\) is nested.

4.2.3. Deformation of coplanar paths of tripods. Let \( \Gamma = (\tau_0, \ldots, \tau_N) \) be a coplanar path of tripods.

**Definition 4.2.4.** [Definition of paths] A deformation of \( \tau \) is a sequence \( \varepsilon = (g_0 \ldots g_N) \) with \( g_i \in P_{x_i} \) the stabilizer of \( x_i \) in \( G \), where \( x_i \) is the pivot of \( \tau_i \). The deformation is an \( \varepsilon \)-deformation if furthermore \( d_{\varepsilon_i}(g_i, Id) \leq \varepsilon \).

Given a deformation \( \varepsilon = (g_0 \ldots g_{N-1}) \), the deformed path of quasi-tripods is the path of quasi-tripods \( \tau^\varepsilon = (\theta^\varepsilon_0, \ldots, \theta^\varepsilon_N) \) where

\[
\begin{align*}
\theta^\varepsilon_i & = (b_i \tau_i, b_i \tau_i^+, b_i \tau_i^+, b_{i+1} \tau_i^0) \\
\theta^\varepsilon_N & = (b_N \tau_{N-1}, b_N \tau_{N-1}^+, b_N \tau_{N-1}^+, b_N \tau_{N}^0)
\end{align*}
\]

(11)

where \( b_0 = Id \) and \( b_i = g_0 \circ \ldots \circ g_{i-1} \).

From the point of view of sequence of chords, the sequence of chords associated to the deformed coplanar path of tripods as above is

\[
h^\varepsilon := (h^\varepsilon_0, \ldots, h^\varepsilon_N) := (b_0 \cdot h_0, \ldots, b_N \cdot h_N),
\]

where \((h_0, \ldots, h_N)\) is the sequence of chords associated to \( \varepsilon \).

4.3. Deformation of coplanar paths of tripods and sheared path of quasi-tripods.

We want to relate our various notions and we have the following two propositions.

**Proposition 4.3.1.** There exists a constant \( M \) only depending on \( G \), so that given an \( (R(N), \varepsilon) \)-sheared path of reduced quasi-tripods \( \theta \) with model \( \varepsilon \), there exists a unique \( M \varepsilon \)-deformation \( \varepsilon \) so that \( \theta = (g_0 \circ \ldots \circ g_i) \varepsilon \) for some \( i \) in \( G \).

**Proof.** Given any path of quasi-tripods \( \theta \). Let \( x_i \) be the pivot of \( \theta_i \). We know that \( \theta_{i+1} \) is \((R_\varepsilon, \varepsilon)\)-sheared from \( \omega \varepsilon \theta_i \).

Let then \( \tau_i \), so that \( \psi_1(\theta_{i+1}) \) is \( R_\varepsilon \)-sheared from \( \tau_i \), and symmetrically \( \tau_{i+1} \) the tripod \( R_\varepsilon \)-sheared from \( \omega \varepsilon \psi_1(\theta_i) \).

Since \( G \) acts transitively on the space of tripods and commutes with the right \( \text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R}) \)-action, there exists a unique \( g_i \in P_{x_i} \) so

\[
g_i(\omega \varepsilon \psi_1(\theta_i)) = \tau_i, \quad g_i(\tau_{i+1}) = \psi_1(\theta_{i+1}).
\]

We have thus recovered \( \theta_i \) as a \((g_0 \ldots, g_{N-1})\)-deformation of its model. It remains to show that this is an \( M\varepsilon \)-deformation, for some \( M \).

\[
d(g_i(\omega \varepsilon \psi_1(\theta_i)), \omega \varepsilon \psi_1(\theta_i)) = d(\tau_i, \psi_1(\omega \varepsilon \theta_i)) + d(\omega \varepsilon \psi_1(\theta_i), \psi_1(\omega \varepsilon \theta_i)).
\]

Since \( \theta_{i+1} \) is \((R_\varepsilon, \varepsilon)\)-sheared from \( \omega \varepsilon \theta_i \), we have \( d(\tau_i, \psi_1(\omega \varepsilon \theta_i)) \leq \varepsilon \). Moreover, since \( \theta_i \) is a quasi-tripod, by Inequality (10): \( d(\omega \varepsilon \psi_1(\theta_i), \psi_1(\omega \varepsilon \theta_i)) \leq M_2 \varepsilon \). Thus

\[
d(g_i(\omega \varepsilon \psi_1(\theta_i)), \omega \varepsilon \psi_1(\theta_i)) \leq (M_2 + 1) \varepsilon.
\]

Then Inequality (5) and Corollary 3.4.6 yields,

\[
d_{\psi_1(\theta_i)}(g_i, Id) \leq C^2 d_{\omega \varepsilon \psi_1(\theta_i)}(g_i, Id) \leq B_0 \varepsilon.
\]
for some constant $B_0$ only depending on $G$. Using proposition 3.4.5, this yields that there exists $M$ only depending on $G$, so that
\[ d_{B_0}(\phi_i, \text{Id}) \leq M \varepsilon. \]
This yields the result. \(\square\)

5. Cones, nested tripods and chords

We will describe geometric devices that generalize the inclusion of intervals in $P^1(\mathbb{R})$ (which corresponds to the case of $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$): we will introduce chords which generalize intervals as well as the notions of squeezing and nesting which replace -- in a qualitative way-- the notion of being included for intervals. We will study how nesting and squeezing is invariant under perturbations.

Our motto in this paper is that we can phrase all the geometry that we need using the notions of tripods and their associated dynamics, circles and the assignment of a metric to a tripod. This will be the basic geometric objects that we will manipulate throughout all the paper.

5.1. Cones and nested tripods.

**Definition 5.1.1. [Cones and nested tripods]** Given a tripod $\tau$ and a positive number $\alpha$, the $\alpha$-cone of $\tau$ is the subset of $F$ defined by
\[ C_\alpha(\tau) := \{ u \in F | d_\alpha(\partial^0 \tau, u) \leq \alpha \}. \]
Let $\alpha$ and $\kappa$ be positive numbers. A pair of tripods $(\tau_0, \tau_1)$ is $(\alpha, \kappa)$-nested if
\[ C_\alpha(\tau_1) \subset C_\kappa(\tau_0), \quad \forall u, v \in C_\alpha(\tau_1), \quad d_\alpha(u, v) \leq \kappa \cdot d_\alpha(u, v). \]
We write this symbolically as $C_\alpha(\tau_1) < \kappa \cdot C_\kappa(\tau_0)$.

The following immediate transitivity property that justifies our symbolic notation.

**Lemma 5.1.2. [Composing cones]** Assume $(\tau_0, \tau_1)$ is $(\alpha, \kappa_2, \kappa_1)$-nested and $(\tau_1, \tau_2)$ is $(\alpha, \kappa_2)$-nested, then $(\tau_0, \tau_2)$ is $(\alpha, \kappa_1 \cdot \kappa_2)$-nested. Or in other words
\[ C_\alpha(\tau_2) \subset C_\alpha(\tau_1) \subset C_\kappa(\tau_0) \Rightarrow C_\alpha(\tau_2) < \kappa_1 \kappa_2 C_\alpha(\tau_0). \]

5.1.1. Convergent sequence of cones. We say a sequence of tripods $\{\tau_i\}_{i \in \mathbb{N}}$ -- where $N$ is finite of infinite -- defines a $(\alpha, \kappa)$-contracting sequence of cones if for all $i$, the pair $(\tau_i, \tau_{i+1})$ is $(\alpha, \kappa)$-nested and $\kappa \leq \frac{1}{2}$.

As a corollary of Lemma 5.1.2 one gets,

**Corollary 5.1.3. [Convergence Corollary]** There exists a positive constant $\alpha_3$ so that if $\{\tau_i\}_{i \in \mathbb{N}}$ defines an infinite $(\alpha, \kappa)$-contracting sequence of cones, with $\kappa \leq \frac{1}{2}$ and $\alpha \leq \alpha_3$, then there exists a point $x \in F$ called the limit of the contracting sequence of cones such that
\[ \bigcap_{i=1}^{\infty} C_\alpha(\tau_i) = \{x\}. \]
Moreover, for all $n$, for all $q$, for all $u, v$ in $C_\alpha(\tau_{n+q})$ we have
\[ d_{\tau_n}(u, v) \leq \frac{1}{2^q} d_{\tau_{n+q}}(u, v) \leq \frac{1}{2^q} \alpha. \]

We then write $x = \lim_{i \to \infty} \tau_i$.

**Proof.** This follows at once form the fact that $C_\alpha(\tau_{n+q}) \subset \frac{1}{2^q} C_\alpha(\tau_n)$; \(\square\)
5.1.2. Deforming nested cones. The next proposition will be very helpful in the sequel by proving the notion of being nested is stable under sufficiently small deformation.

**Lemma 5.1.4.** [Deforming nested pair of tripods] There exist a constant $\beta_0$ only depending on $G$, such that if $\beta \leq \beta_0$ then if

- The pair of tripod $(\tau_0, \tau_1)$ is $(\beta, \kappa/2)$-nested, with $\beta \leq \beta_0$.
- The element $g$ in $G$ is so that $d_{\tau_0}(\text{Id}, g) \leq \frac{\kappa \beta}{2}$.

Then the pair $(\tau_0, g(\tau_1))$ is $(\beta, \kappa)$-nested.

**Proof.** Let $z = \partial^0 \tau_0$. It is equivalent to prove that $(g^{-1}(\tau_0), \tau_1)$ is $(\beta, \kappa)$-nested. Let $u \in C_\beta(\tau_1) \subset C_{k \beta}(\tau_0)$. In particular, $d_{\tau_0}(u, z) \leq \frac{\kappa \beta}{2}$. It follows that

$$d_{g^{-1}(\tau_0)}(u, g^{-1}(z)) = d_{\tau_0}(g(u), z) \leq d_{\tau_0}(g(u), u) + d_{\tau_0}(u, z) \leq \frac{\kappa \beta}{2} + \frac{k \beta}{2} = k \beta. \quad (15)$$

Thus

$$C_\beta(\tau_1) \subset C_{k \beta}(\tau_0) \subset C_{k \beta}(g^{-1}(\tau_0)).$$

Moreover for $\beta$ small enough, by Proposition 3.4.5, $d_{\tau_0} \leq 2d_{g^{-1}(\tau_0)}$ thus for all $(u, v) \in C_\beta(\tau_1)$

$$d_{g^{-1}(\tau_0)}(u, v) \leq 2d_{\tau_0}(u, v) \leq k d_{\tau_1}(u, v).$$

Thus $(g^{-1}(\tau_0), \tau_1)$ is $(\beta, k)$-nested. \hfill $\Box$

5.1.3. Sliding out.

**Lemma 5.1.5.** There exist constants $k$ and $\delta_0$ depending only on the group $G$, such that if $\tau_0$ is a tripod $R$-sheared from $\tau_1$ and

$$\forall u, v \in C_{\delta_0}(\tau_1), \quad d_{\tau_0}(u, v) \leq k \cdot d_{\tau_1}(u, v).$$

**Proof.** This is an immediate consequence of Proposition 3.4.7, with (for $R > 0$)

$$z_0 = \partial^0 \tau_1, \quad z_1 = \partial^1 \tau_1, \quad w = \partial^0 \tau_1.$$

The case $R < 0$ being symmetric. \hfill $\Box$

5.2. Chords and slivers. A chord is an orbit of the shearing flow. We denote by $h_\tau$ the chord associated to a tripod $\tau$ and denote $\tilde{h}_\tau := h_{\partial \tau}$. Observe that all pairs of tripods in $\tilde{h}_\tau \times \tilde{h}_\tau$ are coplanar. We also say that $h_\tau$ goes from $\partial \tau$ and $\partial^1 \tau$ which are its end points.

The $\alpha$-sliver of $H$ is the subset of $F$ defined by

$$S_\alpha(H) := \bigcup_{\tau \in H} C_\alpha(\tau) \subset F.$$  

In particular, $S_0(H) = \{ \partial^0 \tau \mid \tau \in H \}$. Observe that two points $a$ and $b$ in the closure of $S_0(H)$ define a unique chord $H_{ab}$ which is coplanar to $H$ so that $S_0(H_{ab})$ is a subinterval of $S_0(H)$ with end points $a$ and $b$. 

5.2.1. Nested, squeezed and controlled pairs of chords. We shall need the following definitions

(i) The pair \((H_0, H_1)\) of chords is \textit{nested} if \(H_0 \neq H_1\), \(H_0\) and \(H_1\) are coplanar and \(S_0(H_1) \subset S_0(H_0)\). Given a nested pair \((H_0, H_1)\) – with no end points in common – the \textit{projection} of \(H_1\) on \(H_0\) is the tripod \(\tau_0 \in H_0\), so that \(s(\tau_0)\) is the closest point in the geodesic joining the endpoints of \(H_0\), to the geodesic joining the end points of \(H_1\). Observe finally that if \((H_0, H_1)\) is nested, then every pair of tripods in \(H_0 \cup H_1\) is coplanar.

(ii) The pair \((H_0, H_1)\) of chords is \((a, k)\)-\textit{squeezed} if

\[
\exists \tau_0 \in H_0, \forall \tau_1 \in H_1, \quad (\tau_0, \tau_1) \text{ is } (a, k)\text{-nested.}
\]

The tripod \(\tau_0\) is called a \textit{commanding tripod} of the pair.

(iii) The pair \((H_0, H_1)\) of chords is \((a, k)\)-\textit{controlled} if

\[
\forall \tau_1 \in H_1, \exists \tau_0 \in H_0, \quad (\tau_0, \tau_1) \text{ is } (a, k)\text{-nested.}
\]

(iv) The \textit{shift} of two chords \(H_0, H_1\) is

\[
\delta(H_0, H_1)) := \inf\{d(\tau_0, \tau_1) | \tau_0 \in H_0, \tau_1 \in H_1\}.
\]

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{squeezed_controlled_chords.png}
\caption{Controlled and squeezed chords}
\end{figure}

5.2.2. Squeezing nested pair of chords. The following proposition provides our first example of nested pairs of chords in the coplanar situation.

\textbf{Proposition 5.2.1. \textit{[Nested pair of chords]}} There exists \(\beta_1\) only depending on \(G\), and a decreasing function

\[
\ell : [0, \beta_1] \rightarrow \mathbb{R},
\]

such that for any positive numbers \(\beta\) with \(\beta \leq \beta_1\), any nested pair \((H_0, H_1)\) with \(\delta(H_0, H_1) \geq \ell(\beta)\) is \((K\beta, \kappa^\beta)\)-squeezed. The projection \(\tau_0\) of \(H_1\) on \(H_0\) is a commanding tripod of \((H_0, H_1)\).

Observe in particular that \(S_0(H_1) \subset S_K\beta(H_1) \subset C_{\kappa^\beta}(\tau_0)\). The choice of \(\kappa^\beta\) is rather arbitrary in this proposition but will make our life easier later on.

\textit{Proof.} Let \(\tau_1 \in H_1\). Let then \(\tau_0 \in H_0\), with \(\partial^{\partial} \tau_0 = \partial^{\partial} \tau_1\). Let as in Paragraph 3.4.4, \(s_0, s_1, z_0\) and \(z_1\) be constructed from \(\tau_0\) and \(\tau_1\). One notices that \(d_1(z, z_1) \leq \pi/2\). Then given \(\epsilon\), for \(\delta(H_0, H_1)\) large enough the second part of Proposition 3.4.7 yields that \((\tau_0, \tau_1)\) is \((a,\epsilon)\)-nested.

Observe now, that for any \(\beta\), there exists \(\delta_1\) so that \(\delta(H_0, H_1) > \delta_1\) yields \(d(\tau_0, \tau_1) \leq \beta\), where \(\tau_0\) is the projection of \(H_1\) on \(H_0\) Thus, using Proposition 3.4.5 for \(\beta\) small.
Thus from the second equation Proposition 5.2.3: that \((H_0, H_1)\) is \((\alpha, 2 \cdot \epsilon)\)-squeezed for \(\delta(H_0, H_1)\) large enough.

\[ \square \]

5.2.3. Controlling nested pair of chords. Our second result about coplanar pair of chords is the following

**Lemma 5.2.2.** [Controlling diffusion] There exist positive numbers \(\beta_2\) and \(K > 2\), with \(\beta_2 \leq \beta_3\) only depending on \(G\), such that given a positive \(\beta \leq \beta_2\), a nested pair \((H_0, H_1)\), then \((H_0, H_1)\) is \((\xi, K)\)-controlled for all \(\xi \leq 1\).

Assume furthermore that \(\ell_0 \geq \delta(H_0, H_1)\), where \(\ell_0 \geq \ell(\beta)\). Then, given \(\tau_1 \in H_1\), there exists \(H_2\) so that

- \((H_1, H_2)\) is nested,
- \(0 < \delta(H_0, H_2) \leq \ell_0\),
- \((\tau_0, \tau_1)\) is \((K, 2\beta, K)\)-nested, where \(\tau_0\) is the projection of \(H_2\) on \(H_0\).

Let us first prove

**Proposition 5.2.3.** There exists \(\alpha_4\) with the following property. Let \((H_0, H_1)\) be two nested chords and \(\tau_0 \in H_0\), \(\tau_1 \in H_1\) so that for some \(\alpha \leq \alpha_4\), \(C_\alpha(\tau_0) \cap C_\alpha(\tau_1) \neq \emptyset\).

Then \((\tau_0, \tau_1)\) are \((\alpha, K)\)-nested (where \(K\) is as in proposition 3.4.7).

**Proof.** Observe first that if \((z_0, \tau_0, \tau_1, z_1)\) are aligned then in that context \(d_{\gamma_1}(\varphi^{0}_{\tau_1}, z_1) \leq \pi/2\) — see figure (8) —. Then Let \(u, v \in C_\alpha(\tau_1)\) and \(w \in C_\alpha(\tau_0) \cap C_\alpha(\tau_1)\) then by Proposition 3.4.7.

\[
d_{\tau_0}(u, v) \leq \frac{K}{4} d_{\tau_1}(u, v) , \tag{16}
\]
\[
d_{\tau_0}(u, \varphi^{0}_{\tau_0}) \leq d_{\tau_0}(u, w) + d_{\tau_0}(w, \varphi^{0}_{\tau_0}) \leq \frac{K}{4} d_{\tau_1}(u, w) + \alpha \leq K\alpha . \tag{17}
\]

Thus from the second equation \(C_\alpha(\tau_1) \subseteq C_{K\alpha}(\tau_1)\). This concludes the proof of the proposition.

Let us now move to the proof of Proposition 5.2.2:

**Proof.** Let \(\tau_1 \in H_1\). Let \(H^2\) be the associated hyperbolic plane to the coplanar pair \((H_0, H_1)\). Let \(\tau_0 \in H_0\) so that \(\varphi^{0}_{\tau_0} = \varphi^{0}_{\tau_1}\). Then \(\varphi^{0}_{\tau_0} \in C_{\varphi^{0}}(\tau_1) \cap C_{\varphi^{0}}(\tau_0) \neq \emptyset\). We conclude proof of the first assertion by Proposition 5.2.3: that \((\tau_0, \tau_1)\) is \((\xi, K)\)-nested.
Assume now that $\delta(H_0, H_1) \leq \ell_0$. Let $H_3$ so that $S_0(H_3) = C_{\kappa, \beta}(\tau_1) \cap \partial_\omega H^2$. We have two cases.

(1) If $\delta(H_0, H_3) \leq \ell_0$, we can take $H_2 = H_3$, and $\tau_0$ the projection of $H_2$ on $H_0$. Thus $\partial^\tau \tau^0 \in C_{\kappa, \beta}(\tau_1) \cap C_{\kappa, \beta}(\tau_0) \neq \emptyset$ and we conclude by Proposition 5.2.3: $(\tau_0, \tau_1)$ is $(\kappa^2, \beta, K)$-nested.

(2) If $\delta(H_0, H_3) \geq \ell_0 \geq \ell(\beta)$, a continuity argument shows the existence of $H_2$ such that the pairs $(H_1, H_2)$ and $(H_2, H_3)$ are nested and $\delta(H_0, H_2) = \ell_0$. Let $\tau_0$ be the projection of $H_2$ on $H_0$. Then we have,

$$\left( C_{\kappa, \beta}(\tau_1) \cap H^2 \right) = S_0(H_3) \subset S_0(H_2) \subset \left( C_{\kappa, \beta}(\tau_0) \cap H^2 \right) \subset \left( C_{\kappa, \beta}(\tau_0) \cap H^2 \right),$$

where the first inclusion follows from the definition of $H_3$, the second by the fact of $(H_2, H_3)$ is nested, and the previous to last one by Proposition 5.2.1 since $\delta(H_0, H_2) \geq \ell(\beta)$. In particular $C_{\kappa, \beta}(\tau_1) \cap C_{\kappa, \beta}(\tau_0) \neq \emptyset$. Again we conclude by Proposition 5.2.3: $(\tau_0, \tau_1)$ is $(\kappa^2, \beta, K)$-nested.

\[ \square \]

6. The confinement lemma

Our main results are the confinement lemma and the weak confinement lemma that guarantees that a deformed path of quasi-tripods is squeezed or controlled, provided that the deformation is small enough.

Let us say a coplanar path of tripods associated to a path of chords $(h_i)_{0 \leq i \leq N}$ is a weak $(\ell, N)$-coplanar path of tripods if

$$\delta(h_0, h_i) \leq \ell, \text{ for } i < N. \tag{18}$$

A coplanar path of tripods associated to a sequence of chords $(h_i)_{0 \leq i \leq N}$ is a strong $(\ell, N)$-coplanar path of tripods if furthermore

$$\delta(h_0, h_N) \geq \ell. \tag{19}$$

The main result of this section is the following.

**Lemma 6.0.1.** [Confinement] There exists $\beta_3$ only depending on $G$, such that for every $\alpha$ with $\alpha \leq \beta_3$ then there exists $\ell_0(\alpha)$, so that for all $\ell_0 \geq \ell_0(\alpha)$, there is $\eta_0$, so that for all $N$

- for all weak $(\ell_0, N)$-coplanar paths of tripods $\tau = (\tau_0, \ldots, \tau_N)$, associated to a path of chords $h(N) = (h_0, \ldots, h_N)$,
- for all $\varepsilon/N$-deformation $v = (g_0, \ldots, g_{N-1})$ with $\varepsilon \leq \eta_0$

Then

(i) the pair $(h_0^v, h_N^v)$ is $(\kappa^2, \alpha, K^2)$-controlled,

(ii) if furthermore $h$ is a strong coplanar path of tripods then $(h_0^u, h_N^u)$ is $(\alpha, \kappa^2)$-squeezed. Moreover $(h_0^u, h_N^u)$ and $(h_0, h_N)$ both have the same commanding tripod.

(iii) If finally, $h$ is a strong coplanar path with $\delta(h_0, h_N) = \ell_0$, then $\tau_0$, the projection of $h_N$ on $h_0$ is a commanding tripod of $(h_0^u, h_N^u)$.

In the sequel, we shall refer the first case as the weak confinement lemma and the second case as the strong confinement lemma.
6.0.1. Controlling deformations from a tripod. We first prove a proposition that allows us to control the size of deformation from a tripod depending only on the last and first chords.

Proposition 6.0.2. [Barrier] For any positive \( \ell_0 \), there exists positive constants \( k \) and \( \eta_1 \) so that for all integer \( N \)

- for all weak \((\ell_0, N)\)-coplanar paths of tripods \( \vec{\tau} = (\tau_0, \ldots, \tau_N) \), associated to a path of chords \( h(N) = (h_0, \ldots, h_N) \),
- for all chord \( H \) so that \((h_N, H)\) is nested with \( 0 < \delta(h_0, H) \leq \ell_0 \),
- for all \( \frac{\tau}{N} \)-deformation \( \nu = (g_0, \ldots, g_{N-1}) \) with \( \varepsilon \leq \eta_1 \),

we have

\[ d_{\bar{\tau}_0}(Id, b_N) \leq k \cdot \varepsilon, \tag{20} \]

where \( b_N = g_0 \cdots g_{N-1} \) and \( \bar{\tau}_0 \) is the projection of \( H \) on \( h_0 \).

In this proposition, the position of \( h_N \) plays no role.

6.0.2. The confinement control. We shall use in the sequel the following proposition.

Proposition 6.0.3. [Confinement control] There exists a positive \( \varepsilon_0 \) so that for every positive \( \ell_0 \), there exists a constant \( k \) with the following property:

- Let \((H, h)\) be a pair of nested chords, associated to the circle \( C \subset F \), so that \( 0 < \delta(h, H) \leq \ell_0 \) and let \( \tau_0 \) be the projection of \( h \) on \( H \).
- Let \((X, Y)\) and \((x, y)\) be the extremities of \( H \) and \( h \) respectively.
- Let \( u, v, w \in C \subset F \) be pairwise distinct so that \( (X, u, v, x, y, w, Y) \) is cyclically oriented –possibly with repetition – in \( C \) and \( \tau \) be the tripod coplanar to \( H \) so that \( \partial \tau = (u, v, w) \).
- Let \( g \in P_w \) with \( d_\tau(g, Id) \leq \varepsilon_0 \).

Then

\[ d_{\bar{\tau}_0}(g, Id) \leq k \cdot d_\tau(g, Id). \]

Figure (9) illustrates the configuration of this proposition.

![Figure 9. Confinement control](image-url)
Let $p_+ \geq P_+ := P_+ \otimes P_0$, that we consider also equipped with the Euclidian norm $\| \|_\tau$. By construction $P_+ = \tau(P_+^0)$, thus

$$\sup_{t > 0} \| \text{ad}(\exp(-t\alpha)) \|_{p_+} < \infty.$$ 

For $\varepsilon$ small enough and independent of $\partial^+ \tau$, $\exp$ is $k_1$-bilipschitz from the ball of radius $\varepsilon$ in $p_+$ onto its image in $P_+$ for some constant $k_1$ independent of $\partial^+ \tau$. Thus for $\varepsilon_0$-small enough, there exists a constant $k_1$ so that

$$d_{\tau_1}(g, \text{Id}) \leq k_1 d_{\tau}(g, \text{Id}). \quad (21)$$

Now the set $K$ of tripods $\sigma$ coplanar to $\tau_0$, with $\partial \sigma = (u, w, z)$ with $z$ fixed, $u, w$ as above, is compact. In particular there exists $k_2$ only depending on $\ell_0$ so that for any tripod $\sigma$ in $K$,

$$d(\tau_1, \tau_0) \leq k_3.$$ 

Thus by Proposition 3.4.5, there exists $k_4$ so that

$$d_{\tau_1}(g, \text{Id}) \leq k_4 d_{\sigma}(g, \text{Id}).$$

The proposition now follows by combining with inequality (21).

6.0.3. **Proof of the Barrier Proposition 6.0.2.** Let $(x_i, x^i)$ be the extremities of $h_i$ where $x_i$ is the pivot. Let $\bar{x}_{i+1}$ be the vertex of $\tau_i$ different from $x_i$ and $x^i$.

Let $\bar{\tau}_0$ be the projection of $H$ on $h_0$. Observe that $x_i$ lies in one of the connected component of $h_0 \setminus H$, while $x^i$ and lie in the other (see Figure (10)).

Thus, according to Proposition 6.0.3 for $\varepsilon$ small enough there exists $k$, only depending on $\ell$ so that

$$d_{h_{i}}(g, \text{Id}) \leq k \cdot d_{\tau}(g, \text{Id}) \leq k \cdot \frac{\varepsilon}{N^i}.$$ 

Thus, using the right invariance of $d_{h_{i}}$

$$d_{\tau_{i}}(\text{Id}, b_{N}) \leq \sum_{i=1}^{N} d_{\tau_{0}} \left( \prod_{i=1}^{N} \frac{g}{\prod_{j=1}^{N} g} \right) = \sum_{i=1}^{N} d_{\tau_{0}}(g, \text{Id}) \leq k \cdot \varepsilon.$$ 

Observe that this proves Inequality (20) and concludes the proof of the Barrier Proposition 6.0.2.
6.0.4. Proof of the Confinement Lemma 6.0.1. Let $\beta_1$ as in Proposition 5.2.1. Let then $\alpha$ with $\alpha \leq \beta_1$. According to Proposition 5.2.1, there exists $\ell = \ell_0(\alpha)$ so that if $(H_0, H_1)$ is a nested pair of chords with $\delta(H_0, H_1) \geq \ell$, then for any $\alpha_1 \in H_1$, the pair $(\tau_0, \alpha_1)$ is $(K\alpha, \kappa^b)$-nested, where $\tau_0$ is the projection of $H_1$ on $H_0$. Let now fix $\ell_0 \geq \ell_0(\alpha)$

First step: strong coplanar

Consider first the case where $\delta(h_0, h_N) \geq \ell_0$. By continuity we may find a chord $\hat{h}_N$ so that the pairs $(h_{N-1}, \hat{h}_N)$ and $(\hat{h}_N, h_N)$ are nested and so that $\delta(\hat{h}_N, h_0) = \ell_0$.

Let $\hat{\tau}_0$ be the projection of $\hat{h}_N$ on $h_0$. Then by Proposition 5.2.1 for any $\alpha_1$ in $\hat{h}_N$, $(\tau_0, \alpha_1)$ is $(K\alpha, \kappa^b)$-nested.

By Lemma 5.2.2, for any $\sigma_N$ in $h_N$, there exist $\sigma_1$ in $\hat{h}_N$ so that $(\sigma_1, \sigma_N)$ is $(\alpha, K)$-nested and thus $(\hat{\tau}_0, \sigma_N)$ is $(\alpha, \kappa^b)$-nested.

By the Barrier Proposition 6.0.2 applied to $b(N)$ and $H = \hat{h}_N$, we get that

$$d_{\ell_0}(\text{Id}, b_N) \leq k \cdot \varepsilon$$

for $k$ only depending on $G$ and where $\ell$ and $b_N$ are defined in the Barrier Proposition.

We now furthermore assume that $\alpha \leq \beta_0$, where $\beta_0$ comes from Proposition 5.1.4. For $\varepsilon$ small enough, Proposition 5.1.4 shows that for any $\alpha_1$ in $h_N$, $(\tau_0, b_N(\alpha_1))$ is $(\alpha, 2\kappa^b)$-nested. Thus $(h_0, h_N(b_N))$ is $(\alpha, 2\kappa^b)$-squeezed hence $(\alpha, \kappa^b)$-since $2\kappa < 1$, with $\hat{\tau}_0$ as a commanding tripod.

This applies of course if the deformation is trivial and we see that $(h_0, h_N)$ and $(\hat{h}_0, \hat{h}_N)$ both have $\hat{\tau}_0$ as a commanding tripod.

This concludes this first step and the proof of the second item and the third item in Lemma 6.0.1.

Second step

Let us consider the remaining case when $\delta(h_0, h_N) \leq \ell$. Let us apply Proposition 5.2.2 to $(H_0, H_1) = (h_0, h_N)$ and $\tau_1$ in $h_N$. Thus there exists $H_2$ so that $(h_N, H_2)$ is nested, $0 < \delta(H_0, H_2) \leq \ell$, and $(\tau_0, \tau_1)$ is $(\kappa^b\alpha, K)$ nested where $\tau_0$ is the projection of $H_2$ on $h_0$.

Applying the Barrier Proposition 6.0.2 to $h = H_2$ and $H = H_0$, yields that $d_{\ell_0}(\text{Id}, b_N) \leq k \cdot \varepsilon$. Thus for $\varepsilon$ small enough, then Proposition 5.1.4 yields that $(\tau_0, b_N(\tau_1))$ is $(\kappa^b\alpha, 2K)$ nested, hence $(\kappa^b\alpha, K^2)$ nested.

This shows that $(h_0, b_N(h_N))$ is $(\kappa^b\alpha, K^2)$-controlled. This concludes the proof of Lemma 6.0.1.

7. Infinite paths of quasi-tripods and their limit points

The goal of this section is to make sense of the limit point of an infinite sequence of quasi-tripods and to give a condition under which such a limit point exists. The ad hoc definitions are motivated by the last section of this paper as well as by the discussion of Sullivan maps.

One may think of our main Theorem 7.2.1 as a refined version of a Morse lemma in higher rank: instead of working with quasi-geodesic paths in the symmetric space, we work with sequence of quasi-tripods in the flag manifold; instead of making the quasi-geodesic converge to a point at infinity, we make the sequence of quasi-tripods shrink to a point in the flag manifold. This is insured through some local conditions that will allow us to use our nesting and squeezing concepts defined in the preceding section.
Theorem 7.2.1 is the goal of our efforts in this first part and will be used several times in the future.

7.1. Definitions: Q-sequences and their deformations.

**Definition 7.1.1.**
(i) A Q coplanar sequence of tripods is an infinite sequence of tripods \( \Gamma = \{T_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) so that the associated sequence of coplanar chords \( \zeta = \{c_i\}_{i \in \mathbb{N}} \) satisfies: for all integers \( m \) and \( p \) we have
\[
|m - p| \leq Q \delta(c_m, c_p) + Q
\]
where \( \delta(\cdot, \cdot) \) is the shift defined in 5.2.1.

(ii) A sequence of quasi-tripod \( \Gamma = \{\tau_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) is called a \((Q, \epsilon)\)-sequence of quasi-tripods if there exists a \( a \) coplanar \( Q \) coplanar sequence of tripods \( T = \{T_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \), so that for every \( n \), \( \{\tau_m\}_{m \in [0, n]} \) is an \( \epsilon \)-deformation of \( \{\ell_m\}_{m \in [0, n]} \).

(iii) The associated sequence of chords to a \((Q, \epsilon)\)-sequence of quasi-tripods is called a \((Q, \epsilon)\)-sequence of chords.

7.2. Main result: existence of a limit point. Our main theorem asserts the sequence of limit points for some deformed \((Q, \epsilon)\) -sequence and their qualitative properties.

**Theorem 7.2.1. [Limit point]** There exist some positive constants \( A \) and \( q \) only depending on \( G \), with \( q < 1 \), such that for every positive number \( \beta \) and \( \ell_0 \) with \( \beta \leq A \), there exists a positive constant \( \epsilon > 0 \), so that for any \( R > 1 \):

For any \((\ell_0 R, \frac{R}{q})\)-deformed sequence of quasi-tripods \( \Theta = \{\theta_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \), with associated sequence of chords \( \Gamma = \{\gamma_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) there exists some \( \delta > 0 \) so that
\[
\bigcap_{m=0}^{\infty} S_\delta(\Gamma_m) := \{\zeta(\tilde{\theta})\}, \text{ with } \zeta(\tilde{\theta}) = \lim_{m \to \infty} \eta \theta_m \zeta \} \text{ for } j \in \{+, -, 0\},
\]
moreover we have the following quantitative estimates:

(i) for any \( \tau \in \Gamma_0 \), and \( m > (\ell_0 + 1)^2 R \),
\[
d_\epsilon(\zeta(\tilde{\theta}), \eta \theta_m) \leq q^m \beta \text{ for } j \in \{+, -, 0\}.
\]

(ii) Let \( \tau \in \Gamma_0 \). Assume \( \{\theta_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) is the deformation of a sequence of coplanar tripods \( \Gamma = \{\tau_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) with \( \tau_0 = \tilde{\theta}_0 \), then
\[
d_\epsilon(\zeta(\tilde{\theta}), \xi(\tau)) \leq \beta.
\]

(iii) Finally, let \( \{\theta'_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) be another \((\ell_0 R, \frac{R}{q})\)-deformed sequence of quasi-tripods. Assume that \( \{\theta'_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) and \( \{\theta_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) coincide up to the \( n \)-th chord with \( n > (\ell_0 + 1)^2 R \), then for all \( \tau \in \Gamma_0 \),
\[
d_\epsilon(\zeta(\tilde{\theta}), \zeta(\tilde{\theta})) \leq q^m \beta.
\]

The limit point theorem will be the consequence of a more technical one:

**Theorem 7.2.2. [Squeezing chords]** There exists some constant \( A \), only depending on \( G \), such that for every positive number \( \delta \) with \( \delta \leq A \), there exists positive constants \( R_0, \ell_0 \) and \( \epsilon \) with the following property:

If \( \Gamma \) is an \((\ell_0 R, \frac{R}{q})\)-deformed sequence of chords of the coplanar sequence of chords \( \zeta \) with \( R > R_0 \), if \( j > i \) are so that \( \delta(c_i, c_j) \geq \ell_0 \) then \( (\Gamma_i, \Gamma_j) \) is \((\delta, \epsilon)\)-squeezed.

7.3. Proof of the squeezing chords theorem 7.2.2. As a preliminary, we make the choice of constants, then we cut a sequence of chords into small more manageable pieces. Finally we use the confinement lemma to obtain the proof.
7.3.1. Fixing constants and choosing a threshold. Let $\alpha_3$ as in Corollary 5.1.3, let $\beta_3$ as in the confinement Lemma 6.0.1. We now choose $\alpha$ so that

$$\alpha \leq \inf(\beta_3, \alpha_3).$$

(26)

Then $\ell_0 = \ell_0(\alpha)$ be the threshold, and $\eta_0$ be obtained by the confinement Lemma 6.0.1. Let finally

$$\varepsilon \leq \frac{\eta_0}{\ell_0(\ell_0 + 1)}.$$  

(27)

7.3.2. Cutting into pieces. Let $\tau$ be a sequence of coplanar chords admitting an $\ell_0R$-coplanar path of tripods.

**Lemma 7.3.1.** We can cut $\tau$ into successive pieces $\tau^n := \{\tau_p\}_{p, q < p, q}$ for $n \in \{0, M\}$ so that

(i) for $n \in \{0, M - 1\}$, $\tau^n$ is a strong $(\ell_0, N)$ coplanar path of tripods

(ii) $\tau^M$ is a weak $(\ell_0, N)$ coplanar path of tripods.

where in both cases, $N \leq L := [(\ell_0 + 1)(\ell_0R)] + 1$, where $\lfloor x \rfloor$ denotes the integer value of the real number $x$.

**Proof.** Let $\zeta$ be the corresponding sequence of chords. Recall that the function $q \mapsto \delta(c_p, c_q)$ is increasing for $q > p$. Thus we can further cut into (maximal) pieces so that

$$\delta(c_{p, r}, c_{p, r-1}) \leq \ell_0, \quad \delta(c_{p, r}, c_{p, r+1}) \geq \ell_0.$$  

This gives the lemma: the bound on $N$ comes from the fact that $\tau$ is a $\ell_0R$-sequence. In particular, since $\delta(c_{p, r}, c_{p, r+1}) \leq \ell_0$, then $|p_{n+1} - p_n| - 1 \leq (\ell_0R)(\ell_0 + 1)$.

7.3.3. Completing the proof. Let $\theta$ be an $(\ell_0R, \frac{\varepsilon}{\bar{\eta}})$-sequence of quasi-tripods, with $R > R_0$. Let $\Gamma$ be the associated sequence of chords. Assume $\theta$ is the deformation of an $\ell_0R$-coplanar sequence of tripods $\tau$, cut in smaller sub-pieces as in Lemma 7.3.1.

**Proposition 7.3.2.** for all $n$

(i) for $n < M$, $(\Gamma_{p_n, \Gamma_{p_{n+1}}})$ is $(\alpha, K^2)$-squeezed,

(ii) Moreover $(\Gamma_{p_n, \Gamma_{p_{n+1}}})$ is $(\kappa^2, K^2)$-controlled.

**Proof.** If $n < M$, $\tau^n$ is a strong $(\ell_0, L)$-path. Then according to the confinement Lemma 6.0.1 and the choice of our constants $(\Gamma_{p_n, \Gamma_{p_{n+1}}})$ is $(\alpha, K^2)$-squeezed.

Since $\tau^M$ is a weak $(\ell_0, L)$-path, it follows by our choice of constants and the confinement Lemma 6.0.1 that $(\Gamma_{p_n, \Gamma_{p_{n+1}}})$ is $(\kappa^2, K^2)$ controlled.

We now prove the squeezing chord Theorem 7.2.2 with $\delta = \kappa^2$.

**Proposition 7.3.3.** Assuming, $\delta(c_{i, r}, c_{j}) > \ell_0$ and $j > i$, the pair $(\Gamma_i, \Gamma_j)$ is $(\kappa^2, K^2)$-squeezed.

**Proof.** We will use freely the observation that $(\alpha, K^2)$-nesting implies $(\kappa^2, K^2)$-nesting for $p, q \geq 0$ with $p + q \leq n$.

Recall that thanks to the Composition Proposition 5.1.2, if the pairs of chords $(H_0, H_1)$ and $(H_1, H_2)$ which are both $(\alpha, K^2)$-squeezed. (in particular $(H_1, H_2)$ is $(\alpha, K^2)$-squeezed), then $(H_0, H_2)$ is $(\alpha, K^2)$-squeezed.

We cut $\tau$ as above in pieces and control every sub-piece using proposition 7.3.2.

Thus, by induction, $(\Gamma_{p_n, \Gamma_{p_{n+1}}})$ is $(\alpha, K^2)$-squeezed and thus $(\kappa^2, K^2)$-squeezed since $\kappa K = 1$.

Finally since $(\Gamma_{p_n, \Gamma_{p_{n+1}}})$ is $(\kappa^2, K^2)$-controlled, the Composition Proposition 5.1.2 yields that $(\Gamma_{p_n, \Gamma_{p_{n+1}}})$ is $(\kappa^2, K^2)$-squeezed and thus $(\kappa^2, K^2)$-squeezed. This finishes the proof. \(\square\)
7.4. Proof of the existence of limit points, Theorem 7.2.1. Let \( \{\theta_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) and \( \{\tau_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) be sequences of quasi tripods and tripods as in Theorem 7.2.1.

Let \( \Gamma \) be the sequence of chords associated to \( \{\theta_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) and similarly \( \zeta \) associated to \( \{\tau_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) as in Theorem 7.2.1, then according to Theorem 7.2.2 if \( j > i \) are so that if \( \delta(c_i, c_j) \geq \ell_0 \) then \((\delta, \kappa)\)-squeezed. Since \( \zeta \) is \( \mathcal{Q}_0 \)-controlled (with \( \mathcal{Q}_0 = \ell_0R \)) we have

\[
\delta(c_i, c_j) \geq \frac{|i-j|}{\ell_0 R} - 1,
\]

Thus

\[
j - i \geq L \implies \delta(c_i, c_j) \geq \ell_0,
\]

We can summarize this discussion in the following statement

\[
j - i \geq L \implies S_0(\Gamma_j) \subseteq S_{\kappa_0}(\Gamma_i), \quad (28)
\]

7.4.1. Convergence for lacunary subsequences. We first prove an intermediate result.

**Corollary 7.4.1.** There exists a constant \( M \) only depending on \( G \), with \( q < 1 \), such that for \( \delta \) small enough, if \( \{\ell_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) is a sequence so that \( \ell_{m+1} \geq \ell_m + L \) and \( \ell_0 = 0 \), then

\[
S_\delta(\Gamma_{\ell_{m+1}}) \subseteq S_{\kappa_0}(\Gamma_{\ell_m}), \quad (29)
\]

and furthermore there exists a unique point \( \xi(\ell) \in F \) so that

\[
\bigcap_{m=1}^{\infty} S_\delta(\Gamma_{\ell_m}) = \{\xi(\ell)\} \subset C_\delta(\tau_0). \quad (30)
\]

where \( \tau_0 \) is a commanding tripod for \((\Gamma_0, \Gamma_i)\).

Finally, if \( \tau \in \Gamma_0 \) then for all \( u \) in \( S_\delta(\Gamma_{\ell_m}) \) with \( m \geq 1 \) we have

\[
d_\tau(u, \xi(\ell)) \leq 2^{-m}M\delta. \quad (31)
\]

**Proof.** From the squeezed condition for chords, we obtain that there exists \( \tau_m \in \Gamma_{\ell_m} \) so that

\[
S_\delta(\Gamma_{\ell_{m+1}}) \subseteq C_{\kappa_0}(\tau_m) \subseteq S_{\kappa_0}(\Gamma_{\ell_m}).
\]

This proves the first assertion. As a consequence, \( C_\delta(\tau_{m+1}) \subseteq C_{\kappa_0}(\tau_m) \). Combining with the Convergence Corollary 5.1.3, we get the second assertion, with

\[
\{\xi(\ell)\} := \bigcap_{m=1}^{\infty} C_\delta(\tau_m) = \bigcap_{m=1}^{\infty} S_\delta(\tau_m)
\]

Using the second assertion of the Convergence Corollary 5.1.3, we obtain that if \( u, v \in S_\delta(\Gamma_{\ell_m}) \subseteq C_\delta(\tau_{m-1}) \), then

\[
d_\tau(u, v) \leq 2^{-m}\delta.
\]

and in particular \( u, \xi(\ell) \in C_\delta(\tau_0) \) and

\[
d_\tau(u, \xi(\ell)) \leq 2^{-m}\delta. \quad (32)
\]

We now extend the previous inequality when we replace \( \tau_0 \) by any \( \tau \in C_n \). We use Lemma 5.1.5 which produces constant \( \delta_0 \) and \( k \) only depending on \( G \) so that if \( \delta \) is smaller than \( \delta_0 \) then since \( u, \xi(\ell) \in C_\delta(\tau_0) \),

\[
d_\tau(u, \xi(\ell)) \leq k d_\tau(u, \xi(\ell)). \quad (33)
\]

This concludes the proof of the corollary since we now get from inequations (33) and (32)

\[
d_\tau(u, \xi(\ell)) \leq k 2^{-m}\delta.
\]
7.4.2. Completion of the proof. Let \( \{l_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) and \( \{l'_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) be two subsequences. It follows from inclusion (28), that
\[
\bigcap_{m=1}^{\infty} S_\delta(\Gamma_{l_m}) = \bigcap_{m=1}^{\infty} S_\delta(\Gamma_{l'_m}),
\]
As an immediate consequence, we get that
\[
\bigcap_{m=1}^{\infty} S_\delta(\Gamma_m) = \left\{ \xi\left(\frac{\lambda}{m}\right) \right\},
\]
where \( \lambda = \{\lambda_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \), with \( \lambda_m = mL \). Thus we may write \( S_\delta(\Gamma_m) \) for all \( \tau \in \gamma_0 \),
\[
d_\tau(\xi(l), \xi(\lambda)) \leq k\delta,
\]
where \( k \) only depends on \( G \). By Inequality (31), if \( \{l_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) is a lacunary subsequence, for any \( \tau \in \gamma_0 \),
\[
d_\tau(\xi(l), u) \leq 2^{-m}M\delta.
\]
In particular taking \( l_m = mL \), one gets
\[
d_\tau(\xi(\lambda), \theta_{m,L}^j) \leq 2^{-m}M\delta.
\]
Let now \( n = (m + 1)L + p \), with \( p \in [0, L] \). The inclusion (28), gives the first inclusion below, whereas the second is a consequence of the fact that \( \kappa < 1 \)
\[
S_\delta(\Gamma_n) \subset S_{\kappa\delta}(\Gamma_{m,L}) \subset S_{\kappa\delta}(\Gamma_{m,L}).
\]
Thus combining the previous assertion with assertion (35) for all \( u \in S_\delta(\Gamma_n) \), with \( n > L \) we have
\[
d_\tau(\xi(\lambda), u) \leq 2^{-m}M\delta \leq (2^{-\frac{1}{2}})^n 4M\delta.
\]
Taking \( q = 2^{-\frac{1}{2}} \) and \( \beta = 4M\delta \), and \( u = \theta_{m,L}^j \) yields the inequality
\[
d_\tau(\xi(\lambda), \theta_{m,L}^j) \leq q\beta.
\]
This completes the proof of inequality (23) for \( n > L \).

The second item comes from inequality (34) after possibly changing \( \beta \).

The third item comes from the first and the triangle inequality, again after changing \( \beta \).

8. Sullivan limit curves

The purpose of this section is to define and describe some properties of analog of the Kleinian property: being a K-quasi-circle with \( K \) close to 1.

This is achieved in Definition 8.1.1. We then show, under the hypothesis of a compact centralizer for the \( \mathfrak{sl}_2 \), three main theorems of independent interest: Sullivan maps are Hölder (Theorem 8.1.2), a representation with a Sullivan limit
map is Anosov (Theorem 8.1.3), and finally one can weaken the notion of being Sullivan under some circumstances (Theorem 8.5.1).

In this paragraph, as usual, \(G\) will be a semisimple group, \(s\) an \(sl_2\)-triple, \(F\) the associate flag manifold. We will furthermore assume in this section that

\[\text{The centralizer of } s \text{ is compact}\]

We will comment on the case of non compact centralizer later.

Let us start with a comment on our earlier definition of circle maps 3.1.4. Let \(T = (x^-, x^+, x_0)\) be a triple of pairwise distinct points in \(P^1(\mathbb{R})\) – also known as a tripod for \(SL_2(\mathbb{R})\) – and \(\tau\) a tripod in \(G\). Such a pair \((T, \tau)\) defines uniquely

- an associated circle map \(\eta\) so that \(\eta(T) = \partial \tau\),
- an associated extended circle map which is a map \(v\) from the space of triples of pairwise distinct points \((x, y, z)\) in \(P^1(\mathbb{R})\) to \(G\) whose image consists of coplanar tripods and so that

\[\partial v(x, y, z) = (\eta(x), \eta(y), \eta(z)), \quad v(x^-, x^+, x_0) = \tau.\]

8.1. Sullivan curves: definition and main results.

**Definition 8.1.1.** [Sullivan curve] We say a map \(\xi\) from \(P^1(\mathbb{R})\) to \(F\) is a \(\zeta\)-Sullivan curve with respect to \(s\) if the following property holds:

Let \(T = (x^-, x^+, x_0)\) be any triple of pairwise distinct points in \(P^1(\mathbb{R})\). Then there exists a tripod \(\tau\) – called compatible tripod – a circle map \(\eta\), with \(\eta(T) = \partial \tau\), so that for all \(y \in P^1(\mathbb{R})\),

\[d_s(\xi(y), \eta(y)) \leq \zeta.\] (40)

Obviously if \(\zeta\) is large, for instance greater than \(\text{diam}(F)\), the definition is pointless: every map is a \(\zeta\)-Sullivan. We will however show that the definition makes sense for \(\zeta\) small enough.

We also leave the reader to check that in the case of \(G = PSL_2(\mathbb{C})\) (so that \(F = P^1(\mathbb{C})\)) the following holds: for \(K > 1\) and any compact neighborhood \(C\) of \(-1\), there exists a positive \(\varepsilon\) such that if \(\xi\) is \(\varepsilon\)-Sullivan, then for all \((x, y, z, t)\) in \(P^1(\mathbb{R})\), then

\[x, y, z, t] \in C \implies \frac{1}{K} \leq \left| \frac{[\xi(x), \xi(y), \xi(z), \xi(t)]}{[x, y, z, t]} \right| \leq K.\]

This readily implies that \(\xi\) is quasicircle. Thus in that case, an \(\varepsilon\)-Sullivan map is quasi-symmetric for \(\varepsilon\)-small enough. The following results of independent interest justifies our interest of \(\zeta\)-Sullivan maps.

**Theorem 8.1.2.** [Hölder property] There exists some positive numbers \(\zeta\) and \(\alpha\), so that any \(\zeta\)-Sullivan map is \(\alpha\)-Hölder.

We prove a more quantitative version of this theorem with an explicit modulus of continuity in paragraph 8.3. This will be needed in other proofs.

The existence of \(\zeta\)-Sullivan limit maps implies some strong dynamical properties. We refer to [20, 12] for background and references on Anosov representations.

**Theorem 8.1.3.** [Sullivan implies and Anosov] There exists some positive \(\zeta_1\), such that is \(S\) is a closed hyperbolic surface and \(\rho\) a representation of \(\pi_1(S)\) in \(G\) so that there exists a \(\rho\) equivariant \(\zeta_1\)-Sullivan map

\[\xi : \partial_\infty \pi_1(S) = P^1(\mathbb{R}) \to F,\]
then $\rho$ is $P$-Anosov and $\xi$ is its limit curve.

During the proof we shall also prove the following lemma of independent interest

**Lemma 8.1.4.** Let $\rho_0$ be an Anosov representation of a Fuchsian group $\Gamma$. Assume that the limit map $\xi_0$ is $\zeta$-Sullivan, then, for any positive $\varepsilon$, any nearby (i.e., sufficiently close) representation to $\rho$ is Anosov with a $(\zeta + \varepsilon)$-Sullivan limit map.

The following corollary of the refinement Theorem 8.3.1 of Theorem 8.1.2 is worth stating

**Corollary 8.1.5.** Let $\rho_n$ be a family of $P$-Anosov representations of a Fuchsian group, whose limit maps are $\zeta_n$-Sullivan, with $\zeta_n$ converging to zero. Then $\rho_n$ converges to a Fuchsian representation.

**Proof.** Using the modulus of continuity obtained in Theorem 8.3.1, we may extract a subsequence so that the corresponding limit maps converges. The limit map is then 0-Sullivan and thus a circle map. The result follows. \[\square\]

We recall that a $P$-Anosov representation [20, 12] is in particular faithful and a quasi-isometric embedding and that all its elements are loxodromic. Recall also that in that context, the parabolic is isomorphic to its opposite. We prove this theorem in Paragraph 8.4.

In the first paragraph of this section, we single out the consequence of the “compact stabilizer hypothesis” that we shall use.

8.1.1. The compact stabilizer hypothesis. Our standing hypothesis will have the following consequence

**Lemma 8.1.6.** The following holds

(i) There exists a constant $\zeta$, so that for every $M$, there exists $N$, such that if $\xi$ is a $\zeta$-Sullivan map, if $T_1$ and $T_2$ are two triples of distinct points in $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$ with $d(T_1,T_2) \leq M$, if $\tau_1$ and $\tau_2$ are the respective compatible tripods, then

$$d(\tau_1,\tau_2) \leq N.$$

(ii) For any positive $\varepsilon$ and $M$, then for $\zeta$ small enough, if $T_1$ and $T_2$ are two triples of distinct points in $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{R})$ with $d(T_1,T_2) < M$, if $\tau_1$, $\nu_1$ are respective compatible tripods and extended circle maps with respect to $T_1$, then we may choose a compatible tripod $\tau_2$ for $T_2$ so that

$$d(\tau_2,\nu_1(T_2)) \leq \varepsilon.$$

Actually this lemma will be the unique consequence of our standard hypothesis used in the proof. This lemma is itself a corollary of the following proposition.

**Proposition 8.1.7.** (i) There exists positive constants $A$ and $\zeta_0$, such that if $\tau_1$ and $\tau_2$ are two tripods and $X$ is a triple of points in $F$, we have the implication

$$d_{\tau_1}(X,\partial\tau_1) \leq \zeta_0, \quad d_{\tau_2}(X,\partial\tau_2) \leq \zeta_0 \implies d(\tau_1,\tau_2) \leq A.$$

(ii) Moreover, given $\alpha > 0$, there exist $\varepsilon > 0$ so that

$$d_{\tau_1}(X,\partial\tau_1) \leq \varepsilon, \quad d_{\tau_2}(X,\partial\tau_2) \leq \varepsilon \implies \exists \tau_3, \partial\tau_3 = \partial\tau_2 \text{ and } d(\tau_1,\tau_3) \leq \alpha.$$

We first prove the Lemma 8.1.6 from Proposition 8.1.7.
Proof. Let $\zeta_0$ and $A$ be as in Proposition 8.1.7. Let first $v_0$ be an extended circle map with associated map $\eta_0$. By continuity, for any $\zeta_0$, there exists $M$,
\[
d(T_1, T_2) \leq M \implies d_{v_0(T_1)}(\eta_0(T_1), \eta_0(T_2)) \leq \frac{1}{2} \zeta_0.
\]
The equivariance under the action of $G$ then shows that the previous inequality holds for all $v = v_0$.

Let now $\xi$ be a $\zeta$-Sullivan map with $\zeta = \frac{1}{2} \zeta_0$. We prove the first assertion. Let $T_1$ and $T_2$ be two tripods with $d(T_1, T_2) < M$. Let us denote $\eta_1$ and $\eta_2$ the corresponding compatible circles, $v_1$ and $v_2$ the corresponding extended circle maps and $\tau_i = v_i(T_i)$.

Let $X = \xi(T_2)$. Then the $\zeta$-Sullivan property implies that $d_{v_1}(X, \eta_1(T_2)) \leq \zeta$. Then
\[
d_{v_1}(X, \partial \tau_1) \leq d_{v_1}(X, \eta_1(T_2)) + d_{v_1}(\eta_1(T_2), \eta_1(T_1)) \leq 2\zeta = \zeta_0.
\]
From the $\zeta$-Sullivan condition, we get
\[
d_{v_1}(X, \partial \tau_2) = d_{v_1}(\xi(T_2), v_2(T_2)) \leq \zeta \leq \zeta_0.
\]
Thus Proposition 8.1.7 implies $d(\tau_2, \tau_1) \leq A$. This proves the first assertion with $N = A$. Let now prove the second assertion. Let again $X = \xi(T_2) \in F^3$, we have setting $\tau_0 = \eta_1(T_2)$, and using the definition of a $\zeta$-Sullivan map
\[
d_{v_1}(X, \partial \tau_0) \leq \zeta, \quad d_{v_1}(X, \partial \tau_2) \leq \zeta.
\]
Moreover $d(\tau_0, \tau_1) = d(T_1, T_2) \leq M$. Thus by Proposition 3.4.5, $d_{v_0}$ and $d_{v_1}$ are uniformly equivalent. It follows that, for any positive $\beta$, for $\zeta$ small enough we have
\[
d_{v_0}(X, \partial \tau_0) \leq \beta, \quad d_{v_1}(X, \partial \tau_2) \leq \beta.
\]
The second part of Lemma 8.1.7 guarantees us that for any positive $\alpha$, then for $\zeta$ small enough, we may choose $\tau_3$ with the same vertices as $\tau_2$, so that
\[
d(\tau_3, \eta_1(T_2)) = d(\tau_3, \tau_0) \leq \alpha.
\]
Thus conclude the proof by taking $\tau_3$ as a compatible tripod, recalling that in the case of the compact stabilizer hypothesis $d_\xi$ only depends on $\partial \tau$ by Proposition 3.4.4. \hfill $\Box$

Next we prove Proposition 8.1.7.

Proof. Let us first prove that $G$ acts properly on some open subset of $F^3$ containing the set $V$ of vertices of tripods.

We shall use the geometry of the associated symmetric space $S(G)$. Let $x$ be an element of $F$, let $A_x$ be the family of hyperbolic elements conjugated to $a$ fixing $x$; observe that $A_x$ is a $\text{Stab}(x)$-orbit under conjugacy.

The family of hyperbolic elements in $A_x$ corresponds in the symmetric space to an asymptotic class of geodesics at $+\infty$. Thus $A_x$ defines a Busemann function $h_x$ well defined up to a constant. Each gradient line of $h_x$ is one of the above described geodesic. The function $h_x$ is convex on every geodesic $\gamma$, or in other words $D_w^2 h_x(u, u) \geq 0$ for all tangent vectors $u$. Moreover $D_w^2 h_x(u, u) = 0$ if and only if the one parameter subgroup associated to the geodesic $\gamma$ in the direction of $u$ commutes with the one-parameter group associated to the gradient line of $H_x$ though the point $w$. If now $(x, y, z)$ are three point on a circle $C$, the function $C := h_x + h_y + h_z$ is geodesically convex. Let $H^2_y$ be the hyperbolic geodesic plane associated to the circle $C$, then $x$, $y$ and $z$ correspond to three point at infinity in $H^2_C$ and all gradient lines of $h_x$, $h_y$ and $h_z$ along $H^2_C$ are tangent to $H^2_C$. There is a unique
We may as well assume $\tau$ (preliminary construction will be used for the main results of this section: Theorem 8.2.1. There exists universal positive constant $\kappa_1$ and $\kappa_2$ with the following property:

Let $z_0$ be a point in $H^2$, $x_1$ and $x_2$ be two points in $P^1(\mathbb{R})$, so that $d_{\tau}(x_1, x_2)$ is small enough (and possibly zero), then there exists two 2-sequences of tripods $T_1^n$ and $T_2^n$, where $z_0$ belongs to the geodesic arc corresponding to the initial chord of both $T_1^n$ and $T_2^n$, with the following properties – see Figure (11)

(i) we have that $\lim T^n_1 = x_1$. 

point $M$ in $H^2$, which is a critical point of $H$ restricted to $H^2$. Every vector $n$ normal to $H^2$ at $M$, is then also normal to the gradient lines of of $h_x, h_y$ and $h_z$ which are tangent to $H^2$, and as a consequence $D_M H(u) = 0$. Thus $M$ is a critical point of $H$. By the above discussion, $D^2 H(\xi, v) = 0$, if and only if the one parameter subgroup generated by $u$ commutes with the $SL_2(\mathbb{R})$ associated to $H^2$. Since, by hypothesis, this $SL_2(\mathbb{R})$ has a compact centralizer, $M$ is a non degenerate critical point.

The map $G : (x, y, z) \mapsto M$ is $G$ equivariant and extends continuously to some $G$-invariant neighborhood $U$ of $V$ in $F^3$ with values in $S(G)$: to have a non degenerate minimum is an open condition on $C^2$ convex functions. It follows that the action of $G$ on $U$ is proper since the action of $G$ on the symmetric space $S(G)$ is proper.

We now prove the first assertion of the proposition. Let’s work by contradiction, and assume that for all $n$ there exists tripods $\tau_1^n$ and $\tau_2^n$, triple of points $X_n$ so that

$$d_{\tau_1^n}(X_n, \partial \tau_1^n) < \frac{1}{n}; \quad d_{\tau_2^n}(X_n, \partial \tau_2^n) < \frac{1}{n}; \quad n < d(\tau_1^n, \tau_2^n).$$

We may as well assume $\tau_1^n$ is constant and equal to $\tau$ and consider $g_n \in G$ so that $g_n(\tau^n_1) = \tau^n_2$. Thus we have,

$$d_\tau(X_n, \partial \tau) \to 0, \quad d_\tau(g_n(X_n), \partial \tau) \to 0, \quad d(\tau, g_n(\tau)) \to \infty.$$ 

However this last assertion contradicts the properness of the action of $G$ on a neighborhood of $\partial \tau \in F^3$.

For the second assertion, working by contradiction again and taking limits as in the proof of the first part, we obtain two tripods $\tau_1$ and $\tau_2$ so that $d_\tau(\partial \tau_1, \partial \tau_2) = 0$ and for all $\tau_3$ with $\partial \tau_3 = \partial \tau_2$, then $d(\tau_1, \tau_3) > 0$. This is obviously a contradiction. \( \square \)

8.2. Paths of quasi tripods and Sullivan maps. Let in this paragraph $\xi$ be a $\zeta$-Sullivan map from a dense set $W$ of $P^1(\mathbb{R})$ to $F$. To make life simpler, assuming the axiom of choice, we may extend $\xi$ – a priori non continuously – to a $\zeta$-Sullivan map defined on all of $P^1(\mathbb{R})$: We choose for every element $z$ of $P^1(\mathbb{R}) \setminus W$ a sequence $(w_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ in $W$ converging to $z$ so that $\xi(w_n)$ converges, and for $\xi(z)$ the limit of $(\xi(w_n))_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$.

Our technical goal is, given a point $z_0$ in $H^2$ and two (possibly equal) close points $x_1, x_2$ with respect to $z_0$ in $P^1(\mathbb{R})$ we construct, paths of quasi-tripods “converging” to $\xi(x_i)$. This is achieved in Proposition 8.2.3 and its consequence Lemma 8.2.4. This preliminary construction will be used for the main results of this section: Theorem 8.2.1 and Theorem 8.1.3.

8.2.1. Two paths of tripods for the hyperbolic plane. We start with the model situation in $H^2$ and prove the following lemma which only uses hyperbolic geometry and concerns tripods for $SL_2(\mathbb{R})$, which in that case are triple of pairwise distinct points in $P^1(\mathbb{R})$.

Lemma 8.2.1. There exists universal positive constant $\kappa_1$ and $\kappa_2$ with the following property:

Let $z_0$ be a point in $H^2$, $x_1$ and $x_2$ be two points in $P^1(\mathbb{R})$, so that $d_{\tau}(x_1, x_2)$ is small enough (and possibly zero), then there exists two 2-sequences of tripods $T_1^n$ and $T_2^n$, where $z_0$ belongs to the geodesic arc corresponding to the initial chord of both $T_1^n$ and $T_2^n$, with the following properties – see Figure (11)

(i) we have that $\lim T^n_1 = x_i$. 

paths of quasi tripods and Sullivan maps. Let in this paragraph $\xi$ be a $\zeta$-Sullivan map from a dense set $W$ of $P^1(\mathbb{R})$ to $F$. To make life simpler, assuming the axiom of choice, we may extend $\xi$ – a priori non continuously – to a $\zeta$-Sullivan map defined on all of $P^1(\mathbb{R})$: We choose for every element $z$ of $P^1(\mathbb{R}) \setminus W$ a sequence $(w_n)_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ in $W$ converging to $z$ so that $\xi(w_n)$ converges, and for $\xi(z)$ the limit of $(\xi(w_n))_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$.
(ii) the sequences $T_1^n$ and $T_2^n$ coincide for the first $n$ tripods, for $n$ greater than $-\mathbf{x}_1 \log d_{z_0}(x_1, x_2)$.

(iii) Two successive tripods $T_m^i$ and $T_{m+1}^i$ are at most $\mathbf{x}_2$-sheared.

(iv) Defining the $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$-tripods $x_m^i := (\partial^r T_m^i, \partial^\delta T_m^i, x^i)$ then $d(x_m^i, T_m^i) \leq \mathbf{x}_2$.

In item (iii) of this lemma, we use a slight abuse of language by saying $T$ and $T'$ are sheared whenever actually $\omega^p \tau$ and $\omega^q T'$ are sheared for some integers $p$ and $q$.

In the the proof of the Anosov property for equivariant Sullivan curve, we will use the “degenerate construction”, when $x_1 = x_2 = x_0$, in which case $T_1 = T_2 = T_2$ whereas we shall use the full case for the proof of the Hölder property.

Proof. The process is clear from Picture (11). Let us make it formal. Let $x_1$ and $x_2$ be two points in $\mathbb{P}(\mathbb{R})$ and assume that $d_{z_0}(x_1, x_2)$ is small enough. If $x_1 \neq x_2$, we can now find three geodesic arcs $\gamma_0, \gamma_1$ and $\gamma_2$ joining in a point $Z$ in $\mathbb{H}^2$ with angles $2\pi/3$ so that their other extremities are respectively $z_0, x_1$ and $x_2$. The arc $\gamma_0$ is oriented from $z_0$ to $Z$, whilst the others are from $Z$ to $x_i$ respectively. The tripod $\tau^0$ orthogonal to all three geodesic arcs $\gamma_0, \gamma_1$ and $\gamma_2$ will be referred in this proof as the forking tripod and the point of intersection of $\gamma_i$ with $\tau^0$ is denoted $y_i$.

Observe now that there exists a universal positive constant $\mathbf{x}_1$ so that

$$\text{length} (\gamma_0) = d_{\mathbb{H}^2} (z_0, Z) \geq -2\mathbf{x}_1 \log (d_{z_0}(x_1, x_2)),$$ (41)

where $d_{\mathbb{H}^2}$ is the hyperbolic distance. We now construct a (discrete) lamination $\Gamma$ with the following properties

(i) $\Gamma$ contains the three sides of the forking tripod, and $z_0$ is in the support of $\Gamma$.

(ii) All geodesics in $\Gamma$ intersect orthogonally, either $\gamma_0, \gamma_1$ or $\gamma_2$. Let $X$ be the set of these intersection points.

(iii) The distance between any two successive points in $X$ (for the natural ordering of $\gamma_0, \gamma_1$ and $\gamma_2$) is greater than 1 and less than 2.

We orient each geodesic in $\Gamma$ so that its intersection with $\gamma_0, \gamma_1$ or $\gamma_2$ is positive. We may now construct two sequences of geodesics $\Gamma^1$ and $\Gamma^2$ so that $\Gamma^i$ contains all the geodesics in $\Gamma$ that are encountered successively when going from $z_0$ to $x_i$.

For two successive geodesics $\gamma_i$ and $\gamma_{i+1}$ – in either $\Gamma^1$ or $\Gamma^2$ – we consider the associated finite paths of tripods given by the following construction:
We may now apply the second part of Lemma 8.1.6, which shows that given \( \varepsilon \) we first choose a compatible tripod for \( T \) we may thus slightly deform \( T \) sequences of tripods. Our first step is the following lemma

**Lemma 8.2.2.** For every positive \( \varepsilon \), there exists \( \zeta \), so that, for every \( i \in \{1, 2\} \) and \( m \in \mathbb{N} \) there exist a compatible tripod \( \tau^i_m \) for \( T^i_m \) with respect to \( \zeta \), with associated circle maps \( \eta^i_m \) and extended circle maps \( \nu^i_m \), so that denoting by \( d^i_m \) the metric \( d^i_s \) we have

\[
\partial^j \tau^i_m = \zeta(\partial^j T^i_m),
\]

\[
d^i_m(\zeta, \eta^i_m) \leq \varepsilon,
\]

\[
d(\tau^i_m, \nu^i_{m-1}(T^i_m)) \leq \varepsilon.
\]

Moreover for all \( m \) smaller than \( -\kappa_1 \log d_{\omega}(x_1, x_2) \), we have \( \tau^1_m = \tau^2_m \).

**Proof.** Let us construct inductively the sequence \( \tau^i_j \). Let us first construct \( \tau^1_0 = \tau^2_0 \).

We first choose a compatible tripod for \( T_0 \) with associated circle maps \( \eta^i_0 = \nu^i_0 \) and extended circle maps \( \nu^i_0 = \nu^i_0 \). Let \( \tau^0_0 = \eta^0_0(T_0) \) so that denoting by \( d^0 \) the metric \( d^i_0 \), we have the inequality

\[
d^0(\zeta, \eta^0_0) \leq \zeta.
\]

In particular

\[
d^0(\partial^0 \tau^0_0, \zeta(\partial^0 T^0)) \leq \zeta.
\]

we may thus slightly deform \( \eta^0_0 \) (with respect to the metric \( d^0 \)) so that assertion (42) holds. Then for \( \zeta \) small enough, the relation (43) holds for \( m = 0 \), where \( \varepsilon = 2\zeta \).

Assume now that we have built the sequence up to \( \tau^i_{m-1} \). Let then

\[
\tau_1 = \tau^i_{m-1}, \quad T_1 = T^i_{m-1}, \quad T_2 = T^i_m,
\]

and finally \( \nu_1 = \nu^i_{m-1} \). Recall that by the construction of \( T_1 \) and \( T_2 \),

\[
d(T_1, T_2) \leq \kappa_2 =: M, \quad d(\nu_1, (T_1, \tau_1)) \leq \varepsilon.
\]

We may now apply the second part of Lemma 8.1.6, which shows that given \( \varepsilon \) and \( \zeta \) small enough, we may choose a compatible tripod \( T_2 \) with respect to \( \zeta \) so that,

\[
d(\tau_2, \nu_1(T_2)) \leq \frac{1}{2} \varepsilon.
\]
We now set $\tau'_m := \tau_2$, possibly deforming it a little so that Assertion (42) holds. Then by the definition of compatibility Assertion (43) holds, while Assertion (44) is by construction. The last part of the Lemma follows from the inductive nature of our construction and some bookkeeping. \hfill \Box

8.2.3. Main result. Let $\xi$ be a $\zeta$-Sullivan curve. We use the notation of the two previous lemmas. Our main result is

**Proposition 8.2.3.** For all positive $\varepsilon$, for $\zeta$ small enough,

(i) the quadruples $\Theta_i^m := \left(\tau'_m, \xi(\partial T^i_m)\right)$ are reduced $\varepsilon$-quasi-tripods.

(ii) If $T^i_m$ and $T^i_{m+1}$ are $R^i_m$-sheared then $\theta^i_m$ and $\theta^i_{m+1}$ are $(R^i_m, \varepsilon)$-sheared.

(iii) The sequences $\Theta^1$ and $\Theta^2$ are $\varepsilon$-deformations of the sequence $v_0(T^1)$ and $v_0(T^2)$ respectively.

(iv) The $n$ first elements of $\Theta^1$ and $\Theta^2$ coincide up to $-\kappa_1 d_m(x_1, x_2)$.

(v) For all $m$, $\xi(x_i)$ belongs to the sliver $S_i(\tau'_m)$.

**Proof.** Equation (45) guarantees that $\Theta^i_m$ is a $\zeta$-quasi tripod and reduced by condition (42). Furthermore since $T^i_m$ is at most $\kappa_2$ sheared from $T^i_{m-1}$ by Proposition 8.2.1, inequality (44) implies that $\theta^i_{m+1}$ is at most $(R^i_m, \varepsilon)$-sheared from $\theta^i_m$, and thus $\tau'_i$ is a model for $\theta^i$. Statement (iii) then follows from Proposition 4.3.1. The coincidence up to $-\kappa_1 d_m(x_1, x_2)$ follows from the last part of Lemma 8.2.2. Let us prove the last item in the proposition. By the $\zeta$-Sullivan condition

$$d_m^i(\xi(x'), \eta_m^i(x')) \leq \zeta.$$ 

Let $x'_m$ be the $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$-tripod as in Proposition 8.2.1, let $\sigma_m^i = v_m^i(x'_m)$ and $d_m^i := d_{\sigma_m^i}$. By construction, $\sigma_m^i$ and $\tau_m^i$ are coplanar. By statement (iv) of Lemma 8.2.1, $d(x_m^i, T^i_m)$ is bounded by a constant $\kappa_2$, thus by Proposition 3.4.5 $d_m^i$ and $d_m^i$ are uniformly equivalent by constants only depending on $G$ and $\kappa_2$. Thus for $\zeta$ small enough we have

$$d_m^i(\xi(x'), \partial \sigma_m^i) = d_m^i(\xi(x'), \eta_m^i(x')) \leq \varepsilon.$$ 

In other words, $\xi(x')$ belongs to the cone $C_\varepsilon(\sigma_m^i)$ hence to the sliver $S_\varepsilon(\tau'_m)$ as required, since $\sigma_m^i$ and $\tau_m^i$ are coplanar and $\partial \sigma_m^i = \partial \tau_m^i$. \hfill \Box

8.2.4. Limit points. Let then $\Gamma_m^i := \text{Bdry}(\theta^i_m)$ be the chords generated by the tripods $\theta^i_m$, and let us consider the sequences of chords $\Gamma^i := \{\Gamma_m^i\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$. The final part of our construction is the following Lemma

**Lemma 8.2.4.** The sequence of chords $\Gamma^i$ are $(1, \varepsilon)$-deformed sequences of cuffs for $\zeta$ small enough. Furthermore these two sequences coincides up to $N > -\kappa_1 d_1(z_1, z_2)$. Finally

$$\bigcup_{m=0}^{\infty} \Gamma^i_m = [\xi(x_i)].$$ \hfill (46)

**Proof.** The first two items of Proposition 8.2.3, together with Proposition 4.3.1 implies that for $\zeta$ small enough the sequence $\theta^i$ are $\varepsilon$-deformations of the model sequences $v_0(T^i)$. This implies the first two assertions. Equation (46) follows by Theorem 7.2.1 (taking $t_0 = R = 1$ and $\beta = A$), and the last item of Proposition 8.2.3. \hfill \Box
8.3. **Sullivan curves and the Hölder property**: We prove a more precise version of Theorem 8.1.2 that we state now

**Theorem 8.3.1.** There exists positive constants $M, \zeta_0$ and $\alpha$ so that given a $\zeta_0$-Sullivan map $\xi$ from $P^1(\mathbb{R})$ to $F$, then for every tripod $T$ in $P^1(\mathbb{R})$, with associated $G$-tripod $\tau$, with respect to $\xi$, we have

$$d_\tau(\xi(x), \xi(y)) \leq M \cdot d_T(x, y)^\alpha,$$

**Proof.** Since $d_\tau$ has uniformly bounded diameter, it is enough to prove this inequality, for $T$ so that $d_T(x, y)$ is small enough. Let then $x_1 = x, x_2 = x$ be in $P^1(\mathbb{R})$ and $z_0 = s(T)$, $\xi$ a $\zeta$-Sullivan map (for $\zeta$ small enough) and $T_1', T_2'$, the sequences of $SL_2(\mathbb{R})$-tripods and $G$-tripods constructed in the preceding section, let $\Gamma$ the sequence of chords satisfying Lemma 8.2.4. Let

$$\tau_0 := \tau_0^1 = \tau_0^2, \quad \nu_0 := \nu_0^1 = \nu_0^2, \quad T_0 := T_0^1 = T_0^2.$$

Let $N > -k_1 d_{T_0}(x_1, x_2)$ so that $\tau_1^1$ and $\tau_2^1$ coincide up to the first $N$ tripods. By Theorem 7.2.1 using Lemma 8.2.4, we have

$$d_{\tau_0}(\xi(x_1), \xi(x_2)) \leq q^N. A \leq B \cdot d_{\xi_0}(x_1, x_2)^\alpha = B \cdot d_{T_0}(x_1, x_2)^\alpha \quad (47)$$

for some positive constants $B$ and $\alpha$ only depending on $q, A$ and $k_1$.

Here $\tau_0$ is associated to $T_0$. But since $d(T_0, T)$ is uniformly bounded, by the first assertion in Lemma 8.1.6, $d(\tau_0, \tau)$ is uniformly bounded (for $\zeta$ small enough), thus by Proposition 3.4.5, $d_\tau$ and $d_{\tau_0}$ are uniformly equivalent. In particular,

$$d_\tau(\xi(x), \xi(y)) \leq F \cdot d_{\tau_0}(\xi(x), \xi(y)) \leq M \cdot d_T(x, y)^\alpha.$$

This concludes the proof. \qed

8.4. **Sullivan curves and the Anosov property.** In this section, let $\xi$ be a $\zeta$-Sullivan map equivariant under the action of a cocompact Fuchsian group $\Gamma$ for a representation $\rho$ of $\Gamma$ in $G$.

8.4.1. **A short introduction to Anosov representations.** Intuitively, a hyperbolic group is $P$-Anosov if every element is $P$-loxodromic, with “contraction constant” comparable with the word length of the the group.

Let us be more precise, let $P^+$ be a parabolic and $P^-$ its opposite associated to the decomposition

$$g = n^+ \oplus I \oplus n^-, \quad p^+ = n^+ \oplus I$$

For a hyperbolic surface $S$, let $US$ be its unit tangent bundle equipped with its geodesic flow $h_t$. Let $\rho$ be a representation of $\pi_1(S)$ into $G$. Let $\theta_\rho$ be the flat Lie algebra bundle over $S$ with monodromy $Ad \circ \rho$. The action of $h_t$ lifts by parallel transport the action of a flow $H_t$ on $\theta_\rho$. We say that the action is Anosov if we can find a continuous splitting into vector sub-bundles, invariant under the action of $H_t$

$$\theta_\rho = \mathcal{R}^+ \oplus I \oplus \mathcal{R}^-,$$

such that

- at each point $x \in US$, the splitting is conjugated to the splitting $g = p^+ \oplus I \oplus p^-$,
- The action of $H_t$ is contracting towards the future on $\mathcal{R}^+$ and contracting towards the past on $\mathcal{R}^-$.
Equivalently let $F^\pm$ be the associated flat bundles to $\rho$ with fibers $G/P^\pm$. The action of $h_2$ lifts to an action denoted $H_2$ by parallel transport. Then, the representation $\rho$ is Anosov, if we can find continuous $\rho$-equivariant maps $\xi^\pm$ from $\partial_\infty \pi_1(S)$ into $G/P^\pm$ so that

- for $x \neq y$, $\xi^+(x)$ is transverse to $\xi^-(y)$,
- the associated sections $\Xi^\pm$ of $F^\pm$ over $US\rho$ by $\rho$ are attracting points, respectively towards the future and the past, for the action of $H_2$ on the space of sections endowed with the uniform topology.

8.4.2. A preliminary lemma. For a tripod $\tau$, let $\tau^\perp$ be the coplanar tripod to $\tau$ so that $\tau^\perp$ is obtained after a $\pi/2$ rotation of $\tau$ with respect to $s(\tau)$. In other words, $\partial \tau^\perp = (\partial \tau, x, \partial \tau)$ where $x$ is the symmetric of $\partial \tau$ with respect to the geodesic whose endpoints are $\partial \tau$ and $\partial \tau$. Observe that $s(\tau) = s(\tau^\perp)$ and thus $d_\tau = d_{\tau^\perp}$.

Our key lemma is the following

Lemma 8.4.1. There exists $\zeta$ such that if $\xi$ is a $\zeta$-Sullivan map. There exists positive constants $R$ and $c$ so that if $T$ is a tripod in $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$, then for any $\tau$ and $\sigma$ compatible tripods (with respect to $\xi$) to $T$ and $\varphi_R(T)$ satisfying

$$\partial \tau^\sigma = \partial \tau = \xi(\partial \tau T),$$

we have

$$\forall x, y \in C_2(\sigma^\perp), \quad d_{\tau^\perp}(x, y) \leq \frac{1}{2} d_{\tau}(x, y).$$

In this lemma, $\xi$ does not have to be equivariant. Observe also, that with the notation of the lemma $\partial \sigma = \xi(\partial T)$.

Proof. We will use the confinement Lemma 6.0.1. Let then, using the notation of the Confinement Lemma, $b := \beta_3$, and $\ell_0$ an integer greater than $(\beta_3)$, and $\tau_0$ as in the conclusion of the lemma.

Let $z_0 := s(T)$ be the orthogonal projection of $\partial T$ on the geodesic joining $\partial T$ to $\partial T^\tau$. Let $x_1 = x_2 := \partial T^\tau$. Let us now construct, for $\ell \leq \frac{m}{2\ell_0}$ and $\zeta$ small enough as in paragraphs 8.2.2

- The sequence of $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$-tripods $T := T^1 = T^2$ with $T_0 = T^\perp$, associated to the coplanar sequence of chords $h_2$
- The tripods $\tau_m := \tau_m^\perp = \tau_m^\perp$ and the corresponding sequence of reduced $\varepsilon$-quasi tripods $\theta := \theta^1 = \theta^2$, which is an $\varepsilon$-deformation of $\varphi_0(T)$ — according to Proposition 8.2.3 — and associated to the deformed sequence of chords $L$,
- we also denote by $\nu$ the extended circle map associated to $T_i$ that satisfies $\nu(T_i) = \tau_i$. Let us also denote by $\mu_i$ the $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$-tripods which is the projection of $h_{2(i+1)}$ on $h_{2i}$, and

$$\lambda_i := \nu(T_i)(\mu_i).$$

It follows that $T_{2(i-1)}$, $T_{2(i-1)+1}$ is a strong $(\ell_0, 2\ell_0)$-coplanar path of tripods. And thus according to the Confinement Lemma 6.0.1 and our choice of constants, $(T_0, T_1)$ is $(b, b^2)$-squeezed and its commanding tripod is the projection of $\varphi_{2\ell_0}(h_{2(i+1)})$ on $\varphi_{2\ell_0}(h_{2i})$ that is $\lambda_m$. In other words, since $\lambda_{m+1} \in S_0(\varphi_{2\ell_0}(h_{2i}))$ we have for all $m$

$$C_b(\lambda_m) < \kappa^2 C_{\varphi_b}(\lambda_{m+1})$$
Thus by Corollary 5.1.3, using the fact that $\beta_3 \leq \alpha_3$, where $\alpha_3$ is the constant in Proposition, we have

$$\forall u, v \in C_b(\lambda_n), \quad d_{\lambda_n}(u, v) \leq \frac{1}{2^n} d_{\lambda_0}(u, v).$$  \hspace{1cm} (48)

We now make the following claim

Claim 1: there exists a constant $N$ only depending in $G$ so that for any tripod $\beta$ compatible with $\varphi_{2n_0}(T)$ then

$$d(\beta^+, \lambda_n) \leq N. \hspace{1cm} (49)$$

Elementary hyperbolic geometry first shows that there exist positive constants $N_1$ and $M_2$ so that

$$d(\lambda_n, \tau_{2n_0}) = d(\varphi_{2n_0}(T), \tau_{2n_0}) \leq N_1,$$

$$d(\varphi_{2n_0}(T), T_{2n_0}) \leq M_2.$$  

By Lemma 8.1.6, there exists a constant $N_2$ so that

$$d(\beta, \tau_{2n_0}) \leq N_2,$$

Since there exists a constant $N_3$ so that $d(\beta, \beta^+) \leq N_3$, The Triangle Inequality yields the claim.

Inequality (49) and Proposition 3.4.5 yields that there exists a constant $C$ so that if $\sigma_n$ is compatible with $\varphi_{n_0}(T)$, then

$$\frac{1}{C} d_{\sigma_n} \leq d_{\lambda_n} \leq C d_{\sigma_n}.$$  \hspace{1cm} (50)

Then taking $n_0$ so that $2^{n_0-1} > C^2$, $R = n_0 l_0$, we get from inequality (48)

$$\forall x, y \in C_b(\lambda_n_0), \quad d_{\varphi}(x, y) \leq \frac{1}{2} d_{\varphi}(x, y).$$

To conclude, it is therefore enough to prove that

Final Claim: There exists a constant $c$ only depending on $G$ so that

$$C_c(\sigma^+) \subset C_b(\lambda_{n_0}).$$

Recall that by hypothesis, $\varphi^+(\sigma) = \xi(x)$. By the last item in Proposition 8.2.3, for $\zeta$ small enough

$$\varphi^0(\sigma^+) = \xi(x) \in S_{b/2}(h_n),$$

for all $n$. By the squeezing property, it follows that $\xi(x) \in C_{b/2}(\lambda_m)$ for all $m$.

Since $d_{\lambda_n}$ and $d_{\lambda_m}$ are uniformly equivalent by inequality (50), we obtain, taking $c = b(2C)^{-1}$,

$$C_c(\sigma^+) = \{ u \in F, d_{\sigma^+(u, \xi(x))} \leq c \} \subset \{ u \in F, d_{\lambda_{n_0}}(u, \xi(x)) \leq b/2 \} = C_b(\lambda_{n_0}).$$

This concludes the proof of the final claim, hence of the lemma. \hfill \Box
8.4.3. Completion of the proof of Theorem 8.1.3. The proof is now standard. Let \( \rho \) be a representation of a cocompact torsion free Fuchsian group \( \Gamma \). Let \( S \) be the space of \( \text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R}) \) tripods, \( U = \Gamma \backslash S \) the space of tripods in the quotient equipped with the flow \( \varphi \). The space \( U \) with its flow \( U \) is naturally conjugated to the geodesic flow of the underlying hyperbolic surface. Let finally \( \mathcal{F} \) be the \( \rho \)-associated flat bundle over \( U \) with fiber \( \mathcal{F} \). This fibre bundle is equipped with a flow \( \{ \Phi_t \}_{t \in \mathbb{R}} \) lifting the flow \( \{ \phi_t \}_{t \in \mathbb{R}} \) by parallel transport along the orbit.

Let \( \xi \) be a \( \rho \)-equivariant \( \zeta \)-Sullivan map for \( \zeta \) small enough so that Lemma 8.4.1 holds. Observe that \( \xi \) give now rise to two transverse \( \Phi_t \)-invariant sections of \( \mathcal{F} \):

\[ \sigma^+(T) := \xi(\partial^+ T), \quad \sigma^-(T) := \xi(\partial^- T) \]

These sections are transverse for \( \zeta \) small enough: more precisely for \( \zeta < k/2 \), where \( k = d_\ast(\partial^+ \tau, \partial^- \tau) \) for any tripod \( \tau \).

We now choose a fibrewise metric \( d \) on \( \mathcal{F} \) as follows: for every \( T \in S \), let \( \tau(T) \) be a compatible tripod. We may choose the assignment \( T \mapsto \tau(T) \) to be \( \Gamma \)-invariant. We define our fibrewise metric at \( T \) to be \( d_T := d_{\tau(T)} \). This metric may not be continuous transversally to the fibers, but it is locally bounded: locally at a finite distance to a continuous metric since the set of compatible tripods has a uniformly bounded diameter by Lemma 8.1.6.

Now, lemma 8.4.1 exactly tells us that \( \sigma^+ \) is a attracting fixed section of \( \{ \phi_t \}_{t \in \mathbb{R}} \) towards the future, and by symmetry that \( \sigma^- \) is a attracting fixed section of \( \{ \phi_t \}_{t \in \mathbb{R}} \) towards the past. By definition, \( \rho \) is \( \mathcal{F} \)-Anosov and this concludes the proof of Theorem 8.1.3.

8.4.4. Anosov and Sullivan Lemma. As an another relation of the Anosov property and Sullivan curves, let us prove the following

Lemma 8.4.2. Let \( \rho_0 \) be an Anosov representation of a Fuchsian group \( \Gamma \). Assume that the limit map \( \xi_0 \) is \( \zeta \)-Sullivan, then, for any positive \( \epsilon \), any nearby representation to \( \rho_0 \) is Anosov with a \((\zeta + \epsilon)\)-Sullivan limit map.

Proof. By the stability property of Anosov representations [20, 12] any nearby representation \( \rho \) is Anosov. Let limit map \( \xi_\rho \) be its limit map.

By Guichard–Wienhard [12] – see also [6] – \( \xi_\rho \) depends continuously on \( \rho \) in the uniform topology. More precisely, for any positive \( \epsilon \), for any tripod \( \tau \) for \( \mathcal{G} \), there exists neighborhood \( U \) of \( \rho_0 \), so that for all \( \rho \) in \( U \), for all \( x \in \partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2 \),

\[ d_\ast(\xi_\rho(x), \xi_{\rho_0}(x)) \leq \epsilon . \quad (51) \]

Instead of fixing \( \tau \), we may as well assume that \( \tau \) belongs to a bounded set \( K \) of \( \mathcal{G} \), using for instance Proposition 3.4.5.

Let us consider a compact fundamental domain \( D \) for the action of \( \Gamma \) on the space of tripods with respect to \( \mathbb{H}^2 \). For every tripod \( T \) in \( D \), we have a compatible \( \mathcal{G} \)-tripod \( \tau_T \) with circle map \( \nu_T \) with respect to \( \xi_0 \). Then by Lemma 8.1.6, the set

\[ D_\mathcal{G} := \{ \tau_T \mid T \in D \} , \]

is bounded. Thus inequality (51) holds for all \( \tau \) in \( D_\mathcal{G} \). It follows that for all \( T \in D \),

\[ d_{\nu_T}(\xi_\rho(x), \eta_T(x)) \leq \zeta + \epsilon . \quad (52) \]

Using the equivariance under \( \Gamma \), the inequality (52) now holds for all tripods \( T \) for \( \mathbb{H}^2 \). In other words, \( \xi_\rho \) is \((\zeta + \epsilon)\)-Sullivan. \( \square \)
8.5. Improving Hölder derivatives. Our goal is to explain that under certain hypothesis we can promote a Sullivan curve with respect to a smaller subset to a full Sullivan curve. We need a series of technical definitions before actually stating our theorem

(i) For every tripod $T$ for $\mathbb{H}^2$, $d_T$ be the visual distance on $\partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2$ associated to $T$. We say a subset $W$ of $\partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2$ is $(a, T)$-dense if

$$\forall x \in \partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2, \exists y \in W, d_T(x, y) \leq a$$

(ii) Let $a$ and $\zeta$ be a positive number, $Z$ a dense subset of $\partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2$. Let us say a map $\xi$ from $\partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2$ to $F$ is $(a, \zeta)$-Sullivan if given any tripod $T$ in $\mathbb{H}^2$, there exists

• a circle map $\xi_T$,
• an $a$-dense subset $W_T$ of $Z$,
so that, writing $T := \xi_T(T)$, we have for all $x \in W_T$, $d_T(\xi_T(x), \xi(x)) \leq \zeta$.

(iii) Let $\Gamma$ be a cocompact Fuchsian group and $\rho$ a representation of $\Gamma$ in $G$. Let $\xi$ be a $\rho$-equivariant map from $\partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2$. We say $\xi$ is attractively coherent if given any $y$ point in $\partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2$, there exists a sequence $\{\gamma_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$ of elements of $\Gamma$ such that

• the limit of $[\gamma_m^\rho]_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$ is $y$,
• $\xi(y)$ is the limit of $[z_m]_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$, where $z_m$ is an attractive fixed point for $\rho(\gamma_m)$.

Our improvement theorem is the following

**Theorem 8.5.1.** [Improvement Theorem] Let $\Gamma$ be a cocompact Fuchsian group. Then there exists a positive constant $\zeta_2$ and there exists a positive $a_0$ such that given

(i) a continuous family of representations $\{\rho_t\}_{t \in [0, 1]}$ of $\Gamma$ in $G$,

(ii) For each $t \in [0, 1]$, an $(a_0, \zeta)$-Sullivan map $\xi_t$, with $\zeta \leq \zeta_2$, attractively coherent, and $\rho_t$ equivariant. Assume also that $\xi_0$ is $2\zeta$-Sullivan,

Then for all $t$, $\xi_t$ is a $2\zeta$-Sullivan map.

8.5.1. Bootstrapping and the proof of Theorem 8.5.1. Let us first start with a preliminary lemma

**Lemma 8.5.2.** Let $\rho$ be an Anosov representation of a Fuchsian group. Let $\xi$ be an attractively coherent map from $\partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2$ to $F$. Then $\xi$ is the limit map of $\rho$.

**Proof.** Let $\eta$ be the limit map of $\rho$. Let $y \in \partial_\infty \mathbb{H}^2$. Let $\{\gamma_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$ be as in the definition of attractively continuous. Since $\gamma_m^\rho$ is the attractive fixed point of $\gamma$, it follows that $\eta(\gamma_m^\rho) = z_m$. The continuity of $\eta$ shows that $\eta(y) = \xi(y)$. $\square$

We may now proceed to the proof. Let $\{\xi_t\}_{t \in [0, 1]}$, $\{\rho_t\}_{t \in [0, 1]}$, and $\Gamma$ as in the hypothesis of the theorem that we want to prove. Let $\zeta_0$, $\alpha$ be as in Theorem 8.3.1. Let $\zeta_1$ so that Theorem 8.1.3 holds. Let finally $\zeta_2 = \frac{1}{3} \min(\zeta_1, \zeta_0)$ and $\zeta \leq \zeta_2$.

Let us consider the subset $K$ of $[0, 1]$ of those parameters $t$ so that $\xi_t$ is $2\zeta$-Sullivan.

**Lemma 8.5.3.** The set $K$ is closed.

**Proof.** Let $\{t_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$ be a sequence of elements of $K$ converging to $s$. For all $n$, $\{\xi_{t_m}\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$ forms an equicontinuous family by Theorem 8.3.1 since $2\zeta_2 \leq \zeta_0$. We may extract a subsequence converging to a map $\tilde{\xi}$ which is $\rho_s$ equivariant and $2\zeta_2$-Sullivan. In particular since $2\zeta_2 \leq \zeta_1$, it follows that $\rho_s$ is Anosov and $\tilde{\xi}$ is the limit map of $\rho_s$.

By hypothesis, $\xi_s$ is attractively continuous and thus $\xi_s = \tilde{\xi}$ by Lemma 8.5.2. This proves that $s \in K$. $\square$
We prove that \( K \) is open in two steps:

**Lemma 8.5.4.** Assume \( \xi_s \) is \( 2\xi \)-Sullivan. Then there exists a neighborhood \( U \) of \( t \) so that for \( s \in U \), \( \xi_s \) is \( \zeta_0 \)-Sullivan.

**Proof.** Our assumptions guarantee that \( \rho \) is Anosov and by the stability condition for Anosov representations \([20,12]\) the representation \( \rho_s \) is Anosov for \( s \) close to \( t \). Lemma 8.5.2 implies that \( \xi_s \) is the limit curve of \( \rho_s \). Lemma 8.1.4 then shows that for \( s \) close enough to \( t \), \( \xi_s \) is \( \zeta_0 \)-Sullivan since \( 2\xi < 2\xi_2 < \zeta_0 \).

We now prove a bootstrap lemma:

**Lemma 8.5.5.** [Bootstrap] There exists some constant \( A \) so that for \( a_0 < A \), if \( \xi_s \) is \( \zeta_0 \)-Sullivan, then \( \xi_s \) is \( 2\xi \)-Sullivan.

**Proof.** This is an easy consequence of the triangle inequality. Since \( \xi_s \) is \((a_0,\zeta)\)-Sullivan, for every tripod \( T \) for \( H^2 \), there exists an \( a_0 \)-dense subset \( W \), a circle map \( \eta \) so that for all \( y \in W \), \( d_\tau(\xi_s(y),\eta(y)) \leq \zeta \), where \( \tau = \eta(T) \). Let then \( x \in \partial_{\infty}H^2 \) and \( y \in W \) so that \( d_\tau(x,y) \leq a_0 \). Then
\[
 d_t(\xi_s(x),\eta(x)) \leq d_t(\xi(x),\xi(y)) + d_t(\eta(x),\eta(y)) + d_t(\xi(y),\eta(y)) \leq M_0a_0^0 + a_0 + \zeta.
\]
The last quantity is less than \( 2\xi \) for \( a_0 \) small enough. This concludes the proof.

Thus \( K \) is open: let \( t \in K \), then by Lemma 8.5.4, for any nearby \( s \) in \( K \), \( \xi_s \) is \( \zeta_0 \)-Sullivan hence \( 2\xi \) Sullivan by the bootstrap Lemma 8.5.5. Since \( K \) is non empty, closed and open, \( K = [0,1] \) and this concludes the proof of the Theorem.

### 9. Pair of pants from triangles

The purpose of this section is to define **stitched pairs of pants**. These stitched pairs of pants will play the role of almost Fuchsian pair of pants. Section 13 will reveal they are ubiquitous in \( \Gamma \setminus G \).

These stitched pair of pants are the building blocks for the construction of surfaces whose fundamental group injects. Themselves they are built out of two tripods, a construction reminiscent of building hyperbolic pair of pants using ideal triangles.

Our main results here are first a result describing the structure of a pair of pants, Theorem 9.2.1, secondly the Closing Pant Theorem 9.3.2 that gives weaker condition under which such pair of pants exists. They both rely on the Closing Lemma 9.4.1.

#### 9.1. Stitched pair of pants

Let \( \Gamma \) be a subgroup of \( G \). The pair of pants that we are going to define comes with a little bit of structure: two tripods glued together. The \( \text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R}) \) intuition is that of two ideal triangles glued together.

**Definition 9.1.1.** [Stitched pair of pants] an \((\epsilon,R)\)- (positively) stitched pair of pants in \( \Gamma \) is a quintuple \((\alpha,\beta,\gamma,\tau_0,\tau_1)\) so that \( \alpha,\beta,\gamma \in \Gamma \) and \( \tau_0,\tau_1 \) are tripods so that

(i) \( \alpha\gamma\beta = 1 \),

(ii) \( \alpha,\beta, \gamma \) are \( \mathbb{P} \)-loxodromic,

(iii) The following quadruples are \( \epsilon \)-quasi tripods
\[
\theta_0 := (\tau_0,\alpha^-\beta^-\gamma^-), \quad \theta_1 := (\tau_1,\alpha^-\gamma^-\beta^-), \quad \omega\theta_0, \omega^2\theta_0, \omega\theta_1, \omega^2\theta_1.
\]

(iv) The following pairs of quasi-tripods are \( (\epsilon,R) \)-sheared, where \( R > 0 \).
\[
\theta_0 \text{ and } \omega^2\theta_1, \quad \omega(\theta_0) \text{ and } \omega\beta(\theta_1), \quad \omega^2(\theta_0) \text{ and } \alpha^{-1}(\theta_1),
\]
The fundamental group \( P \) of a stitched pair of pants \((\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \tau_0, \tau_1)\) is the subgroup \( \Gamma_p \) with two generators generated by \( \alpha \), \( \beta \) and \( \gamma \). We denote by \( P^{\pm}_{\epsilon, R} \) the space of \((\frac{\pi}{R}, \pm R)\) stitched pair of pants.

![Figure 12. Pair of pants from triangles](image)

**Figure 12.** Pair of pants from triangles

We will have in the sequel to consider stitched pair of pants for negative \( R \). The definition is the same excepts that we replace the repulsive fixed points \( \alpha^- , \beta^- \) and \( \gamma^- \), by respectively the attractive fixed points \( \alpha^+, \beta^+ \) and \( \gamma^+ \). To distinguish between the two cases, we will refer to positively stitched pair of pants for the case described in the definition (that is with \( R > 0 \)) and negatively stitched pair of pants for the case with \( R < 0 \).

Finally, we will not consider only the case of a discrete \( \Gamma \) and may consider the case \( \Gamma = G \).

The goal of this section is to construct using the exponential mixing property many \((\frac{\pi}{R}, R)\)-Fuchsian pairs of pants when \( \Gamma \) is a uniform lattice. We first need to probe the notion.

**9.1.1. Rotating stitched pair of pants.** Stitched pairs of pants have an order 3-symmetry. Let \((\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \tau_0, \tau_1)\) be an \((\epsilon, R)\) stitched pair of pants. Let us define

\[
\omega(\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \tau_0, \tau_1) := (\beta, \gamma, \alpha, \omega(\tau_0), \omega^2(\beta \tau_1)).
\]

Then

**Proposition 9.1.2.** The map \( \omega \) sends any \((\epsilon, R)\)-stitched pair of pants to an \((\epsilon, R)\)-stitched pair of pants. Moreover \( \omega^3 = \text{Id} \).

**Proof.** This follows from either from checking the drawing in Figure 12 or making the following computation. Let

\[
(\alpha', \beta', \gamma', \tau'_0, \tau'_1) := (\beta, \gamma, \alpha, \omega(\tau_0), \omega^2(\beta \tau_1)).
\]

Then accordingly let \( \theta'_0 \) and \( \theta'_1 \) be defined as in Definition 9.1.1:

\[
\theta'_0 = (\tau'_0, (\alpha')^-, (\beta')^-, (\gamma')^-) = (\omega(\tau_0), \beta^-, \gamma^-, \alpha^-) = \omega(\theta_0).
\]

Similarly

\[
\theta'_1 = (\tau'_1, (\alpha')^-, (\gamma')^-, (\beta')^-) = (\omega^2(\beta(\tau_1), \beta(\alpha^-), \gamma^-)
\]

\[
= \omega^2(\beta(\tau_1), \beta(\alpha^-), \gamma^-, \beta^-)
\]


\[ \omega^2 \beta(\tau_1, \alpha^-, \beta^{-1}(\gamma^-), \beta^-) = \omega^2 \beta(\tau_1, \alpha^-, \alpha(\gamma^-), \beta^-) = \omega^2(\beta \theta^1). \]

It follows that the pairs
\[ \theta_0' \quad \text{and} \quad \omega^2 \theta_1', \quad \omega(\theta_0') \quad \text{and} \quad \omega^2(\theta_0'), \quad \omega^2(\theta_0') \quad \text{and} \quad (\alpha')^{-1}(\theta_1'), \]
are respectively equal to
\[ \omega(\theta_0) \quad \text{and} \quad \omega^2(\theta_1), \quad \omega^2(\theta_0) \quad \text{and} \quad \alpha^{-1}(\theta_1), \quad \theta_0 \quad \text{and} \quad \omega^2 \theta_1, \]
and thus are \((\epsilon, R)\)-stitched. \(\square\)

9.2. Structure of a stitched pair of pants.

**Theorem 9.2.1.** [Structure of pair of pants] There exist positive constants \(\mathbf{M}_0, \epsilon_0\) and \(R_0\) only depending on \(G\) with the following property. Let \(\epsilon \leq \epsilon_0\) and \(R \geq R_0\). Then for any \((\epsilon, R)\)-stitched pair of pants \((\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \tau_0, \tau_1)\), we have that

(i) the group elements \(\alpha, \beta, \gamma\) are \(P\)-loxodromic,
(ii) the quadruples \((\tau_0, \alpha^-, \alpha^+, \gamma^-)\) and \((\tau_1, \alpha^-, \alpha^+, \beta^-)\), are both \(\mathbf{M}_0(\epsilon + \exp(-R))\)-quasi tripods,
(iii) Moreover, if \(\tau_\alpha = \Psi(\tau_0, \alpha^-, \alpha^+)\), then
\[
d(\varphi_2(\tau_\alpha), a(\tau_\alpha)) \leq \mathbf{M}_0(\epsilon + \exp(-R)), \tag{55}
d(\varphi_2(\tau_\alpha), \tau_1) \leq \mathbf{M}_0(\epsilon + \exp(-R)). \tag{56}
\]

Symmetric statements hold for \(\beta\) and \(\gamma\).

This theorem will be a consequence of the closing pant theorem that we state now. This closing lemma will also be used in the next section.

9.3. Closing pant theorem. Let \(K\) be the map \(x \to \omega(\overline{x})\) defined in Paragraph 3.3.1.

**Definition 9.3.1.** Let \(T\) and \(S\) be two tripods in \(G\), \(\alpha\) an element in \(G\) and \(\mu\) a positive constant. We say \(T, S\) are \((\mu, R)\)-almost closing for \(\alpha\) if there exist tripods \(u\) and \(v\) so that
\[
d(u, T) \leq \mu, \quad d(v, S) \leq \mu, \tag{57}
d(K \circ \varphi_\mathbf{R}(u), S) \leq \mu, \quad d(K \circ \varphi_\mathbf{R}(v), a(T)) \leq \mu. \tag{58}
\]

Our goal is the following theorem that shows we can actually close up a ‘loosely stitched’ pair of pants.

**Theorem 9.3.2.** [Closing pant theorem] There exist positive constants \(\epsilon_1, R_1\) and \(\mathbf{M}_1\) only depending on \(G\) with the following property. Let that \(\epsilon \leq \epsilon_1\) and \(R \geq R_1\). Let \(\tau_0\) and \(\tau_1\) be two tripods, \(\alpha, \beta, \gamma\) be elements of \(G\) with \(\alpha \gamma \beta = 1\). Assume that

(i) \(\tau_0\) and \(\tau_1\) are \((\mu, R)\)-almost closing for \(\alpha\),
(ii) \(\omega^2 \tau_0\) and \(\omega^2 \alpha^{-1}(\tau_1)\) are \((\mu, R)\)-almost closing for \(\gamma\),
(iii) \(\omega \tau_0\) and \(\omega \beta(\tau_1)\) are \((\mu, R)\)-almost closing for \(\beta\).

Then \((\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \tau_0, \tau_1)\) is an \((\mathbf{M}_1(\mu + \exp(-R)), R)\) stitched pair of pants.
9.4. Closing lemma for tripods. The first step in the proof of both theorems is the following lemma

Lemma 9.4.1. [Closing lemma] There exists constants $M_2$, $\varepsilon_2$ and $R_2$, so that assuming $T, S$ are $(\mu, R)$ almost closing for $\alpha$ for $R > R_2$, $\mu < \varepsilon_2$, then

(i) $\alpha$ is $P$-loxodromic,
(ii) $d_{T}(T^{+}, \alpha^{\pm}) \leq M_2(\mu + \exp(-R))$
(iii) Moreover, if $\tau_{\alpha} = \psi(T, \alpha^{-}, \alpha^{+})$, then
\[
d(\varphi_{2R}(\tau_{\alpha}), \alpha(\tau_{\alpha})) \leq M_2(\mu + \exp(-R)) ,
\]
\[
d(\varphi_{R}(\tau_{\alpha}), S) \leq M_2(\mu + \exp(-R)) .
\]
(iv) $d(T, S) \leq 2R$.

In the sequel $M$, $R$, and $\varepsilon$, will denote positive constants only depending on $G$.

9.5. Preliminaries. Our first lemma is essentially a result on hyperbolic plane geometry.

Lemma 9.5.1. There exists constants $R_3$ and $M_3$ so that for $R \geq R_3$ the following holds. Let $u$ be any tripod. Then $v := \varphi_{-2R}((K \circ \varphi_{R})^{2}(u))$ satisfies
\[
d(v, u) \leq M_3 \exp(-R) ,
\]
\[
d(\varphi_{R}(v), K \circ \varphi_{R}(u)) \leq M_3 \exp(-R) .
\]
\[
\partial^{-} v = \partial^{-} u .
\]

Proof. There exist a constant $M$, so that for all $w$,
\[
d(w, K(u)) \leq M .
\]
Recall that $w$ and $K(u)$ are coplanar. In the upper half plane model where $\partial^{-} w = \partial^{-} K(w) = \infty$, $K(w)$ is obtained from $w$ by an horizontal translation. Thus, for $R$ large enough,
\[
d(\varphi_{-R}(w), \varphi_{-R}(K(w))) \leq M_3 \exp(-R).
\]
Applying this inequality to $w = \varphi_{R}(K \circ \varphi_{R}(u))$, gives
\[
d(\varphi_{R}(v), \varphi_{R}(\varphi_{-R}(u))) = d(\varphi_{R}(v), \varphi_{-R}(K \circ \varphi_{R}(u))) \leq M_3 \exp(-R) ,
\]
and thus the second assertion. Proceeding further, for $R$ large enough, the previous inequality and inequality (64) gives, together with the triangle inequality
\[
d(\varphi_{R}(u), \varphi_{-R}(K \circ \varphi_{R})(u)) \leq 2M .
\]
Then, for $R$ large enough,
\[
d(u, \varphi_{-2R}(K \circ \varphi_{R})(u)) \leq M_3 \exp(-R) .
\]
This concludes the proof.

The second lemma gives a way to prove an element is loxodromic

Lemma 9.5.2. There exist constants $M_4$, $R_4$, $\varepsilon_4$ only depending on $G$, so that for any $\varepsilon \leq \varepsilon_4$ and $R \geq R_4$, then given $\alpha \in G$, assuming that there exists a tripod $v$ so that
\[
d(\varphi_{2R}(v), \alpha(v)) \leq \varepsilon ,
\]
then \( \alpha \) is loxodromic and there exists a tripod \( w \), so that \( \partial^\pm w = \alpha^\pm \) and for all \( t \), with \( 0 \leq t \leq 2R \) we have
\[
d(\varphi_t(v), \varphi_t(w)) \leq M_4 \varepsilon. \tag{65}
\]

**Proof.** Let \( \xi \) be the isomorphism from \( G_0 \) to \( G \) associated to \( v \), it follows that for some constant \( B \) only depending on \( G \), by inequality (5),
\[
d_0(\xi^{-1}(\alpha), \exp(2Ra_0)) \leq B \varepsilon.
\]
Thus \( \alpha \) is \( P \)-loxodromic and \( d_u(\alpha^\pm, \partial^\pm v) \leq \varepsilon \) for \( R \) large enough. \( \square \)

**9.6. Proof of Lemma 9.4.1.** We now start the proof of the Closing Lemma 9.4.1, referring to “\( T, S \) are \((\mu, R)\) almost closing for \( \alpha \)” as assumption \((\ast)\).

**9.6.1. A better tripod.**

**Proposition 9.6.1.** There exist constants \( M_1 \), \( \varepsilon_2 \) and \( R_1 \), so that assuming \((\ast)\), \( \mu \leq \varepsilon_1 \) and \( R > R_1 \), then there exist

(i) a tripod \( u_0 \) so that \( u_0, K \circ \varphi_R(u_0) \) and \( (K \circ \varphi_R)^2(u_0) \) are respectively \( M_2 \mu \)-close to \( T \), \( S \) and \( \alpha(T) \),

(ii) a tripod \( u_1 \) so that \( u_1, \varphi_R(u_1) \) and \( \varphi_2R(u_1) \) and are \( M_2(\mu + \exp(-R)) \)-close respectively to \( T \), \( S \) and \( \alpha(T) \).

**Proof.** Recall that that \( K \circ \varphi_t \) is contracting on \( U^+ \) for positive \( t \) (large enough) – See Proposition 3.3.1. Similarly, by Proposition 3.3.3 \( K \) preserves each leaf of \( U^{0,-} \), and thus \( \varphi_{-t} \circ K^{-1} \) is uniformly \( \kappa \)-Lipschitz (for some \( \kappa \)) along \( U^{0,-} \) for all positive \( t \).

By hypothesis (58), (57) and the triangle inequality
\[
d(K \circ \varphi_R(u), v) \leq 2 \mu.
\]
Thus if \( \mu \) is small enough, \( U_{(K \circ \varphi_R)(u)}^{0,-} \) intersects \( U_w^+ \) in a unique point \( w \) which is \( 4 \mu \)-close to both \( v \) and \( K \circ \varphi_R(u) \) – Hence \( 5 \mu \) close to \( S \) – as in Figure (13).

![Figure 13. Closing quasi orbits](image)

Recall that \( K \) preserves each leaf of \( U^{0,-} \) by Proposition 3.3.3. Thus
\[
U_{(K \circ \varphi_R)(u)}^{0,-} = K \left(U_{\varphi_R(u)}^{0,-}\right).
\]
Let now \( u_0 \) be so that \( K \circ \varphi_R(u_0) = w \). According to our initial remark \( \varphi_{-R} \circ K^{-1} \)
is \( \kappa \)-Lipschitz, since
\[
d(K \circ \varphi_R(u_0), K \circ \varphi_R(u)) \leq 2\mu,
\]
we get that
\[
d(u_0, u) \leq \kappa(2\mu), \quad d(u_0, T) \leq (2\kappa + 1)\mu,
\]
where the second inequality used hypothesis (57).

Symmetrically, using now that \( K \circ \varphi_R \) is contracting for \( R \) large enough along the leaves of \( \mathcal{U}' \), it follows that
\[
d\left((K \circ \varphi_R)^2(u_0), (K \circ \varphi_R)(v)\right) \leq \mu.
\]
Combining with hypothesis (58), this yields
\[
d\left((K \circ \varphi_R)^2(u_0), \alpha(T)\right) \leq 2\mu.
\]
Thus with \( M = 2\kappa + 1 \), we obtain a tripod \( u_0 \) so that so that \( u_0, K \circ \varphi_R(u_0) \) and \((K \circ \varphi_R)^2(u_0)\) are respectively \( M_1\mu \)-close to \( T, S \) and \( \alpha(T) \).

Now, according to Lemma 9.5.1, it is enough to take \( u_1 = \varphi_{-2R}(K \circ \varphi_R)^2(u_0) \), then applies the triangle inequality. \(\square\)

9.6.2. Proof of the closing Lemma 9.4.1. Combining Proposition 9.6.1 and Lemma 9.5.2, we obtain that for \( \varepsilon \) small enough and \( R \) large enough, \( \alpha \) is loxodromic and moreover
\[
d_{\mathcal{U}}(\partial^- u_1, \alpha^-) \leq M_3(\mu + \exp(-R))
\]
Since \( u_1 \) is \( M_2(\mu + \exp(-R)) \)-close to \( T \), applications of Proposition 3.4.5 yields
\[
d_T(\partial^- T, \alpha^-) \leq M_3(\mu + \exp(-R)).
\]
Observe that \( \overline{T}, \overline{S} \) are \( (\mu, -R) \) almost closed with respect to \( \alpha \). Thus, reversing the signs in the proof, on gets symmetrically that
\[
d_T(\partial^+ T, \alpha^+) \leq M_3(\mu + \exp(-R)),
\]
and thus
\[
d_T(\partial^+ T, \alpha^+) \leq M_4(\mu + \exp(-R)).
\]

It remains to prove the last statement in the lemma. Since
\[
d(T, u_1) \leq M_2(\mu + \exp(-R)), \quad d(\alpha(T), \varphi_{2R}(u_1)) \leq M_2(\mu + \exp(-R)),
\]
it follows that \( u_1, \alpha^+ \) satisfies the hypothesis of Proposition 4.1.5. Thus, setting \( u_\alpha := \Psi(u_1, \alpha^-, \alpha^+) \),
\[
d\left(\Psi(\varphi_{2R}(u_1), \alpha^-, \alpha^+), \varphi_{2R}(u_\alpha)\right) \leq M_5(\mu + \exp(-R)).
\]
Using inequalities (71) a second time and Lemma 4.1.3, we obtain that
\[
d(\Psi(\varphi_{2R}(u_1), \alpha^-, \alpha^+), \alpha(\tau_\alpha)) \leq M_6(\mu + \exp(-R)),
\]
\[
d(\varphi_{2R}(\tau_\alpha), \varphi_{2R}(u_\alpha)) = d(\tau_\alpha, u_\alpha) \leq M_6(\mu + \exp(-R)),
\]
where the equality in the second line comes from the fact the flow acts by isometry on the leaves of the central foliation (cf. Property (v)). The triangle inequality yields from inequalities (72) and (73)
\[
d(\varphi_{2R}(u_\alpha), \alpha(\tau_\alpha)) \leq M_7(\mu + \exp(-R)).
\]
Combining finally with (74), we get
\[ d(\rho_{2\kappa}(\tau_\alpha), \alpha(\tau_\alpha)) \leq M_8(\mu + \exp(-R)). \] (75)

This proves inequality (59). A similar argument shows inequality (60). The other assertions of the lemma were proved as inequalities (69), (70) and (75).

The last statement is an obvious consequence of the previous ones.

9.7. **Proof of the Structure Pant Theorem 9.2.1.** By definition an \((\epsilon, R)\)-stitched pair of pants is so that \(\tau_0\) and \(\tau_1\) are \((\epsilon, R)\)-almost closing for \(\alpha\), \(\alpha^\tau_0\) and \(\alpha^\tau_1\) are \((\epsilon, R)\)-almost closing for \(\gamma\). It follows from the Closing Lemma 9.4.1 that \(\alpha\), \(\beta\) and \(\gamma\) are loxodromic elements. This shows the first item.

From the second item in the Closing Lemma 9.4.1, \((\tau_0, \alpha^{-\tau}, \beta^{-\tau}, \gamma^{-\tau})\) is an \(M_1(\mu + \exp(-R))\)-quasi tripod. A similar statement holds for \(\tau_1\) since \(\tau_1\) and \(\tau_0\) are also \((\epsilon, R)\)-almost closing for \(\gamma\). We further use the symmetrization proposition 4.1.2 to conclude the second item.

The last item is a direct consequence of the second to last item of Closing Lemma 9.4.1.

9.8. **Proof of the Closing Pant Theorem 9.3.2.** The first item in the Closing Lemma 9.4.1 guarantees that \(\alpha\), \(\beta\) and \(\gamma\) are \(P\)-loxodromic. As a consequence of the second item of the Closing Lemma 9.4.1, applied three times, \((\tau_0, \alpha^{-\tau}, \beta^{-\tau}, \gamma^{-\tau})\) and \((\tau_1, \alpha^{-\tau}, \alpha(\gamma^{-\tau}), \beta^{-\tau})\) as defined below are \(M_1(\mu + \exp(-R))\)-quasi tripods.

It remains to prove the stitching property. We know from Proposition 9.6.1 that there exists \(u_0\) so that \(u_0\) and \(K \circ \phi_R(u_0)\) are \(M_1\epsilon\) close to \(\tau_0\) and \(\tau_1\), and thus \(\phi_R(u_0)\) is \(M_1\epsilon\) to \(K^{-1}\tau_1\) as well. Using Proposition 4.1.5, we obtain that \(\Psi(\tau_0, \alpha^{-\tau}, \beta^{-\tau})\) is \(M_2\epsilon\) close to \(\phi_R(\psi(K^{-1}\tau_1, \alpha^{-\tau}, \beta^{-\tau}))\). This says that \(\theta_0\) and \(\omega^\tau\) are \((M_2\epsilon, R)\) sheared. Reasoning similarly for \(\beta\) and \(\gamma\) yields the last item in the definition of stitched pair of pants.

9.9. **Negatively stitched pair of pants.** In this section, we have only dealt with positively stitched pair of pants. Perfectly symmetric results are obtained for negatively stitched pair of pants.

10. **Triconnected tripods and pair of pants**

We define in this section triconnected pairs of tripods. These objects consist of a pair of tripods together with three homotopy classes of path between them. One may think of them as a very loosely stitched pair of pants.

We then define weights for these tripods, and show that when the weight of a triconnected pair of tripod is non zero, then this triconnected pair of tripods actually defines a stitched pair of pants. The argument here uses the Closing Pant Theorem 9.3.2 of the previous section.

Apart from important definitions, and in particular the inversion of tripods discussed in the last section, the main result of this section is the Closing up Tripod Theorem 10.4.1.

This section will make use of a discrete subgroup \(\Gamma\) of \(G\), with non zero injectivity radius – or more precisely so that \(\Gamma \setminus \text{Sym}(G)\) has a non zero injectivity radius. When \(\Gamma\) is a lattice this is equivalent to the lattice being uniform.
10.1. **Triconnected pair of tripods and almost Fuchsian pair of pants.** Let $\Gamma$ be a discrete subgroup of $G$. We define tripods in the quotient as points in $\Gamma \backslash G$. Let $K_0^m$ be the maximal compact of $G$.

**Definition 10.1.1.** [Triconnected Pair of Tripods] A triconnected pair of tripods in $\Gamma \backslash G$ – see Figure (14a) – is a quintuple

$$W = (t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2),$$

where $t$ and $s$ are two tripods in $\Gamma \backslash G$ and $c_0$, $c_1$ and $c_2$ are three homotopy classes of paths from $t$ to $s$ up to loops defined in a $K_0^m$-orbit. The associated boundary loops are the elements of $\pi_1(\Gamma \backslash G / K_0^m, s) \cong \Gamma$

$$\alpha = c_0 \cdot c_1^{-1}, \quad \beta = c_2 \cdot c_0^{-1}, \quad \gamma = c_1 \cdot c_2^{-1}.$$  

The associated pair of pants is the triple $P = (\alpha, \beta, \gamma)$. Observe that $\alpha \cdot \gamma \cdot \beta = 1$.

The following ancillary definition will play an important role in the sequel.

**Definition 10.1.2.** [Biconnected Pair of Tripods] A biconnected pair of tripods is a quadruple $b = (t, s, c_0, c_1)$, where $t$ and $s$ are tripods and $c_0$, $c_1$ are homotopy classes of paths from $t$ to $s$ in $\Gamma \backslash G$ (up to loops in $K_0^m$-orbits). Its boundary loop is $\alpha = c_0 \cdot c_1^{-1}$.

10.2. **Lift of triconnected and biconnected tripods in the universal cover.** A triconnected pair of tripods in the universal cover is a quintuple $(T, S_0, S_1, S_2)$ so that $T, S_0, S_1,$ and $S_2$ are tripods in the same connected component of $G$. The boundary loops of $(T, S_0, S_1, S_2)$ are the elements of $G$ so that $S_0 = \alpha(S_1), S_2 = \beta(S_1), S_1 = \gamma(S_2)$.

A triconnected pair of tripods $(t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2)$ defines a triconnected pair of tripods in the universal cover well defined up to the diagonal action of $\Gamma$ called the lift of a triconnected pair of tripods, where $T$ is a lift of $t$ in $G$, and $S_0$, $S_1$, $S_2$ are the three lifts of $s$ which are the end points of the paths lifting respectively $c_0$, $c_1$ and $c_2$ starting at $T$ as in Figure (14b). Observe that $S_0 = \alpha(S_1), S_1 = \gamma(S_2)$ and $S_2 = \beta(S_0)$.

**Figure 14.** Triconnected tripods and their lifts

Conversely, since $G / K_0^m$ is contractible, we may think of a triconnected pair of tripods as a quadruple of tripods $(T, S_0, S_1, S_2)$ in the same connected component of $G$ well defined up to the diagonal action of $\Gamma$, so that $S_i$ all lie in the same $\Gamma$ orbit. In particular, we define an action of $\omega$ on the space of triconnected tripod by

$$\omega(T, S_0, S_1, S_2) := (\omega T, \omega^2 S_2, \omega^2 S_0, \omega^2 S_1).$$  

(76)

Lifts of biconnected pair of tripods are defined in an analogous fashion.
10.3. **Weight functions.** We fix a positive \( \varepsilon_0 \) less than half the injectivity radius of \( \Gamma \setminus \mathcal{G} \). We fix a bell function \( \Theta^\varepsilon \) that is a positive function on \( \mathcal{G} \) with support in an \( \varepsilon_0 \)-neighborhood of a fixed tripod \( \tau_0 \) and integral 1. Let also fix a "local homotheties of ratio \( t \) (in some coordinates on \( U \)) \( \lambda_t \) in \( U \) so that \( \lambda_t(\tau_0) = \tau_0 \) and \( \lambda_1 = \text{Id} \). Finally, we define for every \( g \) in \( \mathcal{G} \) and \( \varepsilon \),

\[
\Theta_{g(\tau_0),\varepsilon} := \frac{1}{\int_U \mathcal{G}^*(\Theta \circ \lambda_{\varepsilon_0/\varepsilon})} \mathcal{G}^*(\Theta \circ \lambda_{\varepsilon_0/\varepsilon}).
\]  

By the assumption on \( \varepsilon_0 \), \( \Theta_{t,\varepsilon} \) also make sense on \( \Gamma \setminus \mathcal{G} \) provided \( \varepsilon < \varepsilon_0 \). We will denote this function also by \( \Theta \). The following proposition is immediate.

**Proposition 10.3.1.** The function \( \Theta_{t,\varepsilon} \) has its support in an \( \varepsilon \) neighborhood of \( \tau \), is positive and of integral 1. Finally, there exists a constant \( D \) independent of \( \varepsilon \) and \( \tau \), so that

\[
\|\Theta_{t,\varepsilon}\|_{C^k} \leq D \varepsilon^{-k-D}.
\]  

**Proof.** This follows that in some coordinates in \( U \) for which \( \tau_0 = 0 \), \( \lambda_t(x) = tx \). \( \Box \)

**Definition 10.3.2.** [Weight Functions] Let \( \varepsilon \) be a positive \( R \) real. The upstairs weight function is defined on the space of pairs of tripods \((T, S)\) in \( \mathcal{G} \) by

\[
A_{\varepsilon, R}(T, S) := \int_{\mathcal{G}} \Theta_{T, \varepsilon}(x) \cdot \Theta_{S, \varepsilon}(K \circ \varphi_R(x)) \, dx.
\]

The downstairs weight function is defined on the space of pairs of tripods \((t, s)\) in \( \Gamma \setminus \mathcal{G} \) by

\[
a_{\varepsilon, R}(t, s) := \int_{\Gamma \setminus \mathcal{G}} \Theta_{t, \varepsilon}(x) \cdot \Theta_{s, \varepsilon}(K \circ \varphi_R(x)) \, dx.
\]

Let \( t \) and \( s \) be tripods in \( \Gamma \setminus \mathcal{G} \). Let \( c_0 \) be a path from \( t \) to \( s \). The connected tripod weight function is defined by

\[
a_{\varepsilon, R}(t, s, c_0) := A_{\varepsilon, R}(T, S_0),
\]

where \( T \) is any lift of \( t \) in \( \mathcal{G} \), and \( S_0 \) the lift of \( s \) which is the end point of the lift of \( c_0 \) starting at \( T \).

**Remarks:**

(i) We allow \( R \) to be negative.

(ii) By construction, for any \( g \in \mathcal{G} \) we have \( A_{\varepsilon, R}(gT, gS) = A_{\varepsilon, R}(T, S) \).

(iii) the value of \( a_{\varepsilon, R}(t, s, c) \) only depends on \( t, s \) and the homotopy class of \( c \).

(iv) Let \( \pi(t, s) \) be the set of homotopy classes of paths from \( t \) to \( s \), then

\[
\sum_{c \in \pi(t, s)} a_{\varepsilon, R}(t, s, c) = \int_{\Gamma \setminus \mathcal{G}} \Theta_{t, \varepsilon}(x) \cdot \Theta_{s, \varepsilon}(K \circ \varphi_R(x)) \, dx = a_{\varepsilon, R}(t, s).
\]  

**Definition 10.3.3.** [Weight of a triconnected pair of tripods] Let \( W = (T, S_0, S_1, S_2) \) be a triconnected pair of tripods in the universal cover. The weight of \( W \) is defined by

\[
B_{\varepsilon, R}(W) = A_{\varepsilon, R}(T, S_0) \cdot A_{\varepsilon, R}(\omega^2 T, \omega S_1) \cdot A_{\varepsilon, R}(\omega T, \omega^2 S_2).
\]  

Similarly, the weight of \( \varepsilon \) of a biconnected pair of tripods \( B = (T, S_0, S_1) \) is defined by

\[
D_{\varepsilon, R}(B) := A_{\varepsilon, R}(T, S_0) \cdot A_{\varepsilon, R}(\omega^2 T, \omega S_1).
\]
The functions $B_{ε,R}$ and $D_{ε,R}$ are $Γ$ invariant and thus descends to functions $b_{ε,R}$ and $d_{ε,R}$ for respectively triconnected tripods and biconnected tripods in $Γ\backslash G$. Using the definition of $b_{ε,R}$ and equation (76)

$$b_{ε,R} = b_{ε,R}.$$  \hspace{1cm} (82)

$$\sum_{c_0,c_1,c_2} b_{ε,R}(t,s,c_0,c_1,c_2) = a_{ε,R}(t,s).a_{ε,R}(ω^2(t),ω(s)).a_{ε,R}(ω(t),ω^2(s)).$$  \hspace{1cm} (83)

where the last equation used Equations (80) and (79).

As an immediate consequence of the definitions of the weight functions we have

**Proposition 10.3.4.** Let $(α, β, γ, τ₀, τ₁)$ be an $(\frac{Γ}{R}, R)$-stitched pair of pants, let $W := (τ₀, τ₁, γ(τ₁), β(τ₁))$. Then $B_{ε,R}(W)$ is non zero.

One of our main goal is to prove the converse.

10.3.1. Weight functions and mixing. Recall that a flow $|φ_1|_{ε,R}$ is exponential mixing if there exists some integer $k$, positive constants $C$ and $a$ so that given two smooth $C^k$ functions $f$ and $g$, then for all positive $t$,

$$\left| \int_X f \circ φ₁ \, dμ - \int_X f \, dμ \cdot \int_X g \, dμ \right| \leq Ce^{-at}∥f∥_{C^k}∥g∥_{C^k}. \hspace{1cm} (84)$$

In the Appendix 19 We recall the fact that the action of $|φ₁|_{ε,R}$ on $Γ\backslash G$ is exponentially mixing when $Γ$ is a lattice. As an immediate corollary:

**Proposition 10.3.5.** [Weight function and mixing] Assume $Γ$ is a uniform lattice, there exists a positive constant $q = q(Γ)$ depending only on $Γ$, a positive constant $K = K(ε, Γ)$ only depending on $ε$ and $Γ$ so that for $R$ large enough and every $t$, $s$ in $Γ\backslash G$, we have

$$|a_{ε,R}(t,s) - 1| \leq \exp(-q|R|)K. \hspace{1cm} (85)$$

**Proof.** This follows from the definition of exponential mixing and the definition of the function $a_{ε,R}$ by Equation (79) and Equation (77). \qed

10.4. Triconnected pair of tripods and stitched pair of pants. The main theorem of this section is to relate triconnected tripods to a stitched pair of pants and to prove the converse of Proposition 10.3.4

**Theorem 10.4.1.** [Closing up tripods] There exists a constant $M$ only depending on $G$, so that the following holds. For any $ε > 0$, there exists $R₀$ so that for any triconnected pair of tripods $W = (T,S₀,S₁,S₂)$ with boundary loops $α$, $β$, and $γ$, so that $b_{ε,R}(W) \neq 0$ with $R > R₀$, then $(α, β, γ, T, S₀)$ is an $(M, R)$-positively stitched pair of pants.

The proof of Theorem 10.4.1 is an immediate consequence of the Closing Pant Theorem 9.3.2 and the following proposition which guarantees that the hypotheses of the Closing Pant Theorem are satisfied.

**Proposition 10.4.2.** For $μ$ small enough and then $R$ large enough. Assuming $B = (T,S₀,S₁)$ is a biconnected tripod with boundary loop $α$ so that $V_{μ,R}(B) \neq 0$. Then $T$ and $S₀$ are $(\frac{μ}{R}, R)$-almost closing for $α$.

**Proof.** We have $S₀ = α(S₁).$ Since $A_{R,μ}(T,S₀) \neq 0$, there exists $u$ so that

$$Θ_{T, \frac{μ}{R}}(u).Θ_{S₀, \frac{μ}{R}}(K \circ φ_{R}(u)) \neq 0.$$
Thus, from the definition of $\Theta$,
\[
d(u, T) \leq \frac{\mu}{R}, \quad d(K \circ \varphi_R(u), S_0) \leq \frac{\mu}{R}.
\] (86)

Similarly, since $A_{K, R}(\varphi^2(T), \omega(S_1)) \neq 0$, there exists a tripod $z$ so that
\[
d(\omega(z), T) \leq \frac{\mu}{R}, \quad d(K \circ \varphi_R(z), \omega(S_1)) \leq \frac{\mu}{R}.
\] (87)

Here we used that $\omega$ is an isometry for $d$ (see beginning of paragraph 3.4.3). Let $v := \alpha(\varphi^2 \circ K \circ \varphi_R(z)) = \alpha(\varphi_R(z))$.

Then using the fact the metric on $G$ is invariant by $G$ and $\omega$ and using Corollary 3.4.6
\[
d(v, S_0) = d(v, \omega(S_1)) = d(\omega^2 \circ K \circ \varphi_R(z), S_1) = d(K \circ \varphi_R(z), \omega(S_1)) \leq \frac{\mu}{R}.
\] (88)

Moreover, using the commutations properties (3.3.1), we have
\[
K \circ \varphi_R(v) = \omega(\varphi_R(\alpha(\varphi_R(z)))) = \alpha \circ \omega(\varphi_{-R}(\varphi_R(z))) = \omega(\varphi_R(z)).
\]

Thus, first inequality (87) and combining with inequality (88)
\[
d(K \circ \varphi_R(v), \omega(T)) \leq \frac{\mu}{R}, \quad d(v, S_0) \leq \frac{\mu}{R}.
\] (89)

The result now follows from inequality (89) and (86).

\[\square\]

10.5. **Reversing orientation on triconnected and biconnected pair of tripods.** We need an analogue of the transformation that reverse the orientation on pair of pants.

Let $J_0$ be a reflexion in automorphism in $G_0$ for $s_0$ (see 2.1). Let $\sigma$ be the involution $x \mapsto x$ defined in Paragraph 3.3. For an even $sl_2$-triple, $J_0$ and $\sigma$ commute: this follows from a direct matrix computation. Recall also that the conjugation by $J_0$ fixes $L_0$ pointwise since by definition $J_0 \in Z(L_0)$.

**Definition 10.5.1.** [Reverting orientation on $G$] The reverting orientation involution $I_0$ is the automorphism of $G_0$ defined by $I_0 := J_0 \circ \sigma$. We use the same notation to define its action on the space of tripods $G = \text{Hom}(G_0, G)$ by precomposition.

**Remarks:**

(i) $I_0$ commutes with $\sigma$, and if $s_0 = (a_0, x_0, y_0)$ is the fundamental $sl_2$-triple, then
\[
I_0(a_0, x_0, y_0) = (a_0, a_0, x_0).
\] (90)

(ii) we have $I_0 \circ \varphi_R = \varphi_{-R} \circ I_0$, similarly $\omega \circ I_0 = I_0 \circ \omega^2$ and $I_0 \circ K = I_0 = \omega \circ K$

(iii) Since the action of $I_0$ commutes with the action of $G$ we may assume that it preserves the left invariant metric on $G$.

(iv) When $G$ is isomorphic to $\text{PSL}_2(\mathbb{C})$, $I_0$ corresponds to the symmetry $J$ with respect to a geodesic.

**Definition 10.5.2.** [Reverting orientation on $G$] The reverting involution $I_0$ – see Figure 15 – on the set of triconnected pairs of tripods $Q$, given by
\[
I(t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2) =: (\omega I_0(t), \omega I_0(s), \omega I_0(c_1), \omega I_0(c_0), \omega I_0(c_2)).
\] (91)

On the set $B$ of biconnected pairs of tripods, it is given by
\[
I(t, s, c_0, c_1) =: (\omega I_0(t), \omega I_0(s), \omega I_0(c_1), \omega I_0(c_0)).
\] (92)
I work for b but a similar construction works for d: where for Equations (94) and (97) we used the equivariance of (95). A change of variables in Thus we can conclude the proof of the first assertion, hence of the proposition (we be the lifts of obtain by using \(c_0, c_1\) and \(c_2\) respectively. Recall that

\[
I(t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2) = (\omega I_0(t), \omega I_0(s), \omega I_0(c_1), \omega I_0(c_0), \omega I_0(c_2)),
\]

\[
b_{c,R}(W) = A_{c,R}(T, S_0) A_{\omega T}(\omega^2, S_1) A_{c,R}(\omega T, S_0) A_{c,R}(\omega^2 S_2).
\]

Thus we can conclude the proof of the first assertion, hence of the proposition (we work for b but a similar construction works for d):

\[
b_{c,R}(I(W)) = A_{c,R}(\omega I_0(T), \omega I_0(S_1)) A_{\omega T}(\omega^2 I_0(T), I_0(S_2)) A_{c,R}(\omega^2 I_0(T), I_0(S_2)) A_{c,R}(\omega T, \omega^2 S_2).
\]

Observe that I sends \(Q_{[k]}\) to \(Q_{[k-1]}\): indeed \(\omega I_0\) commutes with the left action of \(G\). Reverting orientation plays well with the weight functions:

**Proposition 10.5.3.** The following holds for I on \(Q\):

\[
b_{c,R} \circ I = b_{c,-R}, \quad d_{c,R} \circ I = d_{c,-R}.
\]

**Proof.** This follows either from squinting at symmetries in Figure (15) or from tedious computations that we o... following definition 10.5.2. Let \(W\) be the lifts of \(t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2\). Let \(T\) be a lift of \(t\) and \(S_0, S_1, S_2\) be the lifts of \(s\) obtained by using \(c_0, c_1\) and \(c_2\) respectively. Recall that

\[
I(t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2) = (\omega I_0(t), \omega I_0(s), \omega I_0(c_1), \omega I_0(c_0), \omega I_0(c_2)),
\]

\[
b_{c,R}(W) = A_{c,R}(T, S_0) A_{\omega T}(\omega^2, S_1) A_{c,R}(\omega T, S_0) A_{c,R}(\omega^2 S_2).
\]

Thus we can conclude the proof of the first assertion, hence of the proposition (we work for b but a similar construction works for d):

\[
b_{c,R}(I(W)) = A_{c,R}(\omega I_0(T), \omega I_0(S_1)) A_{\omega T}(\omega^2 I_0(T), I_0(S_2)) A_{c,R}(\omega I_0(T), I_0(S_2)) A_{c,R}(\omega T, \omega^2 S_2).
\]

Figure 15. Reverting orientation on triconnected tripods: here \(I = \omega I_0\).
11. Spaces of biconnected tripods and triconnected tripods

We present in this section the spaces of biconnected and triconnected tripods that we shall discuss in the next sections. Our goal in this section are

(i) The definition of the various spaces involved
(ii) The Equidistribution and Mixing Proposition 11.3.1

Throughout this section, \( \Gamma \) will be a uniform lattice in \( G \). Let \( \alpha \in \Gamma \) be a \( P \)-loxodromic element. Recall that (see for instance [11, Proposition 3.5]) the centralizer \( \Gamma_{\alpha} := Z_G(\alpha) \), of \( \alpha \) in \( \Gamma \) is a uniform lattice in the centralizer \( Z_G(\alpha) \) of \( \alpha \) in \( G \).

11.1. Biconnected tripods. Let \( \alpha \) be a \( P \)-loxodromic element and \( \Lambda \) be a uniform lattice in \( Z_G(\alpha) \). We define the upstairs space of biconnected tripods \( B^\alpha \) as

\[ B^\alpha := \{(T, S_0, S_1) \text{ biconnected tripods in the universal cover } | \ S_0 = \alpha S_1 \} \]

and the downstairs space of biconnected tripods as

\[ B_{\Lambda}^\alpha := \Lambda \backslash B^\alpha \cdot \]

We shall also denote by \( [\Gamma] \) be the set of conjugacy classes of elements in \( \Gamma \), that we also interpret as the set of free homotopy classes in \( \Gamma \backslash G / K_0 \), where \( K_0 \) is the maximal compact of \( G_0 \).

11.1.1. An invariant measure. We observe that \( B^\alpha \) is canonically identified with \( (G \times G)^+ \) (that is the space of pair of tripods in the same connected component) and we deduce a covering map from \( B_{\Lambda}^\alpha \) to \( \Lambda \backslash G \times \Lambda \backslash G \). Thus \( B^\alpha \) and \( B_{\Lambda}^\alpha \) carry a canonical invariant form \( \lambda \) in the Lebesgue measure class.

Let also \( D_{\varepsilon,R} \) and \( d_{\varepsilon,R} \) the weight functions defined in Definition 10.3.3 (with respect to \( \Gamma = \Lambda \)) By construction \( D_{\varepsilon,R} \) is a function \( B^\alpha \), while \( d_{\varepsilon,R} \) is a function on \( B_{\Lambda}^\alpha \). We now consider the measures \( \tilde{\nu}_{\varepsilon,R} = D_{\varepsilon,R} \cdot \lambda \), \( \nu_{\varepsilon,R} = d_{\varepsilon,R} \cdot \lambda \),

on \( B^\alpha \) and \( B_{\Lambda}^\alpha \) respectively. The following are obvious

**Proposition 11.1.1.** The measure \( \nu_{\varepsilon,R} \) is locally finite and invariant under \( C_\alpha \).

We finally consider \( B_{\varepsilon,R}(\alpha) \) and \( B_{\varepsilon,R}^\Lambda(\alpha) \) the supports of the functions \( D_{\varepsilon,R} \) and \( d_{\varepsilon,R} \). It will be convenient in the sequel to distinguish between positive and negative and we introduce for \( R > 0 \),

\[ B_{\varepsilon,R}^+(\alpha) = \{ B \in B_{\alpha} | D_{\varepsilon,R}(B) > 0 \} \quad , \quad B_{\varepsilon,R}^\Lambda(\alpha) = \{ B \in B_{\alpha} | d_{\varepsilon,R}(B) > 0 \} \]

\[ B_{\varepsilon,R}^-(\alpha) = \{ B \in B_{\alpha} | D_{\varepsilon,R}(B) > 0 \} \quad , \quad B_{\varepsilon,R}^\Lambda(\alpha) = \{ B \in B_{\alpha} | d_{\varepsilon,R}(B) > 0 \} \]

Recall that by Proposition 10.4.2, if \( (T, S_0, \alpha(S_0)) \) belong to \( B_{\varepsilon,R}(\alpha) \), then \( T \) and \( S_0 \) are \( (k_\varepsilon,R) \)-almost closing for \( \alpha \).
11.1.2. **Biconnected tripods and lattices.** Let $\Gamma$ be a uniform lattice in $G$ and $\alpha$ a $P$-loxodromic element in $\Gamma$. We may now consider the set of biconnected tripods in $\Gamma \G$ whose loop is in the homotopy class defined by $\alpha$.

$$\mathcal{B}_\alpha^\Gamma := \{(t, s, c_0, c_1) \text{ biconnected tripods in } \Gamma \G \mid c_0 \cdot c_1^{-1} \in [\alpha]\}$$

We have the following interpretation.

**Proposition 11.1.2.** The projection from $\mathcal{B}_\alpha^\Gamma$ to $\mathcal{B}_\alpha^\Gamma$ is an isomorphism.

In the sequel we will use the following abuse of language: $\mathcal{B}_\alpha^\Gamma = \mathcal{B}_\alpha^\Gamma$.

11.2. **Triconnected tripods.** We need to give names to various spaces of triconnected tripods, including their "boundary related" versions. Let as above $\Gamma$ be a uniform lattice $\alpha$ be an element in $\Gamma$ and $\Lambda$ a lattice in $\mathbb{Z}_\Gamma(\alpha)$. We introduce the following spaces

- $Q := \{(T, S_0, S_1, S_2) \in \mathcal{G}^4 \mid S_1, S_2 \in \Gamma \cdot S_0\}$
- $Q^\Gamma := \{(t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2) \text{ triconnected tripods in } \Gamma \G\}$
- $Q_\alpha := \{(T, S_0, S_1, S_2) \in Q \mid S_1 = \alpha S_0\}$
- $Q_\alpha^\Gamma := \Lambda \cdot Q_\alpha$
- $Q_{\alpha}^\Gamma := \{(t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2) \in Q^\Gamma \mid c_0 \cdot c_1^{-1} \in [\alpha]\}$

The following identifications are obvious

**Proposition 11.2.1.** We have that $Q^\Gamma$ is isomorphic to $\Gamma \setminus Q$. Similarly $Q_{\alpha}^\Gamma$ is isomorphic to $Q_{\alpha}^\Gamma$. Finally

$$Q^\Gamma = \bigsqcup_{[\alpha] \in \Gamma} Q_{\alpha}^\Gamma.$$

By a slight abuse of language we shall write $Q_{\alpha}^\Gamma := Q_{\alpha}^\Gamma$.

11.2.1. **Triconnected tripods in $\Gamma \setminus G$.** Parallel to what we did for biconnected tripods, let us introduce the following spaces. First let $Q^\Gamma$ be the set of triconnected pairs of tripods in $\Gamma \setminus G$ and let

$$Q_{+R}^\Gamma := \{w \in Q^\Gamma \mid b_{+R}(w) > 0\}.$$

We will assume $R > 0$ and write accordingly $Q_{+R}^\Gamma = Q_{+R}^\Gamma$ and $Q_{-R}^\Gamma = Q_{-R}^\Gamma$. Let $(\Gamma \setminus G \times \Gamma \setminus G)^*$ be the set of pairs of points in $\Gamma \setminus G$ in the same connected component. We first observe

**Proposition 11.2.2.** The (forgetting) map $p$ from $Q^\Gamma$ to $(\Gamma \setminus G \times \Gamma \setminus G)^*$ sending $(t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2)$ to $(t, s)$ is a covering.

**Proof.** Let $Q_\alpha$ be the space of quadruples $(T, S_0, S_1, S_2)$ where all $S_i$ lie in the same $\Gamma$ orbit. The map $\pi : (T, S_0, S_1, S_2) \mapsto (T, S_0)$ is a covering. Let $\Gamma \times \Gamma$ be acting on $Q_\alpha$ by $(\gamma, \eta) \cdot (T, S_0, S_1, S_2) = (\gamma T, \eta S_0, \eta S_1, S_2)$. Then $(\Gamma \times \Gamma) \setminus Q_\alpha = Q$ and $\pi$ being equivariant gives rise to $p$. Thus $p$ is a covering. \hfill $\Box$

**Definition 11.2.3.** [Measures] The Lebesgue measure $\Lambda$ is the locally finite measure on $Q$ associated to the pullback of the $G$-invariant volume forms on $\Gamma \setminus G$.

Given positive $R$ and $\varepsilon$, the weighted measure $\mu_{\varepsilon, R}$ on $Q$ is the measure supported on $Q_{\varepsilon, R}$ given by $\mu_{\varepsilon, R} = b_{\varepsilon, R} \Lambda$. 
For the sake of convenience, we will assume that $R > 0$ and write

$$\mu_{e,R}^+ := \mu_{e,R}$$

and

$$\mu_{e,R}^- := \mu_{e,-R}$$

**Proposition 11.2.4.** For $R > 1$, $Q_{e,R}^+$ is relatively compact and $\mu_{e,R}$ is finite.

**Proof.** Let $(T, S_0, S_1, S_2)$ be a lift of a triconnected tripod $w = (t, s, c_0, c_1, c_2)$ satisfying $b_{e,R}(w) \neq 0$. Then, by Proposition 10.4.2, $d(T, S_i) \leq R + \epsilon$. This implies that $Q_{e,R}$ is relatively compact and thus $\mu_{e,R}$ is finite. \qed

Let’s finally define $Q_{e,\Gamma}^+(\alpha) := Q_{e,\Gamma}^+ \cap Q_{\alpha}^+$.

### 11.3. Mixing: From triconnected tripods to biconnected tripods.

We have a natural forgetful map $\pi$ from $Q_{e,\Gamma}^+(\alpha)$ to $B_{e,\Gamma}^+(\alpha)$. We then have the following proposition which says that adding a third path is probabilistically independent for large $R$.

**Proposition 11.3.1.** ([Equidistribution and mixing]) We have the inclusion $\pi(Q_{e,\Gamma}^+(\alpha)) \subset B_{e,\Gamma}^+(\alpha)$. Moreover, there exists a function $C_{e,R}$ depending on $R$ and $\epsilon$ so that $\pi_*(\mu_{e,R}) = C_{e,R} \nu_{e,R}$. The function $C_{e,R}$ is almost constant: there exists a constant $q$ and a constant $K(\epsilon, \Gamma)$ so that

$$\|C_{e,R} - 1\|_{C^0} \leqslant K(\epsilon, \Gamma) \exp(-q|R|).$$

(99)

In particular, given $\epsilon$, for $R$ large enough, the measure $\nu_{e,R}$ is finite with relatively compact support.

**Proof.** By construction for the second equality, and assertion (79) for the third

$$\pi_*(\mu_{e,R}) = \pi_*(b_{e,R} \Lambda) = \sum_{c_2} a_{e,R}(t, s, c_2) \cdot d_{e,R} \Lambda = a_{e,R}(t, s) \cdot \nu_{e,R}.$$ 

Thus the result follows from exponential mixing: Proposition 10.3.5. \qed

### 12. Cores and feet projections

In this section we concentrate on discussing the analogues of the normal bundle to closed geodesics for hyperbolic 3-manifolds in our higher rank situation. Ultimately, in the next situation we want to show that pair of pants with having a “boundary component” in common are nicely distributed in this “normal bundle”. For now we need to investigate and define the objects that we shall need for this study.

More precisely, we define the feet space which is a higher rank version of the normal space to a geodesic in the hyperbolic space of dimension 3 that we shall call . We also explain how biconnected tripods and triconnected tripods project to this feet space.

We will also introduce an important subspace of this feet space, called the core. The main result of this section is Theorem 12.2.1 about measures on the feet space.

In all this section $\alpha$ will be a semisimple $\mathbb{P}$-loxodromic element in $G$ and $\Lambda$ a uniform lattice of $\mathbb{Z}_G(\alpha)$, the centralizer of $\alpha$ in $G$, so that $\alpha \in \Lambda$. 
12.1. Feet spaces and their core.

**Definition 12.1.1.** [Feet spaces for \( a \)] The upstairs feet space of \( a \) and downstairs feet space of \( a \) denoted respectively \( \mathcal{F}_a \) and \( \mathcal{F}_a^\Lambda \) are respectively
\[
\mathcal{F}_a := \{ \tau \in \mathcal{G} \mid \partial^a \tau = a^a \}, \tag{100}
\]
\[
\mathcal{F}_a^\Lambda := \Lambda \backslash \mathcal{F}_a. \tag{101}
\]

We denote by \( p \) the projection from \( \mathcal{F}_a \) to \( \mathcal{F}_a^\Lambda \).

If \( g \in \mathcal{G} \), the map \( F_g : \tau \mapsto g \tau \), defines a natural map \( f_g \) from \( \mathcal{F}_a \) to \( \mathcal{F}_{g^a g^{-1}} \) which give rise to
\[
f_g : \mathcal{F}_a^\Lambda \to \mathcal{F}_{g^a g^{-1}}^\Lambda \quad \text{so that} \quad p \circ F_g = f_g \circ p,
\]
which is the identify if \( g \in \Lambda \). We also introduce the groups
\[
\mathcal{C}_a := \mathcal{Z}_G^p(\Lambda), \tag{102}
\]
\[
L_a := \{ g \in \mathcal{G} \mid g(\alpha^a) = \alpha^a \}. \tag{103}
\]
Let also consider \( K_a \) the maximal compact factor in \( L_a \). Below are some elementary remarks

(i) Any tripod in \( \mathcal{F}_a \), gives an isomorphism of \( \mathcal{L}_a \) with \( \mathcal{L}_0 \), and the space \( \mathcal{F}_a \) is a principal \( \mathcal{L}_a \) torsor.

(ii) The group \( \mathcal{C}_a \) acts by isometries on \( \mathcal{F}_a \) and \( \mathcal{C}_a \subset L_a \).

12.1.1. The lattice case. When \( \Gamma \) is a lattice in \( \mathcal{G} \), we write by a slight abuse of language \( \mathcal{F}_a^\Gamma := \mathcal{F}_a^\Gamma \), where we recall that \( \Gamma_a = \mathcal{Z}_f(\alpha) \). In that case, we define for \([\alpha] \) a conjugacy class in \( \Gamma \), \( \mathcal{F}_a^\Gamma \), as the set of equivalence in \( \bigcup_{\alpha \in [\alpha]} \mathcal{F}_a^\Gamma \) under the action of \( \Gamma \) given by the maps \( f_g \). Since for \( g \in \Gamma_a \), \( f_g \) gives the identity on \( \mathcal{F}_a^\Gamma \), the space \( \mathcal{F}_a^\Gamma \) is canonically identified with \( \mathcal{F}_a^\Gamma \) for all \( \alpha \in [\alpha] \).

12.1.2. The core of the feet space. A (possibly empty) special subset of the space of feet requires consideration:

**Definition 12.1.2.** [Core] Given \((\varepsilon, R)\), the \((\varepsilon, R)\)-core of the space of feet is the open subset \( X_a \) of \( \mathcal{F}_a \), defined by
\[
X_a = \left\{ \tau \in \mathcal{F}_a \mid d(\varphi_{2R}(\tau), a(\tau)) < \frac{\varepsilon}{R} \right\},
\]

Let then \( X_a^\Lambda \) be the projection of \( X_a \) on \( \mathcal{F}_a^\Lambda \).

We immediately have

**Proposition 12.1.3.** The open sets \( X_a \) and \( X_a^\Lambda \), are invariant under the action of \( \mathcal{C}_a \). Moreover, \( p^{-1}X_a^\Lambda = X_a \). Finally, when non empty, \( X_a^\Lambda \) is compact.

**Proof.** The first statement follows from the fact that \( \mathcal{Z}_G(\alpha) \) acts by isometries on \( \mathcal{F}_a \) commuting both with \( a \) and the flow \( \{ \varphi_t \}_{t \in \mathbb{R}} \). The second statement comes from the fact that \( X_a \) is in particular invariant under the action of \( \mathcal{Z}_G(\alpha) \). Let us finally prove the compactness assertion, the action of the flow on \( \mathcal{F}_a \) is given by the left action of the one parameter subgroup generated by \( a \). Thus
\[
d(\varphi_{2R}(\tau), a(\tau)) = d(\tau, \exp(-2Ra)a(\tau)).
\]
Let $b := \exp(-2Ra)\alpha$. Let $\tau_0$ be an element of $\mathcal{F}_\alpha$. Then the core $X_\alpha$ is the set of those elements $g\tau_0$, where $g \in L_\alpha$ satisfies
\[ d(\tau_0, g^{-1}bg \cdot \tau_0) \leq \frac{\varepsilon}{R}. \]
Since $\alpha$ is semisimple, so is $b$. Thus the orbit map
\[ L_\alpha/Z_{L_\alpha}(b) \rightarrow G, \quad g \mapsto g^{-1}bg \cdot \tau_0, \]
is proper. It follows that the set
\[ \{ h \in L_\alpha/Z_{L_\alpha}(b), \quad d(\tau_0, g^{-1}bg \cdot \tau_0) \leq \frac{\varepsilon}{R} \}, \]
is compact. The result now follows from the fact that $Z_G(\alpha) = Z_G(b)$ and $\Lambda$ is uniform lattice in $Z_G(\alpha)$ by hypothesis.

\[ \square \]

12.2. Main result. The result use the Levy–Prokhorov distance as described in the Appendix 18.

**Theorem 12.2.1.** For $\varepsilon$ small enough, then $R$ large enough, there exists a constant $M$ only depending on $G$, with the following property. Let $\alpha$ be a loxodromic element. Let $\mu$ be a measure supported on the core $X^\Lambda_\alpha$.

Let $T_0$ be a compact torus in $C_\alpha \cap K_\alpha$. Let $\nu$ be a measure on $F^\Lambda_\alpha$ which is invariant under $C_\alpha$ and supported on $X^\Lambda_\alpha$. Assume that we have a function $C$ so that $\mu = C \nu$, with $\|C - 1\|_{\infty} \leq \frac{\varepsilon}{R^2}$. (104)

Then for all $\sigma \in T_0$, denoting $d$ the Levy–Prokhorov between measures on $\mathcal{F}_\alpha$.
\[ d(\sigma \phi_1^*(\mu), \mu) \leq M \frac{\varepsilon}{R}, \]
(105)

After some preliminaries, we prove this proposition in paragraph 12.2.3

12.2.1. A 1-dimensional torus. A critical point in the proof is to find a 1-dimensional parameter subgroup containing $\alpha$.

**Lemma 12.2.2.** We assume $\varepsilon$ small enough, then $R$ large enough. There exists a constant $M_1$ only depending on $G$ so that the following holds. Let $\alpha$ be a loxodromic element. Let $\mathcal{A}$ be a non empty connected component of $X^\Lambda_\alpha$. Then there exists a 1-parameter subgroup $T_\alpha \subset Z(Z(\alpha))$ containing $\alpha$ as well as an element $f \in T_\alpha$ such that for any $\tau \in \mathcal{A}$
\[ d(\tau, \exp(tu_\alpha)(\tau)) \leq M_1 \frac{\varepsilon}{R}. \]
(109)

Assuming the notation of the previous lemma, our first step in that proof is the

**Proposition 12.2.3.** We assume $\varepsilon$ small enough, then $R$ large enough. There exists a constant $M_2$ so that the following holds. Let $\alpha$ be a $P$-loxodromic element. Let $\mathcal{A}^u$ be a non empty connected component of $X^\alpha_\alpha$, then there exists $u_\alpha \in g$ invariant by $Z(\alpha)$, with $\exp(2Ru_\alpha)$ so that for all $\tau \in \mathcal{A}^u$
\[ \forall 0 \leq t \leq 2R, \quad d(\phi_1(t), \exp(tu_\alpha)(\tau)) \leq M_2 \frac{\varepsilon}{R}, \]
(108)
\[ \forall 0 \leq t \leq 2R, \quad d(\tau, \exp(tu_\alpha)(\tau)) \leq M_2 \cdot R. \]
(109)
Proof. If $\tau$ belongs to the $(\varepsilon, R)$ core of $\alpha$, then
\[ d_0(\tau^{-1}(\alpha), \exp(2Ra_0)) \leq \frac{\varepsilon}{R}. \]
Since $d_0$ is right invariant, we obtain that letting $b := \tau^{-1}(\alpha) \exp(-Ra_0)$,
\[ d_0(b, \text{Id}) \leq \frac{\varepsilon}{R}. \]
Thus for $\frac{\varepsilon}{R}$ small enough, there exists $v_\alpha$, with $b = \exp(2Rv_\alpha)$ unique (of smallest norm) in $I_0$ so that
\[ b = \exp(2Rv_\alpha), \quad \forall t \in [0, 2R], \quad d_0(tv_\alpha, \text{Id}) \leq \frac{\varepsilon}{R}. \quad (110) \]
Let $u_\alpha := T\xi_\tau(a_0 + v_\alpha)$. Since $a_0$ is in the center of $I_0$, we get from the first equation that
\[ \alpha = \xi_\tau(\exp(2R(a_0 + v_\alpha))) = \exp(2Ru_\alpha). \]
The second equation in Assertion (110) now yields that for all $\tau$ in $X_\alpha$
\[ d(\varphi_\tau(\tau), \exp(tu_\alpha)\tau) = d_0(\exp(tv_\alpha), \text{Id}) \leq \frac{\varepsilon}{R}. \]
This proves Inequality (108). Finally inequality (109) follows from the fact that there exists a constant $A$ only depending on $G$ so that $d(\varphi_\tau(\tau), \varphi_\tau(t)) \leq A.t$, for all $t$ and $\tau$.

If $\frac{\varepsilon}{R}$ is small enough, $\exp$ is a diffeomorphism in the neighborhood of $v_\alpha$, hence of $u_\alpha$. It follows that $u_\alpha$ only depends on the connected component of $X_\alpha^0$ containing $\tau$.

Similarly since $u_\alpha$ is a regular point of $\exp$, it commutes with the Lie algebra $\mathfrak{z}(\alpha)$ of $Z(\alpha)$. After complexification, it commutes with $\mathfrak{z}_C(\alpha)$, hence is fixed by $Z_C(\alpha) = \exp(i\mathfrak{z}(\alpha))$ (since centralizers are connected in complex semisimple groups) and in particular with $Z(\alpha)$. \hfill \Box

We now prove Lemma 12.2.2 as an application:

Proof. Let $\mathcal{A}'$ be a connected component of the lift of $\mathcal{A}$ to $\mathcal{F}_\alpha$. The hypothesis of proposition 12.2.3 are satisfied for $\mathcal{A}$ and let $u_\alpha \in I_0$ as in the conclusion of this proposition. Let $T_\alpha := \{\exp(tu_\alpha)\}_{t \in \mathbb{R}}$. Since $u_\alpha$ is fixed by $Z(\alpha)$, $T_\alpha \subset Z(\alpha)$.

Let $V_\alpha = \exp([0, 2R]u_\alpha)$ be a fundamental domain for the action of $\alpha$ on $V_\alpha$. By inequality (109), for all $\tau \in \mathcal{A}$
\[ \text{diam}(V_\alpha, \tau) \leq M_3 \cdot R, \]
for some constant $M_3$ only depending on $G$. Since $\alpha$ acts trivially on $\mathcal{F}_\alpha^\Lambda$, we obtain that
\[ V_\alpha \tau = T_\alpha \tau. \]
This concludes the proof of the first assertion of Proposition 12.2.2. The second assertion follows at once from inequality (108). \hfill \Box

12.2.2. Averaging measures. Let $\mu$ and $v$ as in the hypothesis of Theorem 12.2.1.

Let $\{X_\alpha^i\}_{i \in \mathbb{N}}$ be the collection of connected components of $X_\alpha^\Lambda$. Let us denote by $1_A$ the characteristic function of a subset $A$. Let
\[ \mu_i := 1_{X_\alpha^i} \mu, \quad (111) \]
\[ v_i := 1_{X_\alpha^i} v, \quad (112) \]
so that $\mu = \sum_{i \in \mathbb{N}} \mu_i$ and $v = \sum_{i \in \mathbb{N}} v_i$. Let $T_\alpha^i := T^{0}_{\alpha, X_\alpha^i}$ associated to $\mathcal{A}_0 = X_\alpha^i$ as a consequence of Lemma 12.2.2. Let finally consider the tori $Q_\alpha^i = T_0 \times T_\alpha^i$. 

We first state and prove the following:

**Proposition 12.2.4.** For a constant $M_5$ only depending on $G$, and $R$ large enough,

\[ \forall g \in T_0, \quad d(\mu_i, g \cdot \mu_i) \leq M_5 \frac{\varepsilon}{R}, \]

\[ d(\mu_i, g \cdot \mu_i) \leq M_5 \frac{\varepsilon}{R} . \]

**Proof.** In the proof $M_i$ will be constants only depending on $G$. Let $\hat{\mu}_i$ be the average of $\mu_i$ with respect to $Q_i \alpha$. By hypothesis, $\mu_i = C \nu_i$, where $\|C - 1\| \leq \frac{\varepsilon R}{2}$. Since $Q_i \alpha \subset C \alpha$, and $C \alpha$ preserves $\nu_i$, it follows that

\[ \mu_i = D \cdot \hat{\mu}_i \]  

(115)

where $\|D - 1\| \leq 2\frac{\varepsilon}{R}$. We now apply Theorem 18.0.1 to get that

\[ d(\mu_i, \hat{\mu}_i) \leq B \cdot M_1 \frac{\varepsilon}{R} , \]

(116)

where $M_1$ only depends on the dimension of $T_0$ and $B := \sup(\text{diam}(Q_0 \alpha, \tau | \tau \in X_0 \alpha))$.

By Inequality 107, $\text{diam}(T_0, \tau) \leq M_1 \cdot R$, for $\tau \in X_\alpha$. Moreover since $T_0 \subset K_0$, we have that

\[ \text{diam}(T_0, \tau) \leq \text{diam} K_0 . \]

and thus $B \leq M_2 R$. Thus

\[ d(\mu_i, \hat{\mu}_i) \leq M_3 \frac{\varepsilon}{R} , \]

(117)

Observe now that $g \in Q_i \alpha$ acts by isometry on $F_\alpha$ and thus for any measure $\lambda_0$ and $\lambda_1$ we have

\[ d(g, \lambda_0, g, \lambda_1) = d(\lambda_0, \lambda_1) . \]

It then follows that

\[ d(\mu_i, g \cdot \mu_i) \leq d(\mu_i, \hat{\mu}_i) + d(\hat{\mu}_i, g \cdot \mu_i) = 2d(\mu_i, \hat{\mu}_i) \leq 2M_3 \frac{\varepsilon}{R} . \]

(118)

This proves the first assertion.

For the second inequality, by inequality (108), there exists $f \in Q_i \alpha$, so that for any $\tau \in X_\alpha$ then

\[ d(f(\tau), \varphi_1(\tau)) \leq M_1 \frac{\varepsilon}{R} . \]

Thus from Proposition 18.0.4,

\[ d(f, \mu_i, \varphi_1, \mu_i) \leq M_0 \frac{\varepsilon}{R} . \]

Thus

\[ d(\mu_i \cdot \varphi_1, \mu_i) \leq d(\mu_i \cdot \varphi_1, \mu_i) + d(f, \mu_i, \mu_i) \leq M_5 \frac{\varepsilon}{R} . \]

The last assertion of Proposition 12.2.4 now follows. □
12.2.3. Proof of Theorem 12.2.1. The theorem follows easily. From Proposition 12.2.4
\[ d(\mu, \varphi_1, \mu) \leq M_5 \cdot \frac{\varepsilon}{R}, \quad \forall g \in T_0, \quad d(\mu, g, \mu) \leq M_5 \cdot \frac{\varepsilon}{R}. \] (119)

Thus by Proposition 18.0.3
\[ d(\mu, \varphi_1, \mu) \leq M_5 \cdot \frac{\varepsilon}{R}, \quad \forall g \in T_0, \quad d(\mu, g, \mu) \leq M_5 \cdot \frac{\varepsilon}{R}. \] (120)

Then, if \( g \in T_0 \), using again that \( g \) acts by isometry on \( F_{\Lambda} \) hence on its space of measures
\[ d(\mu, g, \varphi_1, \mu) \leq d(g, \mu, g, \varphi_1, \mu) + d(g, \mu, \mu) = d(\mu, \varphi_1, \mu) + d(g, \mu, \mu) \leq 2M_5 \cdot \frac{\varepsilon}{R}. \] (121)

12.3. Feet projection of biconnected and triconnected tripods. For \( \varepsilon \) small enough, then \( R \)-large enough, thanks to Item (ii) of Lemma 9.4.1, we can define the feet projection \( \Psi \) from \( B_{\varepsilon, R}(\alpha) \) to \( F_\alpha \) by
\[ \Psi(T, S_0, \alpha(S_0)) = \Psi(T, \alpha^+; \alpha^-), \]
Similarly we define the feet projection \( \Psi \) from \( Q_{\varepsilon, R}(\alpha) \) to \( F_\alpha \) by
\[ \Psi(T, S_0, S_1, S_2) = \Psi(T, \alpha^+; \alpha^-), \]
Let then
\[ \nu_{\varepsilon, R} = \Psi^* \nu_{\varepsilon, R}, \mu_{\varepsilon, R} = \Psi^* \mu_{\varepsilon, R}, \]
We summarize some properties of the projection now

**Proposition 12.3.1.** The feet projection \( \Psi \) is proper. The measure \( \nu_{\varepsilon, R} \) is supported on \( X_\Lambda^\alpha \) and is finite.

**Proof.** By Lemma 9.4.1 and Proposition 10.4.2, if \( B := (T, S_0, \alpha(S_0)) \) is in the support of \( D_{\varepsilon, R} \) and \( \tau_\alpha := \Psi(B) \), then \( d(T, \tau_\alpha) + d(S_0, \tau_\alpha) \leq M(\varepsilon + R) \), for some universal constant \( M \). This implies the properness of \( \Psi \).

The last assertion of the closing lemma for tripods 9.4.1 also implies that \( \Psi(B_{\varepsilon, R}(\alpha)) \) is a subset of the core \( X_\alpha \). Then, the last assertion follows from the first and the fact that \( X_\alpha^\Lambda \) is finite (Proposition 12.1.3). \( \square \)

13. Pairs of pants are evenly distributed

We will want to glue pairs of pants along their boundary components if their “foot projections” differ by approximatively a “Kahn-Markovic” twist. Given a pair of pants, the existence of other pairs of pants which you can admissibly glue along a given boundary component will be obtained by an equidistribution theorem.

Since we need to glue pair of pants along boundary data, a whole part of this section is to explain the boundary data which in this higher rank situation is more subtle than for the hyperbolic 3-space. We also need to explain what does reversing the orientation mean in this context.

The main result is the Even Distribution Theorem 13.1.2 which requires many definitions before being stated. The proof relies on a Margulis type argument using mixing, as well as the presence of some large centralizers of elements of \( \Gamma \). This is the only part where the flip assumption – revisited in this section – is used. This is of course structurally modelled on the corresponding section in [14]. Let us sketch the construction.
(i) The space of triconnected tripods carries a measure $\mu^+$ coming from the weight functions defined above. Similarly we have a measure $\mu^-$ obtained while using the reverting orientation diffeomorphism on the space of tripods.

(ii) The boundary data associated to a boundary geodesic $\alpha$ with loxodromic holonomy and end points $\alpha^+$ and $\alpha^-$ will be the set of tripods with end points $\alpha^+$ and $\alpha^-$, up to the action of the centralizer of $\alpha$. In the simplest case of the principal $sl_2$ in a complex simple group, this space of feet is a compact torus.

We have now a projection $\Psi$ from the space of triconnected tripods to the space of feet, just by taking the projection of one of the defining tripods (and using Theorem 9.2.1). Our goal is to establish the Even Distribution Theorem 13.1.2 which says that the projected measures $\Psi^*\mu^+$ and $\Psi^*\mu^-$ do not differ by much after a Kahn–Markovic twist. Roughly speaking the proof goes as follows.

(i) This projection $\Psi$ factors through the space of “biconnected tripods” (by forgetting one of the path connecting the tripods) which carries itself a weight and a measure. The mixing argument then tells us the projected measure from triconnected tripod to biconnected tripod are approximatively the same, or in other words the forgotten path is roughly probabilistically independent form the others.

(ii) It is then enough to show that the projected measures from the biconnected tripod is evenly distributed. In the simplest case of the principal $sl_2$ in a complex simple group, this comes from the fact these measures are invariant under the centralizer of $\alpha$ which act transitively on the boundary data. The general case is more subtle (and involves the Flip assumption) since the action of the centralizer of $\alpha$ on space of feet is not transitive anymore.

In this section $\Gamma$ will be a uniform lattice in $G$, $\alpha$ a $P$-loxodromic element in $\Gamma$, $\Gamma_\alpha$ the centralizer of $\alpha$ in $\Gamma$, which is a uniform lattice in $Z_G(\alpha)$ (See [11, Proposition 3.5]).

13.1. The main result of this section: even distribution. We can now state the main result of this section. This is the only part of the paper that makes uses of the flip assumption. The Theorem uses the notion of Levy–Prokhorov distance for measures on a metric space which is discussed in Appendix 18. We first need this

Definition 13.1.1. [Kahn–Markovic twist] For any $\alpha \in \Gamma$, the Kahn–Markovic twist $T_\alpha$ is the element $\varphi_1 \circ \sigma$ that we see as a diffeomorphism of the space of feet $F^{\Gamma}_\alpha$. Similarly we consider the (global Kahn–Markovic twist) as the product map $T = \prod_{\alpha \in \Gamma} T_\alpha$ from $F$ to itself.

Our main result is then

Theorem 13.1.2. [Even distribution] For any positive $\varepsilon$, there exists a positive $R_0$, such that if $R > R_0$ then $\mu^\pm_{\varepsilon,R}$ are finite non zero and furthermore

$$d(\Psi^*\mu^+_{\varepsilon,R}, T_\ast \Psi^*\mu^-_{\varepsilon,R}) \leq M \frac{\varepsilon}{R},$$

where $T$ is the Kahn–Markovic twist, $M$ only depends on $G$, and $d$ is the Levy–Prokhorov distance.

The metric on $F$ is the metric coming from its description as a disjoint union, not the induced metric from $G$. This whole section is devoted to the proof of this theorem. We shall use the flip assumption.
13.2. Revisiting the flip assumption. We fix in all this section a reflexion \( J_0 \). We will explain in this section the consequence of the flip assumption that we shall use as well as give examples of groups satisfying the flip assumptions. Recall that for an element \( \alpha \) in \( \Gamma \), we write \( \Gamma_\alpha = Z_\Gamma(\alpha) \).

Let \( \alpha \) be a \( P \)-loxodromic element. Let

\[
L_\alpha := \{ g \in G, g(\alpha^\pm) = \alpha^\pm \}
\]

Observe first that since \( J_0 \in Z(L_0) \), then \( J := \tau^{-1}J_0 \) does not depend on \( \tau \), for all \( \tau \) with \( \partial^\pm \tau = \alpha^\pm \), and belongs to \( Z(L_0) \). Let also \( K_\alpha \) the maximal compact factor of \( L_\alpha \).

**Definition 13.2.1. (Weak flip assumption)** We say the lattice \( \Gamma \) in \( G \) satisfies the weak flip assumption, if there is some integer \( M \) only depending on \( G \), so that given a \( P \)-loxodromic element \( \alpha \) in \( \Gamma \), then

- there exists a subgroup \( \Lambda_\alpha \) of \( \Gamma_\alpha \cap Z_\Gamma^0(\alpha) \), normalized by \( \Gamma_\alpha \) with \( [\Gamma_\alpha : \Lambda_\alpha] \leq M \),
- moreover \( J \) belongs to a connected compact torus \( T_\alpha^0 \subset Z_\Gamma(\Lambda_\alpha) \cap K_\alpha \).

Denoting by \( Z_J(B) \) the centralizer in the group \( F \) of the set \( B \) and \( H^\circ \) the connected component of the identity of the group \( H \), we now introduce the following groups for a \( P \)-loxodromic element \( \alpha \) in \( \Gamma \) satisfying the weak flip assumption:

\[
C_\alpha := (Z_\Gamma(\Lambda_\alpha))^\circ \subset L_\alpha \quad (123)
\]

13.2.1. Relating the flip assumptions. We first relate the flip assumptions 2.1.3 and 2.1.2 to the weak flip assumption 13.2.1.

**Proposition 13.2.2.** If \( G \) and \( s_0 \) satisfies the flip assumption 2.1.2, or the regular flip assumption 2.1.3, then \( G, s_0 \) and \( \Gamma \) satisfy the weak flip assumption.

**Proof.** Let us first make the following preliminary remark: as an easy consequence of a general result by John Milnor in [23] the following holds: Given a center-free semisimple Lie group \( G \), there exists a constant \( N \), so that for every semisimple \( g \in G \), the number of connected components of \( Z_G(g) \) is less than \( N \). In particular, \( [\Gamma_\alpha : \Gamma_\alpha \cap Z_\Gamma^0(\alpha)] \leq N \).

We have to study the two cases of the flip and regular flip assumptions. Assume first that \( G \) and \( s_0 \) satisfy the flip assumption with reflexion \( J_0 \). Let \( \alpha \) be an element of \( \Gamma \) which is \( P \)-loxodromic. Then any element \( \beta \) commuting with \( \alpha \) preserves \( \alpha^+ \) and \( \alpha^- \), thus \( \Gamma_\alpha \subset L_\alpha \). The flip assumption hypothesis thus implies that taking \( \Lambda_\alpha = \Gamma_\alpha \cap Z_\Gamma(\alpha) \),

\[
J \in (Z_G(L_\alpha))^\circ \subset (Z_G(\Gamma_\alpha))^\circ \subset (Z_G(\Lambda_\alpha))^\circ.
\]

Moreover \( J \) is an involution that belongs to the center of \( L_\alpha \) and thus to its compact factor. Thus we may choose for \( T_\alpha^0 \) a maximal torus in \( (Z_G(\Lambda_\alpha))^\circ \cap K_\alpha \) containing \( J \). This concludes this case.

Let us move to the regular flip assumption. In that case \( L_0 = A_0 \times K_0 \) where \( A_0 \) is a torus without compact factor and \( K_0 \) is a compact factor, accordingly \( L_\alpha = A_\alpha \times K_\alpha \) with the same convention. Let \( \alpha \) be a \( P \)-loxodromic element in \( \Gamma \), as above we notice that \( \Gamma_\alpha \subset L_\alpha \). Since \( \Gamma_\alpha \) is discrete torsion free, \( \Gamma_\alpha \cap K_\alpha = \{ e \} \). Thus, the projection of \( \Gamma_\alpha \) on \( A_\alpha \) is injective, and \( \Gamma_\alpha \) is abelian. Let \( \pi \) be the projection of \( L_\alpha \) on \( K_\alpha \), \( B = \pi(\Gamma_\alpha) \) and \( B_1 \) a maximal abelian containing \( B \) in \( K_\alpha \). Using again [23], there is a constant \( M \) only depending on \( G \), so that if \( C \) is maximal abelian in \( K_\alpha \), then \([C : C^\circ] \leq M \). Let

\[
\Lambda_\alpha := \pi^{-1}(B_1^\circ) \cap \Gamma_\alpha \subset Z_\Gamma(\alpha).
\]
Then $[\Gamma_a : \Lambda_a] \leq M$. Moreover, setting $T^0_a$ to be a maximal torus containing $B^+_a$, we have (since $J$ is central in $K_a$)

$$J \in T^0_a \subset Z_G(B^+_a) \cap K_a \subset Z_G(\Lambda_a) \cap K_a.$$ 

This concludes the proof of the proposition.

13.2.2. Groups satisfying (or not) the flip assumptions. Let us show a list of group satisfying the flip assumptions

(i) If $G$ is a complex semi-simple Lie group. Let $s = (a, x, y)$ be an even $s$-triple. Then $J_0 = \exp \frac{\zeta a}{2}$, for $\zeta$ so that $\exp(it)\zeta = 1$ is a reflection that satisfies the flip assumption: indeed $\exp(it)$ for $t$ real lies in $Z(Z(a))$.

(ii) The groups $\text{SO}(p, q)$ with $p + q$ even and $q > 2p > 0$ satisfy the regular flip assumption for some $s$-triple. More precisely let $H$ be the diagonal group in

$$\text{SO}(1, 2) \times \cdots \times \text{SO}(1, 2) < \text{SO}(p, 2p) < \text{SO}(p, q).$$

Let us consider $\mathbb{R}^{p,q}$ as equipped with the metric

$$\sum_{i=1}^{p} (x_i y_i - z_i^2) - \sum_{i=1}^{q-2p} v_i^2.$$ 

Let us consider $a$ the diagonal matrix whose $p$ first blocks are

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

and the last one is 0, and $J_0$ the diagonal matrix whose $p$ first blocks are

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}$$

and the last one is $-\text{Id}$. By the assumption on parity $J_0 \in \text{SO}(p, q)$.

Moreover $a$ is a regular element (its centralizer is a torus times a compact), and we check that $J_0$ lies in some $\text{SO}(q - p)$ which is in $Z(a)$.

(iii) The groups $\text{PU}(p, q)$, with $q > 2p > 0$, satisfy the flip assumption. We consider the same $H$ as above in $\text{SO}(p, q)$ that we map into $\text{PU}(p, q)$. Then with $a$ and $J_0$ as above, now $J_0$ lies in $\text{O}(q - p) < \text{U}(q - p)$ and in particular its projection in $\text{PU}(p, q)$, lies in the projection of $\text{U}(q - p)$ which is a connected subgroup of $Z(a)$.

On the other hand, one easily check that the groups $\text{SL}(n, \mathbb{R})$ do not satisfy the flip assumption for the irreducible $\text{SL}(2, \mathbb{R})$.

13.3. Proof of the even distribution Theorem 13.1.2. Let $\Lambda_a$ the subgroup of $\Gamma_a$ of index at most $M$ appearing in Definition 13.2.1.

Recall that $T = q_1 \circ o = q_1 \circ J_0 \circ I_0 = q_1 \circ J \circ I_0$, where $J$ is defined in the beginning of the paragraph 13.2. Using Proposition 10.5.3, we have

$$\Psi^* \mu_{e,R} = \Psi^* I \mu_{e,R} = \Psi^* I_0 \mu_{e,R}.$$ 

Let then $\mu = \Psi^* \mu_{e,R}$ and $\nu = \Psi^* v_{e,R}$ Our goal is thus to prove that there exists a constant $M_5$ only depending on $G$, so that

$$d(q_1, J, \mu, \mu) \leq M_5 \frac{e}{R},$$

(124)
where we consider $\mu$ as a measure on $F_\alpha^{\Gamma_\alpha}$. We perform a further reduction: let $\mu^0$ and $v^0$ be the preimages of $\mu$ and $v$ respectively on $F_\alpha^{\Lambda_\alpha}$. Since, $p_*\mu^0 = q\mu$ and $p_*v^0 = qv$ where $q$ is the degree – less than $M$ – of the covering $p$, it is enough by Proposition 18.0.5 to prove that there exists a constant $M_0$ only depending on $G$, so that

$$d(\varphi_1 J_* \mu^0, \mu^0) \leq M_0 \varepsilon \frac{R}{\varepsilon}.$$ (125)

But now this is a consequence of Theorem 12.2.1, whose main hypothesis (104) is a consequence of Proposition 11.3.1.

14. Building straight surfaces and glueing

Our aim in this section is to define straight surfaces and prove their existence in Theorem 14.1.2. Loosely speaking, a straight surface is obtained by glueing almost Fuchsian pair of pants using KM-twists. We also explain that a straight surface comes with a fundamental group.

This section is just a rephrasing of a similar argument in [14] and uses as a central argument the Even Distribution Theorem 13.1.2.

### 14.1. Straight surfaces

Recall that in a graph, a flag adjacent to vertex $v$ a is a pair $(v, e)$ so that the edge $e$ is adjacent to the vertex $v$. The link $L(v)$ of a vertex $v$ is the set of flags adjacent to $v$. A trivalent ribbon graph is a graph with a cyclic permutation $\omega$ of order 3, without fixes points, on edges so that $\omega(v, e) = (v, f)$ so that every link $L(v)$ is equipped with a cyclic permutation $\omega_v$ of order 3. If a graph is bipartite so that we can write its set of vertices as $V^- \sqcup V^+$, we denote by $e^\pm$ the vertices of an edge $e$ that belong to $V^\pm$ respectively.

Let $\Gamma$ be a discrete subgroup of $G$.

**Definition 14.1.1.** [Straight surfaces] Let $\varepsilon$ and $R$ be positive numbers. An $(\varepsilon, R)$ straight surface for $\Gamma$ is a pair $\Sigma = (R, W)$ where $R$ is finite bipartite trivalent ribbon graph whose set of vertices is $V^- \sqcup V^+$, and $W$ is labelling of flags in $R$ so that

(i) For every flag $(v, e)$ with $v \in V^\pm$, $W(v, e)$ belongs to $Q_{\Delta, R}^\pm$.

(ii) The labelling map is equivariant: $W(\omega_v(v, e)) = \omega(W(v, e))$.

(iii) for any edge $e$,

$$d(\Psi^+(W(e^+, e)), T \Psi^-(W(e^-, e))) \leq \varepsilon \frac{R}{\varepsilon}.$$ (126)

We may now associate to a straight surface $\Sigma$ a topological surface given by the gluing of pair of pants (labelled by vertices) along their boundary (labelled by edges), surface whose fundamental group is denoted $\pi_1(\Sigma)$. The labelling of vertices of edges will then give rise to a representation of $\pi_1(\Sigma)$ into $\Gamma$ (see Section 16.1). The main Theorem of this section is

**Theorem 14.1.2.** [Existence of straight surfaces] Let $s$ be an $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$-triple in the Lie algebra of a semisimple group $G$-satisfying the flip assumption. Let $\Gamma$ be a uniform lattice in $G$.

Then, for every $\varepsilon$, there exists $R_0$ so that for any $R > R_0$, there exists an $(\varepsilon, R)$-straight surface for $\Gamma$. 
14.2. Marriage and equidistribution. We want to prove

**Lemma 14.2.1.** [Trivalent graph] Let $Y$ be a metric space. Let $\omega$ be an order 3 symmetry acting freely on $Y$. Let $\mu$ be a $\omega$-invariant finite measure on $Y$. Let $\alpha$ be a real number. Let $f^0$ and $f^1$ be two uniformly Lipschitz maps from $Y$ to a metric space $Z$ such that $d(f^0, \mu, f^1, \mu) < \alpha$. Then there exists a nonempty finite trivalent bipartite ribbon graph $\mathcal{R}$, whose set vertices are $V_0 \sqcup V_1$ so that
- we have an $\omega$-equivariant labelling $W$ of flags by elements of $Y$.
- if $e$ is an edge from $v_0$ to $v_1$ so that $v_i \in V_i$, then $d(f^0 \circ W(v_0, e), f^1 \circ W(v_1, e)) < \alpha$.

This will be an easy consequence of the following theorem.

**Theorem 14.2.2.** [Measured Marriage Theorem] Let $Y$ be a metric space equipped with a finite measure $\mu$. Let $f$ and $g$ be two uniformly Lipschitz maps from $Y$ to a metric space $Z$ such that $d(f(\mu, g, \mu)) < \beta$. Then there exists a non empty finite set $\tilde{Y}$, a map $p$ from $\tilde{Y}$ to $Y$, a bijection $\phi$ from $Y$ to itself, so that
$$d(f \circ p, g \circ p \circ \phi) \leq 2\beta.$$ 
Assume moreover that we have a free action of an order 3 symmetry $\sigma$ on $Y$ preserving the measure. Then, there exists $\tilde{Y}$ and $p$ as before equipped with an order 3 symmetry $\tilde{\sigma}$ so that $p$ is $\tilde{\sigma}$-equivariant.

**Proof.** If $\mu$ is the counting measure and $Y$ is finite, this Theorem is a rephrasing of Hall Marriage Theorem. We reduce to this case by the following trick: by approximation (See Proposition 18.0.2), we can approximate $\mu$ be an atomic measure $\nu$ with rational weights, then after multiplication we can assume that all weights are integers, then finally we let $\tilde{Y}$ be the set $Y$ counted with the multiplicity given by $\nu$. Since $f$ and $g$ are uniformly Lipschitz then, for $\mu$ and $\nu$ close enough, by Proposition 18.0.5, $f, \nu$ and $f, \mu$ are very close and the same holds for $g$. Thus $f, \nu$ and $g, \nu$ are $2\beta$-close and we can conclude using the observation at the beginning of the paragraph. Finally the procedure can be made equivariant with respect to finite order symmetries. \(\square\)

14.2.1. *Proof of Lemma 14.2.1.* Let $\tilde{Y}$, $\tilde{\sigma}$ and $\tilde{h}$ as in Theorem 14.2.2. Let us write $V = \tilde{Y}/\langle \alpha \rangle$ and $\pi$ the projection from $\tilde{Y}$ to $V$. Let now $\mathcal{R} = V_0 \sqcup V_1$ be the disjoint union of two copies of $V$; this will be the set of vertices of the graph. An edge is given by a point $y$ in $\tilde{Y}$, that we consider joining the vertex $v_0 := \pi(y)$ to $v_1 := \pi(\tilde{h}(y))$. The labelling is given by $W = p$.

14.3. Existence of straight surfaces: *Proof of Theorem 14.1.2.* We apply Lemma 14.2.1 to the set $Y := Q^+_{\epsilon, R}$ (which is non empty by Theorem 11.2.4), the measure $\mu := \mu^+_{\epsilon, R}$ (which is $\omega$-invariant) and the functions $f^0 := \Psi^+, f^1 := T \circ \Psi^t = T \circ \Psi^+ \circ \mathbf{I}$. For $\epsilon$ small enough, then $R$ large enough (depending on $\epsilon$) we have that
- the set $Q^+_{\epsilon, R}$ is non empty by Theorem 11.2.4.
- by Theorem 13.1.2, we have the inequality $d(f^0, \mu, f^1, \mu) \leq M_{\tilde{R}}$, using the fact that $L_{\mu^+_{\epsilon, R}} = \mu^+_{\epsilon, R}$.

Theorem 14.1.2 is now a rephrasing of the Trivalent Graph Lemma 14.2.1.

15. The perfect lamination

In this section, we concentrate on plane hyperbolic geometry. We present some results of [14] concerning the $R$-perfect lamination. This perfect lamination is associated to a tiling by hexagons.
We also introduce a new concept: accessible points from a given hexagons. Apart from the definition, the most important result is the Accessibility Lemma 15.2.3 which guarantees accessible points are almost (in a quantitative way) dense.

15.1. The R-perfect lamination and the hexagonal tiling. Let us consider of two ideal triangles in the (oriented) hyperbolic plane, glued to each other by a shear of length $R$ (with $R > 0$) to obtain a pair of pants $P_0$, called the positive R-perfect pair of pants. Symmetrically, the negative R-perfect pair of pants $P_1$ is obtained by a shear of length $-R$. Both perfect pair of pants come by construction with ideal triangulations and orientations.

The R-perfect surface $S_R$ is the genus 2 oriented surface obtained by gluing the two pair of pants $P_0$ and $P_1$ with a shear of value 1. The surface $S_R$ possesses three cuffs which are the three geodesic boundaries of the initial pairs of pants. These cuffs are oriented, where the orientation comes from the orientation on $P_0$.

Let $\Lambda_R$ be the Fuchsian group so that $H^2/\Lambda_R = S_R$.

The R-perfect lamination $L_R$ of $H^2$ is the lift of the cuffs of $S_R$ in $H^2$.

Observe that each leaf of $L_R$ carries a natural orientation. Connected components of the complement of $L_R$ are even or odd whenever they cover respectively a copy of $P_0$ or $P_1$.

We denote by $L_R^\infty$ the set of endpoints of $L_R$ in $\partial\infty H^2$.

15.1.1. Length, intersection and diameter. We collect here important facts about the R-perfect lamination from Kahn–Markovic paper [14].

**Lemma 15.1.1.** [Length control] [14, Lemma 2.3], There exist a constant $K$, so that for $R$ large enough, for all geodesic segments $\gamma$ in $H^2$ of length $\ell$, we have $d(\gamma \cap L_R) \leq K \cdot R \cdot \ell$.

**Lemma 15.1.2.** [Uniformly bounded diameter] [14, Lemma 2.7]. There exists a constant $M$ independent of $R$, such that for all $R$, $\text{diam}(S_R) \leq M$.

As a corollary of the first Lemma, using the language of section 7.1, we have

**Corollary 15.1.3.** There exists a constant $K$, so that for $R$ large enough, any coplanar sequence of cuffs whose underlying geodesic lamination is a subset of $L_R$ is a KR-sequence of cuffs.

15.1.2. Tilings: connected components, tiling hexagons and tripods. Let $C$ be a connected component of $H^2 \setminus L_R$.

Observe that $C$ is tiled by right-angled tiling hexagons coming from the decomposition in pair of pants of $S_R$. Each such hexagon $H$ is described by a triple of geodesics $(a, b, c)$ in $L_R$, whose ends points (with respect to the orientation) are respectively $(a^+, a^-), (b^+, b^-)$ and $(c^+, c^-)$ so that the sextuple $(a^+, a^-, b^+, b^-, c^+, c^-)$ is positively oriented. Let us then define three disjoint intervals, called sides at infinity in $\partial\infty H^2$ by $\partial a H := [b^+, c^-], \partial b H := [a^+, b^-], \partial c H := [c^+, a^-]$. Each such side corresponds to the edge of the hexagon connecting the two corresponding cuffs.

**Definition 15.1.4.** (i) The successor of an hexagon $H = (a, b, c)$ is the unique hexagon of the form $\text{Suc}(H) = (a, d, b)$.
(ii) The opposite of an hexagon $H = (a, b, c)$ is the hexagon $\text{Opp}(H) = (a, b', c')$, so that $H$ and $\text{Opp}(H)$ meet along a geodesic segment of length $R - 1$.
(iii) Given a tiling hexagon $H$, an admissible tripod with respect to $H$ is given by three points $(x, y, z)$ in $\partial x H \times \partial y H \times \partial z H$. 
We remark that $\text{Opp} \circ \text{Suc} \circ \text{Opp} \circ \text{Suc} = \text{Id}$. We can furthermore color hexagons:

**Proposition 15.1.5.** There exists a labelling of hexagons by two colors (black and white) so that $H$ and $\text{Opp}(H)$ have different colors.

We denote by $T_R(H)$ the set of admissible tripods with respect to a given hexagon $H$ and $T_R$ the set of all admissible tripods. Elementary hyperbolic geometry yields

**Proposition 15.1.6.** There exists a universal constant $K$, so that for $R$ large enough

(i) the diameter of each tiling hexagon is less than $R + K$.
(ii) each hexagon has long edges (along cuffs) of length $R$, and short edges of length $\ell$ where

$$\frac{\ell' + 1}{\ell' - 1} = \sqrt{\frac{1 + e^{2R}}{e^R + e^{2R}}} \quad \lim_{R \to \infty} e^{\frac{R}{2\ell}} = 1.$$  
(iii) the distance between any two admissible tripods with respect to the same hexagon is at most $2e^{-\frac{R}{2\ell}}$.

15.1.3. **Cuff groups and graphs.** The cuff elements are those elements of the Fuchsian group $\Lambda_R$ whose axis are cuffs, a cuff group $\Lambda$ is a finite index subgroup of $\Lambda_R$ containing all the primitive cuff elements: equivalently, $\Lambda \setminus H^2$ is obtained by gluing $R$-perfect pair of pants by shears of length 1. We will identify oriented cuffs with primitive cuff elements.

To a cuff group $\Lambda$, we can associate a ribbon graph $\mathcal{R}$. Observe that $S := \Lambda \setminus H^2$ is tiled by hexagons. We consider the graph $\mathcal{R}$ whose vertices are hexagons in the above tiling of $S$, up to cyclic symmetry, and edges corresponding to pair of hexagons who lift to opposite hexagons.

Observe $\mathcal{R}$ is the covering of the corresponding graph for $S_R$ and has thus two connected components which correspond respectively to the two coloring in black and white hexagons. The distinction between odd and even components (and thus between odd and even hexagons) gives to $\mathcal{R}$ the structure of a bipartite graph.

Hexagons in $S$ correspond to links of $\mathcal{R}$. By construction each hexagon $H$ is associated to a perfect triconnected pair of tripods $W_0(H)$ with respect to $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$, in other words an element in $Q_{0,R}$. We have thus associated to each cuff group $\Lambda$ a $(0,R)$-straight surface $\Sigma(\Lambda) := (\mathcal{R}, W_0)$ – which actually has two connected components. One easily checks that every connected $(0,R)$-straight surface $\Sigma$ is obtained from a well defined cuff group $\Lambda$, as a connected component of $\Sigma(\Lambda)$.

15.2. **Good sequence of cuffs and accessible points.** Let us start with a definition associated to a positive number $K$.

**Definition 15.2.1.** A pair $(c_1, c_2)$ of cuffs is $K$-acceptable if

(i) There is no cuffs between $c_1$ and $c_2$,

(ii) Moreover $d(c_1, c_2) \leq K$.

A triple of cuffs $(c_1, c_2, c_3)$ of cuffs is $K$-acceptable if

(i) we have $d(c_1, c_3) \leq K$.

(ii) $c_2$ is the unique cuff between $c_1$ and $c_3$.

Observe that if $(c_1, c_2, c_3)$ of cuffs is $K$-acceptable, then both $(c_1, c_2)$ and $(c_2, c_3)$ are $K$-acceptable.

**Definition 15.2.2.** (i) A $K$-good sequence of cuffs is a sequence of cuffs $(c_m)_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$ such that for every $m$, whenever it makes sense, $(c_m, c_{m+1}, c_{m+2})$ is $K$-acceptable.
Lemma 15.2.3. An accessible point with respect to an tiling hexagon $H$ is a point in $\partial_{\infty} H^2$ which is a limit of subsequences of end points of the cuffs of $K$-good sequence of cuffs, where $c_1$ and $c_2$ contains long segments of the boundary of $H$.

Observe that we have an associated nested sequence of chords, where the chord is defined by the geodesic $c_0$ and the half space containing $c_{n+1}$ or not containing $c_{n-1}$. For a point $x$ in $H^2$, we denote by $W(K)$ the set of $K$-accessible points from an hexagon containing $x$ (with respect to the lamination $L_L$).

The main result of this section is the following lemma

Lemma 15.2.3. [Accessibility] Let $K_0$ be a positive constant large enough. There exists some function $R \mapsto a(R)$ converging to zero as $R \to \infty$, so that $W(K)$ is $a(R)$-dense.

15.3. Preliminary on acceptable pairs and triples. We need first to understand $K$-acceptable pairs

Proposition 15.3.1. For $R$ large enough, Let $(c_1, c_2)$ be a $K$-acceptable pair

(i) Then $\frac{1}{2}e^{-\frac{R}{2}} \leq d(c_1, c_2) \leq 2e^{-\frac{R}{2}}$

(ii) There exists exactly two hexagons $(H_1, H_2)$ whose sides are $c_1$ and $c_2$. Moreover $H_2 = \text{Suc}(H_1)$

(iii) If $(c_1, \eta)$ is $K$-acceptable, and furthermore $\eta$ and $c_2$ lie in the same connected component of $H^2 \setminus c_1$, then there exists $\gamma \in L_L$ preserving $c_1$ so that $\eta = \gamma \cdot c_2$.

We have also a proposition on $K$-acceptable triples

Proposition 15.3.2. There exists $K_0$ so that if $(c_1, c_2)$ is a $K$-acceptable pair with $K > K_0$, then

(i) There exists exactly three $K$-acceptable triples starting with $c_1$ and $c_2$. Fixing an orientation of $c_2$, we can describe the last geodesic in the triple as $c_3^1 := \langle c_1, c_2 \rangle^{+}$, and similarly $c_3^0$ and $c_3^{-}$, where if $x'$ is the projection of $c_3$ on $c_2$, then $(x'^{-}, x'^{0}, x'^{+})$ is oriented.

(ii) If $(c_1, c_2, c_3)$ is a $K$-acceptable triple, then $d(c_1, c_3) \leq K_0$ and moreover if $x$, is the point in $c_2$ closest to $c_1$, then $d(x_1, x_2) \leq 3R$.

(iii) Moreover if $(H_1, \text{Suc}(H_1))$ and $(H_2, \text{Suc}(H_2))$ are the pairs of hexagons bounded respectively by $(c_1, c_2)$ and $(c_2, c_3)$, then

$H_2 = \gamma^p \text{Opp}(H_1)$,

where $\gamma$ is the cuff element associated to $c_2$ and $p \in \{-1, 0, 1\}$.

(iv) If $c$ is a geodesic non intersecting $c_1$ and $c_2$, so that $c_2$ is between $c_1$ and $c$ and so that $d(c, c_1) < K$, then there is a cuff $c_3$ so that $(c_1, c_2, c_3)$ is a $K$-acceptable triple and

- either $c_3$ do not not intersect $c$ and
  - $c_3$ lies between $c$ and $c_2$,
  - or $c$ lies between $c_3$ and $c_2$,

- or $c_3$ intersects $c$.

These two propositions have immediate consequences summarized in the following corollary:

Corollary 15.3.3. (i) For all positive $K_1$ and $K_2$ greater than $K_0$, there exists $R_0$ so that for all $R > R_0$, $W(K_1) = W(K_2)$.

(ii) Any finite K-good sequence of cuffs $\{c_1, \ldots, c_p\}$ can be extended to an infinite K-good sequence $\{c_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$. 
15.3.1. Proof of Proposition 15.3.1. If there is no cuffs between $c_1$ and $\eta$, then $c_1$ and $\eta$ are common bounds of the universal cover of one pair of pants. Then for $R$ large enough

- either $d(c_1, \eta) > R/2$,
- or they bounds two hexagons with a common short edge that joins $c_1$ to $c_2$.

Then by construction of the shear coordinates, the pair of pants obtained by glueing to ideal triangles using an $R$-shear has $2R$ as length of its boundaries. Thus the two hexagons have opposite long sides of length $R$ and short side of length approximatively $e^{-\frac{R}{2}}$ by the last item of Proposition 15.1.6. The result now follows.

This shows the first assertion.

Finally all $K$-acceptable pairs $(c_1, \eta)$ – if $\eta$ and $c_2$ are in the same connected component of $H^2 \setminus c_1$ – are equivalent under the action of $\Lambda_R$, the first item follows.

15.3.2. Controlling distances to geodesics. We will denote in general by $[c, d]$ the geodesic arc passing between $c$ and $d$ where $c$ and $d$ could be at infinity. We first need a statement from elementary hyperbolic geometry

**Proposition 15.3.4.** If $a$ and $b$ are two non intersecting geodesics, if $x$ is the closest point on $a$ to $b$, if $y$ is a point on $a$ so that $d(x, y) > R_0$, then

$$d(y, b) \geq \inf \left( \frac{1}{10} d(a, b)e^{d(x, y) \cdot \frac{1}{4}}, \frac{1}{4}d(x, y) - d(a, b) \right).$$

**Proof.** Let $w$ and $z$ be the projections of $x$ and $y$ on $b$. Let $A := d(x, y)$.

(i) Assume first $d(z, w) \leq \frac{3A}{4}$. Then

$$d(y, z) \geq d(y, x) - d(x, w) - d(w, z) \geq A - d(a, b) - \frac{3}{4}A \geq \frac{A}{4} - d(a, b),$$

(ii) If now $d(z, w) \geq \frac{3A}{4}$, then $d(y, z) \geq \frac{1}{10}d(x, w) e^\frac{A}{4}$.

This concludes the proof of the inequalities. \qed

![Figure 16. K-acceptable triples](image)

15.3.3. Proof of Proposition 15.3.2. Let $(c_1, c_2)$ be a $K$-acceptable pair. Let $c_3^0$ be the unique cuff so that $(c_2, c_3^0)$ are $K$-acceptable and if $z$ is the projection of $c_3^0$ on $c_2$, $y$ is the projection of $c_1$ on $c_2$, then $d(z, y) = 1.$
Let $\gamma$ the primitive element of $\Lambda_k$ preserving $c_2, \ p \in \mathbb{Z}$ and
\[ c''_2 = \gamma^k \left( c'_2 \right), \ z'' = \gamma^k (z). \]

Observe that $z''$ is the projection of $c''_2$ on $c_2$ and that $d(z, z'') = pR$.

Obviously $(c_1, c_2, c''_2)$ is $K$-acceptable since $d(c_1, c''_2) = 2$ for $R$ large enough.

Observe now that the configuration of five geodesics given by $c'_2, c''_2, c_2, c_1, \gamma(c_1)$ converges to a pair of ideal triangles sheared by 1. Thus, there exists a universal constant $K_0$ so that, for $R$-large enough
\[ d(c_1, c''_2) \leq K_0, \quad (127) \]
\[ d(c_1, c''_2) \leq K_0. \quad (128) \]

where the second inequality is obtained by a similar argument.

As a consequence for $K > 2, (c_1, c_2, c'_2)$ is $K$-acceptable for $p = +1, 0, -1$ and $K > K_0$.

We want to show that these are the only ones. Let us write to simplify $c''_2 = c''_3$,
\[ z'' = z'^{+1}. \]

- let $D_2$ be the connected component of $\mathbb{H}^2 \setminus c_2$ not containing $c_1$.
- Let $\eta^\pm$ be the geodesic arc orthogonal to $c_2$ passing though $z^\pm$ and lying inside $D_2$.
- Let $D^\pm$ be the convex set bounded by $\eta^\pm$ and the geodesic arc $[z^+, c_2(\pm\infty)]$.

Observe that

(i) for all $p > 3, c''_2 \subset D^+,

(ii) The closest point $m$ to $c_1$ in $D^+$ lies on $c_2$ (geodesic arcs orthogonal to $\eta^\pm$ never intersect $c_2$ and $c_1$).

It follows for all $p > 1$
\[ d(c''_2, c_1) \geq d(D^+, c_1) = d(m, c_1) \geq \inf \left( \frac{1}{10}d(c_1, c_2) e^{\frac{1}{2}A}, \frac{1}{4}A - d(c_1, c_2) \right) \]

where $A = d(m, y)$ and where the last inequality comes from Proposition 15.3.4.

Observe that
\[ d(m, y) \geq d(z^+, y) \geq d(z^+, z) - d(z, y) = R - 1. \]

Since $d(c_1, c_2) \geq \frac{1}{2} e^{-\frac{1}{2}R}$, we obtain from the previous inequality that
\[ d(c''_2, c_1) \geq d(D^+, c_1) \geq \inf \left( \frac{1}{1000} e^{\frac{1}{2} - 1}, \frac{1}{4}R - 2 \right). \]

Thus for $R$ large enough,
\[ d(c''_2, c_1) \geq d(D^+, c_1) \geq \frac{1}{8} R. \]

It follows that $(c_1, c_2, c''_2)$ is not $K$-acceptable for $R$ large enough and $p > 1$ (and a symmetric argument yields the case $p < 1$). This finishes the proof of the first point.

The second point follows from inequality (127), (128). The third point is an immediate consequence of the previous construction and more precisely the restriction on $p$ appearing.

We use the notation of the previous paragraph to prove the last point. Let $c$ so that $d(c_1, c) \leq K$. Since $d(D^+, c_1) \geq \frac{1}{8} R$, it follows that
\[ c \notin D^+ \cup D^- . \]
Let furthermore $D_0$ (respectively $D_1$) be the hyperbolic half plane not containing $c_1$ bounded by $[c_2^{\downarrow}(-\infty), c_2^{\uparrow}(-\infty)]$ (and respectively by $[c_3^{\downarrow}(+\infty), c_3^{\uparrow}(+\infty)]$). Observe that $d(D_0, c_2) \geq R$ and $d(D_1, c_2) \geq R$. Thus

$$c \notin D_0 \cup D_1.$$ 

Thus the result now follows from the examination of Figure 16.

15.4. **Preliminary on accessible points.** The following proposition is obvious and summarizes some properties of accessible points

**Proposition 15.4.1.** A K-good sequence of cuffs $\{\gamma_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$ admits a unique accessible point which is also the Hausdorff limit of $\{\gamma_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$ in the compactification of $\mathbf{H}^2$, as well as the limit of the nested sequence of associated chords.

We can explain our first construction of accessible points

**Proposition 15.4.2.** There exists a function $\alpha(R)$ converging to zero as $R$ goes to infinity with the following property. Given $K$ there exists $R_0$ so that for all $R > R_0$ the following holds: let $(c_1, c_2)$ be a K-acceptable pair, let $a$ be an extremity at infinity of $c_2$. Then there exists an accessible point $\beta$ in $\partial_\infty \mathbf{H}^2$, so that for all $x$ on $c_1$,

$$d_z(\beta, a) \leq \alpha(R).$$

**Proof.** It is enough to prove this inequality whenever $x$ is the projection of $a$ on $c_1$. Let us consider the $K$-good sequence $\{c_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}$, starting with $c_1, c_2$, characterized by the following induction procedure:

First we choose an orientation on $c_2$ so that $a = c_2(+\infty)$, let also $b = c_1(-\infty)$ when $c_1$ inherits the orientation form $c_2$.

Assume $\{c_1, \ldots, c_p\}$ is defined. We choose the orientation on $c_i$ compatible with $c_2$. Then we choose $c_{p+1} := (c_{p-1}, c_p)^+$, where the notation is from Proposition 15.3.2.

Let $\beta$ be the accessible point from this sequence. We will now show that

$$\lim_{K \to \infty} d_z(\beta, a) = 0.$$ 

This will prove the result setting $\alpha(R) =: d_z(\beta, a)$. Let us start by the following construction and observations

- Let $z$ the projection of $c_3$ on $c_2$,
- Let $\eta$ the geodesic arc orthogonal to $c_2$ starting at $z$ and intersecting $c_3$,
- $D$ be the convex set bounded by $\eta$ and $[y, a]$

Observe that for all $p > 3$, $c_p \subset D$. It is therefore enough to prove that $D$ converges to $[a]$ whenever $R$ goes to infinity. Since

$$d(x, D) = d(x, z).$$

it will be enough to prove that $d(x, z)$ converges to $\infty$. Then let $y$ be the projection of $c_1$ on $c_2$. We then know that

$$A := d(y, z) \geq R - 1.$$ 

It the follows from Proposition 15.3.4 that

$$d(x, z) \geq d(c_1, z) \geq \inf\left(\frac{1}{2}d(c_1, c_2)e^{\frac{1}{3}A}, \frac{1}{4}A - d(c_1, c_2)\right).$$

Since $d(c_1, c_2) \geq \frac{1}{2}e^{\frac{1}{3}}$ for $R$ large enough, it follows, again for $R$ large enough, that

$$d(x, z) \geq \frac{1}{8}R.$$
In particular \( \lim_{R \to \infty} d(x, z) = \infty \). This concludes the proof. \( \square \)

15.5. Proof of the accessibility Lemma 15.2.3. Let us work by contradiction. Then there exists \( \beta > 0 \), and for all \( R \), an interval \( I_R \) in \( \partial_{\infty} \mathbb{H}^2 \) of visual length with respect to \( H \) greater than \( 2\beta \) so that \( W_{I_R}^H \) does not intersect \( I_R \). As a consequence, there exist a non empty closed interval \( I \) of length \( \beta \), a subsequence \( \{ R_m \}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) going to infinity so that \( W_{m}(K) := W_{I_R}^H(K) \) never intersects \( I \).

Let \( \gamma \) be the geodesic connecting the extremity of \( I \) and \( D_0 \) the closed geodesic half-plane whose boundary is \( \gamma \) and boundary at infinity \( I \). We may as well assume – at the price of taking a smaller \( \beta \) – that \( D_0 \) does not intersect \( H \). Let \( x \) be the center of mass of \( H \).

Let then \( K \) be the distance form \( \gamma \) to \( x \). Assume \( m \) is large enough (that is \( R_m \) is large enough) so that \( W_{m}(K) = W_{m}(K_0) \). Let also \( \eta \) be a geodesic inside \( D_0 \), so that \( d(\eta, x) = 2K \) and \( d(\eta, \gamma) = K \). Let \( D_1 \subset D_0 \) bounded by \( \eta \). Let also \( \zeta \) be the geodesic segment joining \( x \) to \( \eta \). This segment intersects finitely many cuffs and let \( c \) be the closest cuff to \( \eta \), non intersecting \( D_0 \). Let us consider all the cuffs \( \{ c_1, \ldots, c_p \} \) intersecting \( \zeta \) between \( x \) and \( \epsilon = c_p \). Then \( \{ c_1, \ldots, c_p \} \) is a \( K \)-good sequence of cuffs.

We can now work out the contradiction. According to the last item of Proposition 15.3.2, there exists a cuff \( c_{p+1} \) so that \( (c_{p-1}, c_p, c_{p+1}) \) is a \( K \)-acceptable triple and either

- \( \gamma \) intersects \( c_{p+1} \),
- \( \gamma \) is between \( c_p \) and \( c_{p+1} \).

Indeed, \( c_{p+1} \) cannot be between \( c_p \) and \( \gamma \), by the construction of \( c_p \).

In both cases, \( c_{p+1} \) has an extremity – call it \( a \) – inside \( D_1 \). Then according to Proposition 15.4.2, we can find an accessible point with respect to a sequence starting with \( (c_p, c_{p+1}) \) – hence starting with \( (c_1, c_2) \) – so that the corresponding accessible point \( y \) satisfies for any \( \epsilon \) and \( R \) large enough

\[
d_z(y, a) \leq \epsilon,
\]

where \( z \) is the intersection of \( c_p \) with \( \zeta \). Hence, since \( a \) lies in \( D_0 \),

\[
d_z(y, a) \leq \epsilon.
\]

But this implies that \( y \in D_0 \) for \( \epsilon \) small enough and thus the contradiction.

16. Straight surfaces and limit maps

We finally make the connection with the first part of the paper and the path of quasi tripods. Our starting object in this section will be a straight surface as discussed in the previous section, of more generally an equivariant straight surface: see Definition 16.1.1. Such an equivariant straight surface comes with a monodromy \( \rho \) and our main result, Theorem 16.2.1, shows that there exists a \( \rho \) equivariant limit curve which is furthermore Sullivan. This implies the Anosov property and in particular the fact that the representation is faithful.

The proof involves introducing another object: unfolding a straight surface gives rise to a labelling of each hexagons of the fundamental tiling of the hyperbolic plane by tripods, satisfying some coherence relations – see Proposition 16.3.1.

Then we show that accessible points with respect to a given hexagon can be reached though nice path of tripods. The labelling of hexagons gives deformations of these paths into path of quasi-tripods. We can now use the Limit Point Theorem 7.2.1 and thus associate to an accessible point, a point in \( F \): the limit point of the sequence of quasi-tripods.
Using finally the Improvement Theorem 8.5.1 and the explicit control on limit points in Theorem 7.2.1, we show that we can define an actual Sullivan limit map.

16.1. **Equivariant straight surfaces.** We extend the definition of straight surfaces (which require a discrete subgroup of \( G \)) to that of an equivariant straight surface that you may think as of a “local system” in our setting, similar in spirit to the definition of positive representations in [10].

Recall that a stitched pair of pants for \( G \) is a quintuple \( T = (\alpha, \beta, \gamma, T_0, T_1) \) so that \( \alpha, \beta, \gamma \) are \( P \)-loxodromic elements in \( G \) and \( T_0, T_1 \) are tripods, satisfying the conditions of Definition 9.1.1. We denoted by \( P_{e,R} \pm \) the space of \((\epsilon R, \pm R)\)-stitched pair of pants.

Then we defined if \( T = (\alpha, \beta, \gamma, T_0, T_1) \) is an \((\epsilon R, R)\)-stitched pair of pants, 

\[ \Psi(T) = \Psi(T_0, \alpha^+, \alpha^-) \]

where \( \Psi \) is the foot map for quasi-tripods defined in Definition 4.1.4. We now define

- the configuration space of pair of pants is defined as \( P_{e,R} := G \setminus P_{e,R}^{\pm} \).
- the configuration space of couple of pair of pants is \( Z_{e,R} := G \setminus Z_{e,R} \) where \( Z_{e,R} \) is the set of pairs \((T^+, T^-) \in P_{e,R}^+ \times P_{e,R}^-\) so that 

\[ T^\pm = (\alpha_\pm, \beta_\pm, \gamma_\pm, T_0^\pm, T_1^\pm), \alpha_+ = (\alpha_-)^{-1}, d(\Psi(T^+), T \Psi(T^-)) \leq \frac{\epsilon}{R}. \]

Observe that we have obvious projections \( G \)-equivariant projections \( \pi^\pm : Z_{e,R} \mapsto P_{e,R}^\pm \) so that we also denote by \( \pi^\pm \) the resulting projection \( Z_{e,R} \mapsto P_{e,R}^\pm \).

**Definition 16.1.1.** [Equivariant straight surfaces] Let \( e \) and \( R \) be positive numbers. A \((e,R)\) equivariant straight surface is a pair \((R, Z)\) where \( R \) is finite bipartite trivalent ribbon graph whose set of vertices is \( V^- \sqcup V^+ \), so that

1. Every edge \( e \) is labelled by an element \( Z(e) \) of \( Z_{e,R} \). For convenience, we define the corresponding label of flag

\[ W(e^+, e) := \pi^+ Z(e) \in P_{e,R}^+. \]

By an abuse of notation, we will talk about equivariant straight surfaces as triples \((R, Z, W)\) even though \( W \) is redundant.

2. The labelling map from the link of a vertex \( v \) is equivariant with respect to the order 3 symmetries:

\[ W(\omega_3(v, e)) = \omega(W(v, e)) \]

Given a discrete subgroup \( \Gamma, \epsilon \) small enough and then \( R \) large enough, a straight surface for \( \Gamma \) gives rise to an equivariant straight surface by Theorem 9.3.2.

Observe that, given a bipartite trivalent graph \( R \) there is just one \((0,R)\)-equivariant straight surface, that we call the perfect surface for \( R \).

16.1.1. **Monodromy of an equivariant straight surface.** The fundamental group (as a graph of groups) \( \pi_1(\Sigma) \) of \( \Sigma = (R, Z, W) \) is given by

1. generators associated with the oriented edges, with the usual relation that reversing the orientation is taking the inverse,
2. relations for every vertex: the (oriented) product of edges at a is 1.
Let \( \mathcal{R}_u \) be the universal cover of the trivalent graph \( \mathcal{R} \) and \( \pi_1(\Sigma^u) \) be group obtained from \( \mathcal{R}_u \) by a similar construction. Observe the the fundamental group of \( \mathcal{R} \) acts by automorphisms on \( \pi_1(\Sigma^u) \) and that \( \pi_1(\Sigma) \) is canonically isomorphic to \( \pi_1(\Sigma^u) \rtimes \pi_1(\mathcal{R}) \).

Let denote by \([v, e]\) the flag in \( \mathcal{R} \) which is the projection on the flag \((v, e)\) in \( \mathcal{R}_u \).

The following follows at once from the fact that \( \mathcal{G} \) acts freely on the space of stitched pair of pants.

**Proposition 16.1.2.** There exists a map \( Z^u \) from the set of oriented edges of \( \mathcal{R}_u \) in \( Z_\epsilon, R \) a map \( W^u \) from the set of flags edges of \( \mathcal{R}_u \) with values in \( P_\epsilon, R \), so that

\[
[W^u(v, e)] = W([v, e]), \quad \pi^u Z(e) = W(e^u, e). \tag{130}
\]

Moreover \((W^u, Z^u)\) is unique up to the action of \( \mathcal{G} \).

A pair \((\mathcal{R}_u, Z^u)\) is called a lift of \((\mathcal{R}, Z)\) As a corollary of this construction we obtain from \( W^u \) a representation \( \rho \) of \( \pi_1(\Sigma^u) \) in \( \mathcal{G} \), where the image by \( \rho^u \) of the element represented by the flag \((v, e)\) is \( a \), when \( W^u(v, e) = (a, b, \gamma, T_0, T_1) \). Moreover by uniqueness, we obtain also a representation \( \rho_0 \) of \( \pi_1(\mathcal{R}) \) into \( \mathcal{G} \) so that if \( a \in \pi_1(\Sigma^u) \), \( b \in \pi_1(\mathcal{R}) \) then

\[
\rho^u(b \cdot a \cdot b^{-1}) = \rho^u(b) \cdot \rho_0(a) \cdot \rho^u(b^{-1}).
\]

**Definition 16.1.3.** [Monodromy–Cuff elements] The monodromy of \( \Sigma = (\mathcal{R}, Z, W) \) is the unique morphism \( \rho \) from \( \pi_1(\Sigma) \) to \( \mathcal{G} \) extending both \( \rho^u \) and \( \rho_0 \). The cuff limit map is the map \( \xi^+ \) which associates to every attractive point \( a^+ \) of the cuff element \( a \), the attracting fixed point \( \xi^+ (a^+) := \rho(a^+) \) in \( \mathcal{F} \) of the \( \mathcal{P} \)-loxodromic element \( \rho(a) \).

16.1.2. Deforming equivariant straight surfaces. We may deform equivariant straight surface. Let us say a family \( \Sigma_t = (\mathcal{R}, Z_t, W_t) \), with \( t \in [0, 1] \), of \((\epsilon, \mathcal{R})\)-equivariant straight surface is continuous if \( W_t \) is continuous in \( t \). The corresponding family of representations is then continuous as well.

**Proposition 16.1.4.** Let \( \epsilon \) be small enough. Then given any \((\epsilon, \mathcal{R})\)-equivariant straight surface \( \Sigma \), there exists a continuous family \( \Sigma_t \) of \((2\epsilon, \mathcal{R})\)-equivariant straight surfaces, with \( t \in [0, 1] \), so that \( \Sigma_1 = \Sigma \) and \( \Sigma_0 = \Sigma \) is the perfect surface for \( \mathcal{R} \).

**Proof.** Our first step is to observe that for \( \epsilon \) small enough that we can join two points in \( P_{\tau, \mathcal{R}}^u \) by a path inside \( P_{\tau, \mathcal{R}}^u \). We can think of a stitched pair of pants \((\alpha, \beta, \gamma)\) as a quadruple of tripods \((T_0, S_0, S_1, S_2)\) so that \( S_0 = T_1, S_0 = \alpha S_1, S_1 = \gamma S_2, S_2 = \beta S_0 \). Fixing \( T_0 \) for \( \epsilon \)-small enough, and deforming all the \( S_i \) to the perfectly sheared tripods \( S'_i \) from \( T_0 \), we will deform for \( \epsilon \)-small enough the \((\epsilon, \mathcal{R})\)-stitched pair of pants to a \((0, \mathcal{R})\) stitched pair of pants, through \((2\epsilon, \mathcal{R})\)-stitched pair of pants.

Now our second step is to prove that the fibers of the projection

\[
\pi := (\pi^+, \pi^-) : Z_{\epsilon, \mathcal{R}} \to P_{\mathcal{R}}^\epsilon \times P_{\mathcal{R}}^{-\epsilon}.
\]

are connected. These fibers are described in the way: given \( p = (p^0, p^-) \in P^+ \times P^- \), where \( p^+ = (a_+, \beta_+, \gamma_+, \tau_0^+, \tau_1^+) \), then there exist a unique element \( g \in Z_\mathcal{G}(a) \) so that

\[
\Psi(\tau_0^+, a_+, \alpha^-) = g T \Psi(\tau_0^+, a_+, \alpha^-).
\]

and moreover, for some universal constant \( B \), \( g \) is \( B_{\mathcal{G}} \)-close to the identity with respect to the metric \( d_\epsilon := d_0 \) by the definition of \( Z_{\epsilon, \mathcal{G}} \) and assertion (5).

Let us use the tripod \( \tau_0^+ \) as an identification of \( \mathcal{G} \) with \( \mathcal{G}_0 \), so that \( d_+ = d_0 \) and \( Z_\mathcal{G}(a) \subseteq L_0 \). Since \( g \) is \( B_{\mathcal{G}} \)-close to the identity, we can write for \( \epsilon \) small enough,
\( g = \exp(u) \) with \( u \in \mathfrak{l}_0 \) or norm less than \( 2B\frac{\epsilon}{R} \). Moreover \( u \) is the unique such vector of norm less than \( 4B\frac{\epsilon}{R} \). We now prove that \( u \in \mathfrak{z}_0(\alpha) \). Observe that
\[
\exp(\text{ad}(a) \cdot u) = a \cdot g \cdot a^{-1} = g.
\]
By assertion (55), \( a = \exp(2R \cdot a_0)h \) where \( h \) is \( \mathbf{M}_R^{\frac{\epsilon}{R}} \) close to the identity for some constant \( \mathbf{M} \). Thus for \( \epsilon \) small, the linear operator \( \text{ad}(a) \) – acting on \( \mathfrak{l}_0 \) – is close to the identity and has norm less than 2. Thus
\[
\| \text{ad}(a) \cdot u \| \leq 4B\frac{\epsilon}{R}.
\]
It follows by uniqueness of \( u \) that \( \text{ad}(a) \cdot u = u \). Thus \( u \in \mathfrak{z}_0(\alpha) \).

Then \( g \) can be connected to the identity through a path in \( \mathbb{Z}_0(\alpha) \) by elements of norm less than \( B\frac{\epsilon}{R} \). Thus the fibers of the projection \( Z_{\epsilon,R} \to \mathbb{P}^* R \times \mathbb{P}^* R \) are connected.

As a conclusion we may describe the label \( \mathbb{Z}(e) \) of an edge \( e \) connecting \( e^+ \) to \( e^- \) as \( W(e^+) \times W(e^-) \times g_e \) where \( g_e \) belong to some connected neighborhood of the identity in some group.

Then first, we deform each \( g_e \) to the identity. Secondly we can now deform each \( W(\tau) \) to an \((0,R)\)-stitched pair of pants. We have completed the deformation of an \((\frac{\epsilon}{R},R)\)-equivariant straight surface to a \((0,R)\)-equivariant straight surface.

16.2. Main result. Our main result is the following theorem that shows the existence of Sullivan curves.

**Theorem 16.2.1.** [Sullivan and straight surfaces] We assume \( s \) has a compact centralizer.

For any positive \( \zeta \), there exists positive numbers \( (\varepsilon_0, R_0) \) so that for \( \varepsilon < \varepsilon_0, R > R_0 \), if \( \Sigma \) is an \((\varepsilon,R)\)-equivariant straight surface with monodromy \( \rho \) and cuff limit map \( \xi' \), then there exists a unique \( \rho \)-equivariant \( \zeta \)-Sullivan map \( \xi \) from \( \partial_{\omega_0} \pi_1(\mathcal{S}_R) \) to \( \mathbf{F} \) extending \( \xi' \).

In this section, we will always precise when we use the hypothesis that \( s \) has a compact centralizer.

16.3. Hexagons and tripods. We need to connect our notion of equivariant straight surfaces to the picture of tiling by hexagons.

16.3.1. Labelling hexagons by tripods. Let us consider \( \Sigma_0 \) the perfect surface for \( \mathcal{R} \), that is the unique \((0,R)\)-straight surface of the form \((\mathcal{R},Z_0)\). Gluing perfect \( R \)-pair of pants associated to the vertices of \( \mathcal{R} \) along sides corresponding to edges of \( \mathcal{R} \) by an 1-shear, we obtain a covering \( S \) of the perfect surface \( \mathcal{S}_R \). We now consider \( \rho \) as a representation of the cuff group \( \Lambda \) which is so that \( \Lambda \backslash \mathbf{H}^2 = S \).

We recall (see paragraph 15.1.3) that conversely \( \mathcal{R} \) is obtained as the adjacency graph of the tiling of \( S \) by (let us say) white hexagons.

Taking the universal cover of this perfect surface, one obtains a map \( \pi \) from the set of tiling hexagons to the flags of \( \mathcal{R} \), so that \( \pi(\text{Suc}(H)) = \pi(H) \), if \( \pi(\text{Opp}(H)) \) is the opposite flag to \( \pi(H) \).

**Proposition 16.3.1.** [Straight surfaces and equivariant labelling] Let \( \Sigma = (R,Z,W) \) be an equivariant \((\varepsilon,R)\)-straight surface, with monodromy \( \rho \) and cuff limit map \( \xi' \). Then there exists a labelling \( \tau \) of tiling hexagons by tripods so that

(i) \( \tau(a,b,c) = \omega(\tau(b,c,a)) \)

(ii) If \( H = (a,b,c) \), then \( P(H) := (\tau(H),\tau(\text{Suc}(H),\rho(a),\rho(b),\rho(c)) \) is an \((\varepsilon,R)\)-stitched pair of pants,
(iii) for a white hexagon \( W(\pi(H)) = \{P(H)\} \),
(iv) for all \( \gamma \in \Lambda \), \( \tau(\gamma(H)) = \rho(\gamma) \cdot \tau(H) \).

We will refer to \( \tau, P \) as equivariant labelings associated to the straight surface \( \Sigma \).

**Proof.** From the definition of \( \Sigma = (\mathcal{R}, Z, W) \) we have a map from the set of white hexagons to \( \mathcal{P}_{i,x}^+ \) given by \( H \mapsto W(\pi(H)) \).

We are now going to lift \( W \circ \pi \) to a map \( P \) with values in \( \mathcal{P}_{i,x}^+ \). Let us choose a white hexagon \( H_0 \) and fix a lift \( P(H_0) = (\alpha_0, \beta_0, \gamma_0, \tau(H_0), \tau_1(H_0)) \) of \( W \circ \pi \). For any white hexagon \( H \), let us lift \( W \circ \pi(H) \) to \( P(H) = (\alpha_H, \beta_H, \Gamma_H, \tau(H), \tau_1(H)) \) by using the following rules.

(i) \( H' = \text{Opp}(H) \) then \( P(H') \) is uniquely defined from \( P(H) \) by the fact that so that \( (P(H), P(H')) \) is a lift of \( Z(e) \) in \( Z_{e, R} \), where \( e \) is the edge in \( \mathcal{R} \) associated to the pair \( (H, H') \).

(ii) If \( H' = \text{Suc}^2(H) \), then \( P(H') = \alpha_H P(H) \).

We leave the reader check that these rules are coherent. We finally choose a labelling of the black hexagons using the following rule: if \( H' = \text{Suc}(H) \) and \( H \) is labelled by \( P(H) = (\alpha_H, \beta_H, \Gamma_H, \tau(H), \tau_1(H)) \) then the labelling of \( H' \) is given by

\[
P(H') = (\alpha_H, \beta_H^{-1} \gamma_H \beta_H, \beta_H, \tau_1(H), \alpha_H \tau(H))
\]

Our label by tripods is finally given by the maps \( \tau : H \mapsto \tau(H) \), where \( P(H) = (\alpha_H, \beta_H, \gamma_H, \tau(H), \tau_1(H)) \). \qed

### 16.4. A first step: extending to accessible points.

Our first step will not use the assumption that \( s \) has a compact centralizer and will be used to show a weaken version of the surface subgroup theorem in that context.

Let us denote by \( W^R_H \) the set of accessible points from a tiling hexagon \( H \) and let us define the set of accessible points as

\[
W^R := \bigcup_H W^R_H
\]

the union set of of all accessible points with respect to any hexagons. Observe that \( W^R \) is \( \pi_1(S) \) invariant and thus dense.

Our main result in this paragraph is the next lemma that contrarily to Theorem 16.2.1 will not use the compact stabilizer hypothesis.

**Lemma 16.4.1.** [Extension] For any positive \( \zeta \), there exists positive numbers \( (\varepsilon_0, R_0) \) so that for \( \varepsilon < \varepsilon_0 \), \( R > R_0 \), the following holds.

Let \( \Sigma \) is an \((\varepsilon, R)\) equivariant straight surface with monodromy \( \rho \) and cuff limit map \( \xi' \).

Then there exist a unique \( \rho \)-equivariant map \( \xi \) from the set of accessible points \( W^R \) to \( \mathbb{E} \), so that if \( \{c_m\}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) is a nested sequence of cuffs converging to an accessible point \( y \in W^R_H \), then

\[
\lim_{m \to \infty} (\xi'(c_m^H)) = \xi(y)
\]

Moreover, if \( \eta \) is the circle map associated to \( \tau_0 = \tau(H) \), then for any \( \tau \) coplanar to \( \tau(H) \) so that \( \tau^\pm = \tau_0^\pm \)

\[
d_\tau(\xi(y), \eta(y)) \leq \zeta.
\]

We furthermore show that the dependence of \( \xi \) on the straight surface is continuous.
Corollary 16.4.2. Let \( \{ \Sigma_t \}_{t \in \mathbb{R}} \) be a continuous family of \((\varepsilon, R)\)-equivariant straight surfaces, and \( \{ \xi_t \}_{t \in \mathbb{R}} \) the family of maps produced as above, then for every \( z \), the map \( \xi_t(z) \) is continuous as a function of \( t \).

We first construct a sequence of quasi-tripods associated to an accessible point and an equivariant labelling, then show that this sequence of quasi-tripods converges and complete the proof of the Extension Lemma 16.4.1.

16.4.1. A sequence of quasi tripods for an accessible point. Let \( \Sigma \) be an equivariant straight surface with monodromy \( \rho \) and cuff limit map \( \xi' \), let \( \tau \) be an equivariant labelling obtained by Proposition 16.3.1.

Given \( K \), let \( K_0 \) so that Proposition 15.3.2 holds and \( R > R_0 \). Let \( y \) be an accessible point which is the limit of a sequence of cuffs \( \{ c_n \}_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \).

As first step we associate to \( \{ c_n \}_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \) a sequence of coplanar tripods \( \{ T_m \}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) associated to a \( K \)-good sequence of cuffs \( \{ c_n \}_{n \in \mathbb{N}} \): first we orient each cuff so that \( c_{n+1} \) is on the right of \( c_n \), then we associate to every \( K \)-acceptable pair \( (c_n, c_{n+1}) \) the pair of tripods \( (T_{2m-1}, T_{2m}) \) defined by
\[
T_{2m-1} = (c_n^+, c_{n+1}^-), \quad T_{2m} = (c_{n+1}^+), c_{n+1}^-).
\]
Let then \( A_m \) be the shear between \( T_{2m-1} \) and \( T_{2m+1} \).

Our second step is to associate our data a sequence of quasi-tripods. Recall that \( c_n, c_{n+1} \) are the common edges of exactly two hexagons \( H_{2m-1} = (c_{m-1}^+, c_{n+1}^-, b_m) \) and \( H_{2m} = (c_{m}, d_{m}, c_{m}^-) = \text{Suc}(H_{2m-1}) \), where we denote by \( \overline{c} \) the cuff \( c \) with the opposite orientation.

Let us consider the sequence \( \{ \theta_m \}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) of quadruples given by \( \theta_m = (\tau(H_m), \xi'(T_m)) \). Then it follows by the second item of Proposition 9.2.1 that \( \theta_m \) are \( M_0 \xi \)-equivariant, and complete the proof of the Extension Lemma 16.4.1.

We can now prove

Proposition 16.4.3. There exists a positive constant \( M_1 \) only depending on \( G \) so that the sequence \( \{ \theta_m \}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \) is an \( (\{ A_m \}_{m \in \mathbb{N}}, M_1 \xi \) sheared sequence of quasi tripods whose model is \( \{ T_m \}_{m \in \mathbb{N}} \).

Proof. Let us first consider the pair \( (\theta_{2m-1}, \theta_{2m}) \). From the definition, the \( \xi \)-equivariant quasi tripod
\[
\beta_{2m-1} := (\tau_{2m-1}, \xi'(c_{m-1}^+), \xi'(c_m^+), \xi'(b_m^-))
\]
is \( (R, \xi) \) sheared from
\[
\omega(\beta_{2m}) := (\omega(\tau_{2m}), \xi'(c_{m}^+), \xi'(c_{m+1}^+), \xi'(d_m^-))
\]
for \( m \) odd and \( (-R, \xi) \) sheared for \( m \) even. By construction,
\[
\beta_{2m}^+ = \theta_{2m}, \quad \omega(\beta_{2m-1})^+ = \omega(\theta_{2m-1})^+, \quad \beta_{2m} = \theta_{2m}.
\]

It follows that \( \beta_{2m} \) is \( R, \xi \) sheared from \( \omega(\theta_{2m-1}) \) for \( m \) odd and \( (-R, \xi) \) sheared for \( m \) even. Thus since
\begin{itemize}
  \item \( \omega(T_{2m}) \) is \( \frac{2}{R} \) close to \( t_{2m} = (c_{m}^+, c_{m+1}^+, d_m^-) \) by Proposition 15.1.6 and similarly
  \item \( T_{2m-1} \) is \( \frac{2}{R} \) close to \( t_{2m-1} = (c_{m+1}^+, c_{m}^-, b_m^-) \),
\end{itemize}
it follows that \( A_m \) is \( \frac{2}{R} \) close to \( R \), for \( m \) odd and to \( -R \) for \( m \)-even. Thus \( \theta_{2m} \) is \( (A_m, M_2 \xi) \) sheared from \( \omega(\theta_{2m-1}) \) for some constant \( M_2 \).
Let us consider now the pair \((\theta_{2m-1}, \theta_{2m})\). Since \((c_{m-1}, c_m, c_{m+1})\) is a \(K\)-acceptable triple, it follows by Item (iii) of Proposition 16.3.2 that

\[
H_{2m+1} = \eta_m \text{Opp}(H_{2m-1}),
\]

where \(\eta_m = \gamma^p m, \gamma_m\) is the cuff element associated to \(c_m\) and \(p \in \{-1, 0, 1\}\).

By definition of a labelling, \(\eta_m^{-1}(\theta_{2m})\) is \((1, \xi)\)-sheared from \(\theta_{2m-1}\). By construction (see Proposition 16.3.1) \(P(H_{2m-1})\) is an \((R, \xi)\)-stitched pair of pants associated to and thus by the last item of Theorem 9.2.1

\[
d(\eta(\theta_{2m}), \varphi_{2R}(\theta_{2m})) \leq M_3 \frac{\varepsilon}{R}.
\]

for some constant \(M_3\) only depending on \(G\).

It follows that \(\theta_{2m}\) is \((1 + pR, M_4 \xi)\)-sheared from \(\theta_{2m-1}\) for a constant \(M_4\) only depending on \(G\). Since \(A_m = 1 + pR\), the quasi-tripod \(\theta_{2m}\) is \((A_m, M_4 \xi)\)-sheared from \(\theta_{2m-1}\) for a constant \(M_4\) only depending on \(G\).

This concludes the proof of the proposition.

**16.4.2. Proof of Lemma 16.4.1 and its corollary.** We first prove the following result which is the key argument in the proof.

**Proposition 16.4.4.** [Extension] For any positive \(\zeta\) and \(K\), there exists positive numbers \((\varepsilon_0, R_0)\), \(q < 1, \beta, L\), so that for \(\varepsilon < \varepsilon_0, R > R_0\),

- if \(\Sigma\) is an \((\varepsilon, R)\) straight surface,
- if \([c_m]_{m \in \mathbb{N}}\) is a nested sequence of cuffs converging to an accessible point \(y\) with respect to an tiling hexagon \(H\) for \(\Sigma\),

Then \([\zeta(c_m^\pm)]_{m \in \mathbb{N}}\) converges to a point \(Y\) so that for any \(\tau\) coplanar to \(\tau(H)\) so that \(\tau^\pm = \tau_0^\pm\), and \(m > L\)

\[
d_\tau(Y, \zeta(c_m)) \leq q^m \beta
\]

Moreover, if \(\eta\) is the circle map associated to \(\tau_0 = \tau(H)\), then for any \(\tau\) coplanar to \(\tau(H)\) so that \(\tau^\pm = \tau_0^\pm\)

\[
d_\tau(Y, \eta(y)) \leq \zeta.
\]

**Proof.** Let \(\zeta\) be a positive constant. The sequence of tripods \([T_m]_{m \in \mathbb{N}}\) is a \(2KR\)-sequence of tripods by Corollary 15.1.3. From Proposition 16.4.3, it follows that \([\theta_m]_{m \in \mathbb{N}}\) is a \((KR, \xi)\)-deformed sequence of quasi tripods. In particular, using Theorem 7.2.1 with \(\beta = \zeta, [\xi(c_m^\pm)]_{m \in \mathbb{N}}\) and \([\xi(c_m^-)]_{m \in \mathbb{N}}\) both converges to a point \(y(\theta) = Y\) in \(\text{F}\).

Then Inequality (131) is a consequence of (23). Since \(\eta(\tau) = \eta(y)\), Inequality (132) also follows from Theorem 7.2.1.

The proof of Lemma 16.4.1 now follows immediately. The proof of Corollary 16.4.2 follows from that fact thanks to Inequality (131) the convergence of \([\xi(\theta_m^n)]_{m \in \mathbb{N}}\) is uniform.

**16.5. Proof of Theorem 16.2.1.** We now make use of the compact stabilizer hypothesis using in particular the Improvement Theorem 8.5.1.

Let us start with an observation. Let \(\tau\) be any tripod in \(\text{H}^2\). Since the diameter of the hyperbolic surfaces \(S_R\) is bounded independently of \(R\) (Lemma 15.1.2). It
follows that there exists some constant $C_0$, so that given any tripod $\tau$, we can find an tiling hexagon $H$ so that
\[ d(\tau, \tau_H) \leq C_0, \]
where $\tau_H$ is an admissible tripod in $H^2$ for $H$. It follows that there exists a universal constant $C_1$ so that for any circle map $\eta$
\[ d_{\eta(\xi)} \leq C_1 \cdot d_{\eta(\tau_H)}, \]
Given a positive number $\zeta$, let $R_0$ so that Lemma $16.4.1$ holds.
Let $\Sigma = (R, Z)$ be an $(\epsilon, R)$ equivariant straight surface with monodromy $\rho$ and cuff limit map $\xi'$. Then according to Proposition $16.1.4$, we can find a continuous family $\{\xi_t\}_{t \in [0,1]}$ of $(\epsilon, R)$ equivariant labelling under $\{\rho_t\}_{t \in [0,1]}$. It follows by Lemma $16.4.1$ and Corollary $16.4.2$ that we can find a continuous family $\{\xi_t\}_{t \in [0,1]}$ defined on the dense set of accessible points $W^R$ so that
- $\xi_t$ is equivariant under $\rho_t$;
- $\xi_0$ is a circle map, $\xi_1 = \xi$;
- For any tiling hexagon $H$, for all $y \in W^R_H$
\[ d_{\eta_t}(\eta_t(y), \xi_t(y)) \leq \frac{\zeta}{C_1}, \]
where $\eta_t^H$ is the circle map so that $\eta_t^H(\tau_H) = \tau_t := \tau_t(H)$.

Remark now that
(i) by Theorem $16.4.1$, $\xi_t$ is attractively continuous: for all $y \in W$, $\xi_t(y)$ is the limit of $\xi'(c^*_m)$ as $m$ goes to infinity, where $\xi'(c^*(m))$ is the attractive element of the cuff element $\rho(c_m)$;
(ii) by the Accessibility Lemma $15.2.3$, $W^R_H$ is $a(R)$-dense, where $a(R)$ goes to zero when $R$ goes to $\infty$.
We thus now choose $R_0$ so that for all $R$ greater than $R_0$, $a(R) < a_0$ where $a_0$ is given from $\zeta$ by Theorem $8.5.1$.
Using the initial observation, we now have that for any tripod $\tau$, and any $t \in [0,1]$, we can find a circle map $\eta_t = \eta_t^H$ so that for any $y$ in some $a_0$-dense set
\[ d_{\eta_t(y)}(\eta_t(y), \xi_t(y)) \leq \xi, \]
where we have used both inequalities (64) and (131).
We are now in a position to apply the Improvement Theorem $8.5.1$. This shows that $\xi_t$ – and in particular $\xi$ – is $2\zeta$-Sullivan. By construction $\xi$ extends $\xi'$. This completes the proof of Theorem $16.2.1$.

17. Wrap up: proof of the main results

This section is just the wrap up of the proof of the main Theorems obtained by combing the various theorems obtained in this paper.

**Theorem 17.0.1.** Let $G$ be a semisimple Lie group of Lie algebra $\mathfrak{g}$ without compact factors. Let $s = (a, x, y)$ be an $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{R})$-triple in $\mathfrak{g}$. Assume that $s$ satisfies the flip assumption and that $s$ has a compact centralizer.

Let $\Gamma$ be a uniform lattice in $G$. Let $\epsilon$ be a positive real number. Then there exists a closed hyperbolic surface $S_{\epsilon}$, a faithful $(G, P)$ Anosov representation $\rho_\epsilon$ of $\pi_1(S_{\epsilon})$ in $\Gamma$, whose limit curve is $\epsilon$-Sullivan with respect to $s$, where $P$ is the parabolic associated to $a$. 

As a corollary, considering the case of the principal SL₂(R) in a complex semisimple Lie group, we obtain

**Theorem 17.0.2.** Let \( G \) be a complex semisimple group, let \( \Gamma \) be a uniform lattice in \( G \), then there exists a closed Anosov surface subgroup in \( \Gamma \).

**Proof.** From Theorem 14.1.2, for any positive \( \varepsilon \), there exists \( R_0 \), so that for any \( R > R_0 \), there exists an \((\varepsilon, R)\)-straight surface \( \Sigma \) in \( \Gamma \) associated to \( s \). This straight surface is equivariant under a representation \( \rho \) of a surface group \( \Gamma_0 \) in \( \Gamma \).

By Theorem 16.2.1, for any \( \zeta \), \( R \) large enough and \( \varepsilon_0 \) small enough, an \((\varepsilon, R)\)-straight surface equivariant under a representation \( \rho \) of a surface group \( \Gamma_0 \) in \( \Gamma \), is so that we can find a \( \zeta \)-Sullivan \( \rho \)-equivariant Sullivan map from \( \partial_\infty \Gamma_0 \) to \( F \). By Theorem 8.1.3, for \( \varepsilon \)-small enough the corresponding representation is Anosov and in particular faithful. \( \square \)

17.1. **The case of the non compact stabilizer.** In that context we obtain a less satisfying result. Recall that we denote by \( c^+ \) the attractive point in \( \partial_\infty \pi_1(S) \) of a non trivial element \( c \) of \( \pi_1(S) \).

Let \( G_1 \ldots G_n \) be semisimple Lie groups without compact factors. Let \( G = \prod_{i=1}^n G_i \) with Lie algebra \( g \). Let \( \Gamma \) a uniform lattice in \( G \) so that (up to finite cover) its projection on \( G_i \) is an irreducible lattice. Let \( (a, x, y) \) be an SL₂(R)-triple in \( g \) so that

- \( s \) satisfies the flip assumption,
- the projections on all factors \( g_i \) are non trivial,

Let \( P \) the parabolic associated to \( a \). Let \( \Gamma \) be a uniform lattice in \( G \).

**Theorem 17.1.1.** Let \( \varepsilon \) be a positive real. Then there exists some \( R \) and

- a faithful representation \( \rho_\varepsilon \) of \( \Gamma_R = \pi_1(S_R) \) in \( \Gamma \), so that the image of every cuff element of \( \Gamma_R \) has an attractive fixed point in \( F \).
- a \( \rho \)-equivariant \( \xi \) from \( \partial_\infty \Gamma_R \) to \( F \) so that
  - For a cuff element \( c \), \( \xi(c^+) \) is the attractive fixed point of \( \rho(c) \),
  - If \( \{c_m\}_{m\in\mathbb{N}} \) is a sequence of cuff elements so that \( \{c_m^+\}_{m\in\mathbb{N}} \) converges to \( y \), then \( \{\xi(c_m^+)\}_{m\in\mathbb{N}} \) converges to \( y \).

**Proof.** The proof runs as before except that we replace the use of the Theorem 16.2.1 by Lemma 16.4.1. \( \square \)

18. **Appendix: Lévy–Prokhorov distance**

Let \( \mu \) and \( \nu \) be two finite measures of the same mass on a metric space \( X \) with metric \( d \). For any subset \( A \) in \( X \), let \( A_\varepsilon \) be its \( \varepsilon \)-neighborhood. Then we define

\[
d_\varepsilon(\mu, \nu) = \inf\{\varepsilon > 0 \mid \forall A \subset X, \ \nu(A_\varepsilon) \geq \mu(A)\}.
\]

This function \( d_\varepsilon \) is actually a distance (see [14, Paragraph 3.3]) related to both the \( \text{Lévy–Prokhorov distance} \) and the \( \text{Wasserstein-\infty distance} \). By a slight abuse of language, we call still call this distance the \( \text{Lévy–Prokhorov distance} \).

We want to prove the following result which is an extension of a result proved in [14] for connected 2-dimensional tori. The proof uses different ideas.

**Theorem 18.0.1.** Let \( X \) be a manifold. Assume that a connected compact torus \( T \) – with Haar measure \( \nu \) – of dimension \( n \) acts freely on \( X \) preserving a a bi-invariant Riemannian
metric $d$ and measure $\mu$. Let $\phi$ be a positive function on $X$. Let $\phi := \int f \circ g \, dv(g)$ be its $T$-average. Assume that $(1 - \kappa)\phi \leq \phi \leq (1 + \kappa)\phi$. Then

$$d_L(\phi, \mu, \varphi, \mu) \leq 4n.\kappa. \sup_{x \in X} \text{diam}(T.x).$$

18.0.1. Elementary properties. The following properties of the Lévy–Prokhorov distance will be used in the proof.

**Proposition 18.0.2.** Let $\mu$ be a finite measure on a compact metric space $X$. Then for all positive $\epsilon$, there exists an atomic measure $\mu_\epsilon$ so that

$$d_L(\mu, \mu_\epsilon) \leq \epsilon.$$

**Proof.** One can find a finite partition of $X$ by sets $U_1, \ldots, U^n$ together with a finite set of points $x_1, \ldots, x_n$, so that $x_i \in U_i \subset B(x_i, \epsilon)$. We then choose the atomic measure $\mu_\epsilon := \sum_{i=1}^n \mu(U_i)\delta_{x_i}$, so that $\mu_\epsilon(U_i) = \mu(U_i)$. Let $A \subset X$ and $A^i = A \cap U_i$. Let $I$ be the set of $i$ so that $A^i$ is non empty, then for $i \in I$,

$$U_i^c \subset B(x_i, \epsilon) \subset A_{2\epsilon}^c.$$

Thus,

$$A \subset \bigcup_{i \in I} U_i = \bigcup_{i \in I} \left( U_i \cap A_{2\epsilon}^i \right) \subset A_{2\epsilon}.$$

It follows that for all subset $A$,

$$\mu(A) \leq \mu \left( \bigcup_{i \in I} U_i \right) = \mu_\epsilon \left( \bigcup_{i \in I} U_i \right) = \mu_\epsilon \left( \bigcup_{i \in I} \left( U_i \cap A_{2\epsilon}^i \right) \right) \leq \mu_\epsilon(A_{2\epsilon}).$$

in particular $d(\mu, \mu_\epsilon) \leq 2\epsilon$. \qed

**Proposition 18.0.3.** Let $\{\mu_n\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ and $\{\nu_n\}_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$ be two families of measures so that $\mu = \sum_{n=1}^\infty \mu_n$ and $\nu = \sum_{n=1}^\infty \nu_n$ are finite measures. Assume that for all $i$, $d_L(\mu_n, \nu_i) \leq \epsilon$, then $d_L(\mu, \nu) \leq \epsilon$.

**Proof.** Let $n \geq \epsilon$. Then for $i$ and for all $A \subset X$, $\nu_i(A) \geq \mu_i(A)$. Thus $\nu(A) \geq \mu(A)$. It follows that $\nu \geq d(\mu, \nu)$. \qed

**Proposition 18.0.4.** Let $f$ and $g$ be two maps from a measured space $(Y, \nu)$ to a metric space $X$. Assume that for all $y \in Y$, $d(f(x), g(x)) \leq \kappa$. Then

$$d_L(f, g) \leq \kappa.$$

**Proof.** Observe that by hypothesis, for any subset $B$ of $Y$, $f(B) \subset (g(B))$. Let $A$ be a subset of $X$, $C = f^{-1}(A)$ and $D = g^{-1}(A)$. Then $f(D) \subset A$. It follows that

$$f_\ast \mu(A) \geq f_\ast \mu(f(D)) = \mu(f^{-1}(f(D))) \geq \mu(D) = g_\ast \mu(A).$$

The assertion follows. \qed

**Proposition 18.0.5.** Let $\pi$ be a $K$-Lipschitz map from $X$ to $Y$. Let $\mu$ and $\nu$ be measures on $X$, then

$$d_L(\pi_\ast (\mu), \pi_\ast (\nu)) \leq K d(\mu, \nu).$$

We will actually apply this proposition when $\pi : X \rightarrow Y$ is a finite covering.

**Proof.** By renormalizing the distance, we can assume the map $\pi$ is contracting. Let $\epsilon \geq d(\mu, \nu)$. Let $B \subset Y$, observe that $\pi^{-1}(B)_{\epsilon} \subset \pi^{-1}(B)$. Then,

$$\pi_\ast \mu(B) = \mu(\pi^{-1}(B)) \geq \mu \left( \pi^{-1}(B) \right) \geq \nu (\pi^{-1}(B)) = \pi_\ast \nu(B).$$

Then by definition, $\epsilon \geq d(\pi_\ast (\mu), \pi_\ast (\nu))$ and the result follows. \qed
18.0.2. Some lemmas. We need the following lemmas.

**Lemma 18.0.6.** Let $X$ be a metric space equipped some metric $d$. Let $\pi : X \to X_0$ be a fibration. Let $d_x$ be the restriction of $d$ to the fiber $\pi^{-1}(x)$. Let $\nu$ and $\mu$ be two measures on $X$ so that $\pi_*\mu = \pi_*\nu = \lambda$. For every $x$ in $X_0$, let $\mu_x$—respectively $\nu_x$—be the disintegrated measure on $\pi^{-1}(x)$ coming from $\mu$ and $\nu$ respectively. Then

$$d_1(\mu, \nu) \leq \sup_{x \in X_0} d_x(\mu_x, \nu_x). \quad (136)$$

**Proof.** Let $A$ be a subset of $X$ and $A^x := A \cap \pi^{-1}(x)$. By construction $(A^x)_x \subset (A_x)^x$. Thus, for any set $A$, if $\kappa \geq d(x, \mu_x)$ for all $x$, we have

$$\nu(A_x) = \int_{X_0} \nu_x ((A^x)_x) d\lambda(x) \geq \int_{X_0} \nu_x ((A^x)_x) d\lambda(x) \geq \int_{X_0} \mu_x (A^x) d\lambda(x) \geq \mu_0(A).$$

Thus, $\kappa \geq d(\mu, \nu)$. Inequality (136) follows. $\Box$

**Lemma 18.0.7.** Let $T^1$ be the connected compact torus of dimension 1 equipped with a bi-invariant metric $d$ and Haar measure $\mu$. Let $\phi$ be a positive function on $T^1$. Let $\overline{\phi} := \int_{T^1} \phi \circ g \cdot dv(g)$ be its $T^1$-average. Assume that $\exp(-\kappa)\overline{\phi} \leq \phi \leq \exp(\kappa)\overline{\phi}$. Then

$$d(\phi, \mu, \overline{\phi}, \mu) \leq \kappa \text{diam}(T^1).$$

**Proof.** We can as well assume after multiplying the distance by a constant that $\text{diam}(T^1) = 1$. Let $A$ be any interval in $T^1$. Assume first that $A_x$ is a strict subset of $T^1$ (and thus $\kappa < 1/2$). Then

$$\phi_x(A_x) \geq \exp(-\kappa) \int_{A_x} \overline{\phi_x} d\mu_x \geq \exp(-\kappa)(\mu(A) + 2\kappa)\overline{\phi}$$

(137)

Next observe that $\mu(A) \leq 1 - 2\kappa$. Hence

$$\phi_x(A_x) \geq \exp(-\kappa)\left(1 + \frac{2\kappa}{1 - 2\kappa}\right)\overline{\phi_x}(\mu(A)) \geq \left(\frac{\exp(-\kappa)}{1 - 2\kappa}\right)\overline{\phi_x}(\mu(A)).$$

(138)

Thus if $A_x$ is a strict subset of $T^1$: $\phi_x(A_x) \geq \overline{\phi_x}(\mu(A))$. Finally if $A_x = T^1$,

$$\phi_x(A_x) = \int_{T^1} \phi_x d\mu_x = \overline{\phi} = \overline{\phi}(\mu(A)).$$

This concludes the proof of the statement. $\Box$

These two lemmas have the following immediate consequence

**Corollary 18.0.8.** Let $X := T^1 \times X_0$. Let $d$—respectively $\mu$—be a $\ell_1$ product metric—respectively a measure—on $X$ invariant by $T^1$. Let $\phi$ be a function on $X$. Let $\overline{\phi} := \int_{T^1} \phi \circ g \cdot dv(g)$ be its $T^1$-average. Assume that $(1 - \kappa)\overline{\phi} \leq \phi \leq (1 + \kappa)\overline{\phi}$. Then

$$d(\phi, \mu, \overline{\phi}, \mu) \leq \kappa \text{diam}(T^1).$$
18.0.3. **Proof of Theorem 18.0.1.** We first treat the case of $X = T = (T^1)^n$ with the $\ell_1$ product metric $d_1$ which is of diameter 1 on each factor. Note first that if $\bar{\phi}$ is its average along one of the $T^1$ factor, then

$$\exp(-2.\kappa) \cdot \bar{\phi} \leq \phi \leq \exp(2.\kappa) \cdot \bar{\phi}.$$  

Applying Corollary 18.0.8 to all the factors of $T$, we get after an induction procedure that for the corresponding Lévy–Prokhorov distance

$$d_1(\phi, \mu, \bar{\phi}, \mu) \leq 2n.\kappa.$$  

We can conclude.

We still consider the case $X = T^n$. Let now $d$ is a bi-invariant Riemannian metric on the torus $X$. Observe that $\pi_1(X)$ can be generated by translations of length smaller than $2 \text{diam}(X)$. Thus there exists a bi-invariant $\ell_1$ product metric $d_1$ on this torus whose factors have diameter 1, so that

$$d \leq 2 \cdot \text{diam}(T) \cdot d_1.$$  

The statement in that case follows from the following observation: let $d_1$, $d_2$ be two metrics whose corresponding Lévy–Prokhorov distances are respectively $\delta_1$ and $\delta_2$. Assume that $d_2 \leq K \cdot d_1$. Then $\delta_2 \leq K \cdot \delta_1$. Finally, we apply Lemma 18.0.6 to conclude for the general case.

### Appendix B: Exponential Mixing

The following lemma is well known to experts as a combination of various deep results. However, it is difficult to track it precisely in the literature. We thank Bachir Bekka and Nicolas Bergeron for their help on that matter.

**Lemma 19.0.1.** Let $G$ be a semi-simple Lie group without compact factor and $\Gamma$ be an irreducible lattice in $G$, then the action of any non trivial hyperbolic element is exponentially mixing.

When the lattice is not irreducible, we have to impose furthermore that the projection of the hyperbolic element to all irreducible factors is non trivial.

**Proof.** The extension to non irreducible factors follow from simple considerations. Thus let just prove the first statement. Let $G_1, \ldots, G_n$ be the simple factors of $G$. Let $\pi$ be the unitary representation of $G$ in $L^2_0(G/\Gamma)$, the orthogonal to the constant function in $L^2(G/\Gamma)$.

By Kleinbock–Margulis [18, Corollary 4.5] we have to show that the restriction $\pi_i$ of $\pi$ on $G_i$ has a spectral gap (see also Katok–Spatzier [17, Corollary 3.2]).

In the simplest case is when $G$ is simple and $\Gamma$ uniform, this follows by standard arguments, for instance see Bekka’s survey [2, Proposition 8.1]

When $G$ is still simple, but $\Gamma$ non uniform, this now follows from Bekka [1, Lemma 4.1].

When finally $G$ is a actually a product, by Margulis Arithmeticity Theorem [22], $\Gamma$ is arithmetic. For $\Gamma$ uniform, the spectral gap follows from Burger–Sarnak [7] and Clozel [8]. For $\Gamma$ non uniform, this is due to Kleinbock–Margulis [18, Theorem 1.12].
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Index

(a, κ)-nested, 22
C_α(τ), see also Cone
K, 13
Q-sequence , 30
S_0, 71
S_α(H), 23
T, 66
Λ_0, 71
Ψ, see also Foot map
Θ, 54
N, 67
K, 17
κ, 17
δ(H_0, H_1), see also Shift
δ, 18
ε-quasi tripod, 18
η_0, 14
F, 8
H^2, 14
F_0, 61
G, 9
H, 14
σ, 10
L_0, 10
L_∞, 61
P, 8
S_0, 10
Z^2(α), 61
Z_0, 10
δ, 18
δτ, 11
σ, 12
σ_0, 10
ψ, 12
ζ, 10
d_0, 15
d_τ, 15
s(τ), 15
U^-1, 12
Z(sl_2), 61
sl_2-triple, even, regular, 8

Admissible tripod, 71
Almost Fuchsian, 46

Cuff elements, cuff group, 72
Cuff limit map, 79
Deformation fo a path, 21
Diffusion constant, 17
equivariant straight surface, 78
Extended circle map, 34

Feet of an ε-quasi tripod, 18
Feet space, 61
Flag Manifold, 8
Flip assumption, 8
Foot map, 18

Interior of an ε-triangle, 18
Kahn–Markovic twist, 66
Levy–Prokhorov, 85
Lift of a triconnected pair of tripods, 53
Limit of a sequence of cone, 22
Loxodromic, 9

Model of a path, 20
Nested pair of chords, 24
Nested tripods, 22
Parabolic subgroup, 8
Path of chords, 20
Path of quasi-tripods, 20
Perfect Lamination, 71
Perfect surface, 71
Perfect triangle, 10
Pivot, 20
Quasi-tripod, 18

Reduced ε-quasi tripod, 18
Shear, 12
Shift, 24
Sliver, 23
Stable and unstable foliations, 12
Straight surface, 69
Strong coplanar path of tripods, 26
Sullivan curve, 34

Transverse flags, 9
Triconnected pair of tripods, 53
Tripod, 9

Vertices of a tripod, 11
Vertices of an ε-quasi tripod, 18
Weak coplanar path of tripods, 26
Weight functions, 54
Brown University, Department of Mathematics, Providence, RI 02912, U.S.A.

Université Côte d’Azur, LJAD, Nice F-06000; France

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Einstein Institute of Mathematics, Givat Ram. Jerusalem, 9190401, Israel