HYPERBOLICITY OF CYCLIC COVERS AND COMPLEMENTS

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Abstract. We prove that a cyclic cover of a smooth complex projective variety is Brody hyperbolic if its branch divisor is a generic small deformation of a large enough multiple of a Brody hyperbolic base-point-free ample divisor. We also show the hyperbolicity of complements of those branch divisors. As an application, we find new examples of Brody hyperbolic hypersurfaces in $\mathbb{P}^{n+1}$ that are cyclic covers of $\mathbb{P}^n$.

1. Introduction

A complex analytic space $X$ is called Brody hyperbolic if there are no non-constant holomorphic maps from $\mathbb{C}$ to $X$. Lang’s conjecture [Lan86] predicts that a projective variety $X$ is Brody hyperbolic if every subvariety of $X$ is of general type. More generally, the Green-Griffiths-Lang conjecture [GG79, Lan86] predicts that if a projective variety $X$ is of general type, then there exists a proper Zariski closed subset $Z \subseteq X$ such that any non-constant holomorphic map $f : \mathbb{C} \to X$ satisfies $f(\mathbb{C}) \subseteq Z$. For hyperbolicity of hypersurfaces, Kobayashi [Kob70, Kob98] proposed the following conjecture:

Conjecture 1 (Kobayashi). For $n \geq 3$, a general hypersurface $X \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ of degree $\geq (2n - 1)$ is Brody hyperbolic.

It is easy to see that Lang’s conjecture follows from the Green-Griffiths-Lang conjecture by a Noetherian induction argument. Based on results by Clemens [Cle86], Ein [Ein88, Ein91] and Xu [Xu94], Voisin [Voi96] showed that a general hypersurface $X$ of degree $\geq (2n - 1)$ in $\mathbb{P}^n$ with $n \geq 3$ satisfies that every subvariety of $X$ is of general type. Therefore, Lang’s conjecture implies Conjecture 1 by Voisin’s result.

A lot of work has been done toward Conjecture 1. See [McQ99, DEG00, Rou07a, Pau08, DMR10, Sui13, Den15, Bro16, Den16]. Examples of hyperbolic hypersurfaces are constructed in [MN96, SY97, Fuj01, SZ02, CZ03, Duv04, SZ05, CZ13, Huy15, Huy16].

In this paper, we first study the hyperbolicity of cyclic covers. For curves we know that if the branch divisor has large degree, then the cyclic cover will be Brody hyperbolic for generic choice of the branch divisor. (See Section 3.1 for hyperbolicity of cyclic covers of $\mathbb{P}^1$.) Our first main result is a higher dimensional generalization:

Theorem 2. Let $X$ be a smooth projective variety with dim $X = n$. Let $L$ be a globally generated ample line bundle on $X$. Suppose that there exists a smooth hypersurface $H \in |L|$ that is Brody hyperbolic. Let $m, d \geq 2$ be positive integers such that $m$ is a multiple of $d$. For a generic small deformation $S$ of $mH \in |L^{\otimes m}|$, let $Y$ be the degree $d$ cyclic cover of $X$ branched along $S$. Then $Y$ is Brody hyperbolic if $m \geq d\lceil \frac{n + 2}{d - 1} \rceil$.

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Here the assumption that $H$ being Brody hyperbolic is crucial for our discussion. If $X \setminus H$ is also Brody hyperbolic, we have slightly better lower bounds on $m$ to settle the hyperbolicity of $Y$:

**Theorem 3.** With the notation of Theorem 2, assume in addition that $X \setminus H$ is Brody hyperbolic. Then $Y$ is Brody hyperbolic if $m \geq d\lceil \frac{n+1}{d-1} \rceil$.

In fact, we prove stronger results from which Theorem 2 and 3 follow (see Theorem 16 and 18).

The following theorem is an application of Theorem 2 which gives new examples of Brody hyperbolic hypersurfaces in $\mathbb{P}^{n+1}$. These hypersurfaces are cyclic covers of $\mathbb{P}^n$ via linear projections.

**Theorem 4.** Suppose $D$ is a smooth hypersurface of degree $k$ in $\mathbb{P}^n$ that is Brody hyperbolic. For $d \geq n + 3$ and a generic small deformation $S$ of $dD$ in $|O_{\mathbb{P}^n}(dk)|$, let $W$ be the degree $dk$ cyclic cover of $\mathbb{P}^n$ branched along $S$. Then $W$ is a Brody hyperbolic hypersurface in $\mathbb{P}^{n+1}$ of degree $dk$.

In [RR13], Rouleau-Rousseau showed that a double cover of $\mathbb{P}^2$ branched along a very general curve of degree at least 10 is algebraically hyperbolic. Thus Green-Griffiths-Lang conjecture predicts that these surfaces are also Brody hyperbolic. As an application of Theorem 3, we give some evidence supporting this prediction:

**Theorem 5.** Let $l \geq 3$, $k \geq 5$ be two positive integers. Let $D$ be a smooth plane curve of degree $k$ such that $\mathbb{P}^2 \setminus D$ is Brody hyperbolic. (The existence of such $D$ was shown by Zaidenberg in [Zai89].) Let $S$ be a generic small deformation of $2lD$. Then the double cover of $\mathbb{P}^2$ branched along $S$ is Brody hyperbolic.

Note that the minimal degree of $S$ is 30.

For hyperbolicity of complements, the logarithmic Kobayashi conjecture and related problems have been studied in [Gre77, Zai87, Zai89, SY96, SZ00, EG03, Rou07b, Rou09, IT15].

The cyclic cover being Brody hyperbolic clearly implies that the complement of the branch locus is also Brody hyperbolic. More precisely, with the notation of Theorem 2 we have that $X \setminus S$ is Brody hyperbolic if $m \geq d\lceil \frac{n+2}{d-1} \rceil$. In fact, we can still reach the same conclusion with the slightly weaker condition $m \geq n + 2$, as the following theorem states.

**Theorem 6.** Let $X$ be a smooth projective variety with $\dim X = n$. Let $L$ be a globally generated ample line bundle on $X$. Suppose that there exists a smooth hypersurface $H \subset |L|$ that is Brody hyperbolic. Let $m \geq n + 2$ be a positive integer. Then for a generic small deformation $S$ of $mH \in |L^{\otimes m}|$, both $S$ and $X \setminus S$ are Brody hyperbolic. Moreover, $X \setminus S$ is complete hyperbolic and hyperbolically embedded in $X$.

Recall that complete hyperbolicity is defined in [Kob98, p. 60] and hyperbolically embeddedness is defined in [Kob98, p. 70].

**Structure of the paper.** The proofs of the theorems are mostly based on the degeneration to the normal cone (Section 2.1) and deformation type theorems of hyperbolicity (Theorem 15, 17 and 20).
In Section 2, we construct a family $\mathcal{X} \to \mathbb{A}^1$ with the general fiber $X_t$ isomorphic to $X$ and the special fiber $X_0$ being a projective cone over $H$. For technical reasons, we first introduce a smooth model $\tilde{\mathcal{X}}$ of $\mathcal{X}$ (Proposition 8). Then by taking a cyclic cover of the total space $\mathcal{X}$, we get a family of cyclic covers $Y_t$ of $X$ which degenerates to a cyclic cover $Y_0$ of $X_0$ (Proposition 11).

Most of the theorems are proved in Section 3. As a preparation, we study the hyperbolicity of cyclic covers of $\mathbb{P}^1$ and $\mathbb{A}^1$ in Section 3.1. We give lower bounds on the size of the reduced branch loci to get hyperbolicity of those cyclic covers (Lemma 12 and 13). Section 3.2 is devoted to proving Theorem 2, 3 and 6. By dimension counting, we give a lower bound for the size of the reduced branch loci among all generators of $X_0$ (Lemma 14). When the branch locus has large degree, we prove the hyperbolicity of the cyclic cover of each generator of $X_0$, which gives the hyperbolicity of $Y_0$ since the base $H$ is also Brody hyperbolic. Then Theorem 2 follows by applying a deformation type theorem (see Theorem 15). Theorem 3 and 6 are proved in similar ways with minor changes.

We first apply our methods to hypersurfaces in $\mathbb{P}^n$ in Section 4.1. We prove a stronger result that essentially implies Theorem 4 (see Theorem 22). We give a new proof to the main result in [Zai09] by applying Mori’s degeneration method (see Theorem 23). We also improve [Zai92, p. 147, Corollary of Theorem II.2] (see Theorem 24). In Section 4.2, we apply our methods to surfaces. We prove Theorem 5. We also obtain hyperbolicity of the complement of a smooth curve in some polarized K3 surface of large degree (Example 27).

Notation. Throughout this paper, we work over the complex numbers $\mathbb{C}$. We will follow the terminology of [Kob98] for various notions of hyperbolicity.

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2. Construction of Families

2.1. Degeneration to the normal cone. From now on $X$ will be a smooth projective variety of dimension $n$. Let $L$ be a globally generated ample line bundle on $X$. Let $H$ be a smooth hypersurface in $|L|$.

Let $\rho : \tilde{\mathcal{X}} \to X \times \mathbb{A}^1$ be the blow up of $X \times \mathbb{A}^1$ along $H \times \{0\}$, with exceptional divisor $E$. Denote the two projections from $X \times \mathbb{A}^1$ by $p_1$ and $p_2$. The line bundle $\tilde{L}$ on $\tilde{\mathcal{X}}$ is defined by

$$\tilde{L} := (p_1 \circ \rho)^* L \otimes \mathcal{O}_{\tilde{\mathcal{X}}}(-E).$$

Let $\tilde{\pi} := p_2 \circ \rho$ be the composite of the projections $\tilde{\mathcal{X}} \to X \times \mathbb{A}^1 \to \mathbb{A}^1$.

Proposition 7. With the above notation, the line bundle $\tilde{L}$ is globally generated.

Proof. Let $\mathcal{I}$ be the ideal sheaf of $H \times \{0\}$ in $X \times \mathbb{A}^1$. Then $\mathcal{O}_{\tilde{\mathcal{X}}}(-E) = \rho^{-1} \mathcal{I} \cdot \mathcal{O}_{\tilde{\mathcal{X}}}$. Therefore, it suffices to show that $p_1^* L \cdot \mathcal{I}$ is globally generated.
Let us choose a basis $s_1, \cdots, s_N$ of the vector space $H^0(X, L)$ with $N := \dim H^0(X, L)$. Let $s_H \in H^0(X, L)$ be a defining section of $H$, i.e. $H = (s_H = 0)$. We may define sections

$$
\sigma_0, \sigma_1, \cdots, \sigma_N \in H^0(X \times \mathbb{A}^1, p_1^*L)
$$

as follows:

$$
\sigma_0(x, t) = s_H(x),
\sigma_i(x, t) = ts_i(x) \quad \text{for any } 1 \leq i \leq N.
$$

Since $s_1, \cdots, s_N$ generate $L$, the sections $\sigma_0, \cdots, \sigma_N$ generate the subsheaf $p_1^*L \cdot \mathcal{I}$ of $p_1^*L$. Hence we prove the proposition. \hfill \Box

Denote the lifting of $\sigma_i$ to $\widetilde{X}$ by $\tilde{\sigma}_i \in H^0(\widetilde{X}, \widetilde{L})$. The proof above implies that $\tilde{\phi} := [\tilde{\sigma}_0, \cdots, \tilde{\sigma}_N]$ defines a morphism $\tilde{\phi} : \widetilde{X} \to \mathbb{P}^N$, such that $\tilde{L} \cong \tilde{\phi}^*\mathcal{O}(1)$.

Since $L$ is globally generated, it is also $\tilde{\pi}$-globally generated. By [Laz04] 2.1.27, we may define the ample model $\mathcal{X}$ of $(\widetilde{X}, \widetilde{L})$ over $\mathbb{A}^1$ by

$$
\mathcal{X} := \text{Proj}_{\mathbb{A}^1} \bigoplus_{i \geq 0} \tilde{\pi}_* (\widetilde{L}^\otimes i),
$$

where $\psi : \widetilde{X} \to \mathcal{X}$ is an algebraic fibre space with $\mathcal{X}$ normal. Then $\tilde{L}$ descends to a globally generated ample line bundle $L$ on $\mathcal{X}$, i.e. $\tilde{L} = \psi^*L$. Since $\tilde{\phi}$ is induced by a base point free sub linear system of $|\tilde{L}|$, $\tilde{\phi}$ descends to a morphism $\phi : \mathcal{X} \to \mathbb{P}^N$, i.e. $\tilde{\phi} = \phi \circ \psi$.

Denote the fibers of $\tilde{\pi} : \widetilde{X} \to \mathbb{A}^1$ and $\pi : \mathcal{X} \to \mathbb{A}^1$ by $\tilde{X}_t$ and $\mathcal{X}_t$, respectively. Then as a Cartier divisor, $\tilde{X}_0$ can be written as

$$
\tilde{X}_0 = \tilde{X}_0 + E,
$$

where $\tilde{X}_0$ is the birational transform of $X \times \{0\}$ under $\rho$.

**Proposition 8.** With the above notation, we have the following properties.

1. The Stein factorization of $(\tilde{\phi}, \tilde{\pi}) : \widetilde{X} \to \mathbb{P}^N \times \mathbb{A}^1$ is given by the following commutative diagram

$$
\begin{array}{ccc}
\tilde{X} & \xrightarrow{\psi} & \mathcal{X}(\tilde{\phi}, \pi) \\
(\tilde{\phi}, \tilde{\pi}) & \downarrow & \\
\mathbb{P}^N \times \mathbb{A}^1 & \end{array}
$$

where $\psi_* \mathcal{O}_{\tilde{X}} = \mathcal{O}_{\mathcal{X}}$, and $(\phi, \pi)$ is finite.

2. The morphism $\psi$ is birational. More precisely, $\psi$ is an isomorphism away from $\tilde{X}_0$, and it contracts $\tilde{X}_0$ to a point $\psi_0$ in $\mathcal{X}$.

3. Let $\rho_E : E \to H$ be the $\mathbb{P}^1$-bundle structure on $E$. Then $\tilde{\phi}$ sends each fiber of $\rho_E$ isomorphically onto a line in $\mathbb{P}^N$.

**Proof.**

1. It follows from the relative version of [Laz04] 2.1.28.

2. Since $\rho : \widetilde{X} \setminus \tilde{X}_0 \to X \times (\mathbb{A}^1 \setminus \{0\})$ is an isomorphism, the restriction $\tilde{L}|_{\widetilde{X} \setminus \tilde{X}_0}$ is $\tilde{\pi}$-ample over $\mathbb{A}^1 \setminus \{0\}$. Hence $\psi$ is an isomorphism away from $\tilde{X}_0$, which implies that $\psi$ is birational.
Let \( \hat{\rho}_0 := (p_1 \circ \rho)|_{X_0} \) be the isomorphism from \( \hat{X}_0 \) to \( X \). Recall that \( \hat{L} = (p_1 \circ \rho)^* L \otimes \mathcal{O}_{\hat{X}}(-E) \). Then
\[
\hat{L}|_{\hat{X}_0} \cong \hat{\rho}_0^* L \otimes \mathcal{O}_{\hat{X}_0}(-E|_{\hat{X}_0}) \\
\cong \hat{\rho}_0^* L \otimes \hat{\rho}_0^* \mathcal{O}_X(-H) \\
\cong \hat{\rho}_0^*(L \otimes \mathcal{O}_X(-H)) \\
\cong \mathcal{O}_{\hat{X}_0}
\]
Hence \( \hat{L}|_{\hat{X}_0} \) is trivial, which implies that \( \psi \) contracts \( \hat{X}_0 \) to a point \( v_0 \) in \( \mathcal{X} \).

Since \( N_{H/X} \cong \mathcal{O}_X(H)|_H \cong L|_H \), we have \( E \cong \mathbb{P}_H(L|_H \oplus \mathcal{O}_H) \). It is clear that \( H_0 := \hat{X}_0|_E \) is the section of \( \rho_E \) corresponding to the first projection \( L|_H \oplus \mathcal{O}_H \to L|_H \). Denote by \( \tilde{H}_1 \) the other section of \( \rho_E \) corresponding to the second projection \( L|_H \oplus \mathcal{O}_H \to \mathcal{O}_H \). Then
\[
\hat{L}|_E \cong (p_1 \circ \rho)^*(L)|_E \otimes \mathcal{O}_{\mathcal{X}}(-E)|_E \\
\cong \rho_E^*(L|_H) \otimes \mathcal{O}_{\hat{X}}(X_0)|_E \otimes \mathcal{O}_{\hat{X}}(X_0)|_E \\
\cong \rho_E^*(L|_H) \otimes \mathcal{O}_E(H_0) \\
\cong \mathcal{O}_E(H_1)
\]
Since \( L|_H \) is ample, for sufficiently large \( k \) the linear system \( |\hat{L}|_E^k \) gives a birational morphism \( E \to C_p(H, L|_H) \), where \( C_p(H, L|_H) \) is the projective cone in the sense of [Kol13, Section 3.1]. In particular, any curve contracted by \( \psi|_E \) is contained in \( H_0 \). Thus \( \psi|_E \) is an isomorphism away from \( H_0 \), we prove (2).

(3) As we have seen in the proof of (2), \( \hat{L}|_E \cong \mathcal{O}_E(H_1) \). Hence \( (\hat{\phi}^* \mathcal{O}(1) \cdot \rho_E^{-1}(x)) = (\hat{L} \cdot \rho_E^{-1}(x)) = 1 \) for any \( x \in H \), we prove (3). \( \square \)

Remark 9. By the proof of Proposition[8] the Stein factorization of \( \psi|_E : E \to X_0 \) is given by \( E \to C_p(H, L|_H) \to X_0 \). Thus \( C_p(H, L|_H) \) is isomorphic to the normalization \( X_0' \) of \( X_0 \). In general, \( X_0 \) is not necessarily normal. According to [Kol13, 3.10], \( X_0 \) is normal if and only if \( H^1(X, L^k) = 0 \) for any \( k \geq 0 \).

2.2. Constructing families of cyclic covers. Let \( m, d \geq 2 \) be positive integers such that \( m \) is a multiple of \( d \). It is clear that the linear system \( \phi^*(|\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|) \) is base point free. Hence by Bertini’s theorem, the following property holds for a general hypersurface \( T \in |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)| \):

\( \star \) \( \phi^*(T) \) is smooth, does not contain \( v_0 \) and intersects \( X_0 \) transversally.

Fix a general hypersurface \( T \in |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)| \) satisfying property \( \star \). Let \( \mu : \mathcal{Y} \to \mathcal{X} \) and \( \tilde{\mu} : \tilde{\mathcal{Y}} \to \tilde{\mathcal{X}} \) be the degree \( d \) cyclic covers of \( \mathcal{X} \) and \( \tilde{\mathcal{X}} \) branched along \( \phi^*(T) \) and \( \tilde{\phi}^*(T) \), respectively. Let \( \pi_{\tilde{\mathcal{Y}}} := \tilde{\pi} \circ \tilde{\mu} \) and \( \pi_{\mathcal{Y}} := \mu \circ \mu \) be the composition maps. Let \( \psi_1 : \tilde{\mathcal{Y}} \to \mathcal{Y} \) be the lifting of \( \psi : X \to \mathcal{X} \). Then \( \tilde{\mathcal{Y}} \) and \( \mathcal{Y} \) are proper flat families over \( \mathbb{A}^1 \). Denote the fibers of \( \pi_{\tilde{\mathcal{Y}}} \) and \( \pi_{\mathcal{Y}} \) by \( \tilde{Y}_t \) and \( Y_t \), respectively.

For \( t \neq 0 \) we notice that \( (p_1 \circ \rho)|_{\tilde{X}_t} \) maps \( \tilde{X}_t \) isomorphically onto \( X \). Hence we may define a family of maps \( f_t : X \to \mathbb{P}^N \) by \( f_t := \hat{\phi} \circ (p_1 \circ \rho)|_{\tilde{X}_t}^{-1} \) for \( t \neq 0 \). In projective coordinates, we have
\[
f_t(x) = [s_H(x), ts_1(x), \cdots, ts_N(x)].\]
Denote by $S_t := f_t^*(T)$ the pull back of $T$ under $f_t$. Then $S_t \in |L^{\otimes m}|$ for all but finitely many $t$. In projective coordinates, let $F = F(z_0, \cdots, z_N)$ be a degree $m$ homogeneous polynomial such that $T = (F = 0)$. Expand $F$ as a polynomial of the single variable $z_0$ yields

$$F(z_0, z_1, \cdots, z_N) = F_0 z_0^m + F_1 z_0^{m-1} + \cdots + F_{m-1} z_0 + F_m,$$

where $F_i$ is a homogeneous polynomial in $z_1, \cdots, z_N$ of degree $i$ for $0 \leq i \leq m$. Then $S_t$ is the zero locus of the following section in $H^0(X, L^{\otimes m})$:

$$F(s_H, ts_1, \cdots, ts_N) = F_0 s_H^m + \sum_{i=1}^{m} F_i(s_1, \cdots, s_N)s_H^{m-i}t^i.$$

Since $T$ does not contain $\phi(v_0) = [1, 0, \cdots, 0]$, we have that $F_0 \neq 0$. For simplicity we may assume that $F$ is a monic polynomial in $z_0$, i.e. $F_0 = 1$. Thus for any $t \neq 0$ we have

$$S_t = \left( s_H^m + \sum_{i=1}^{m} F_i(s_1, \cdots, s_N)s_H^{m-i}t^i = 0 \right).$$

**Definition 10.** With the above notation, we say that $S \in |L^{\otimes m}|$ is a *generic small deformation* of $mH$, if $S$ is the zero locus of the section

$$s_H^m + \sum_{i=1}^{m} F_i(s_1, \cdots, s_N)s_H^{m-i}t^i$$

for generic choices of degree $i$ polynomials $F_i$ and for some $t \in \mathbb{A}^1 \setminus \{0\}$ with $|t| \leq \epsilon$, where $\epsilon = \epsilon(\{F_i\}) \in \mathbb{R}_{>0}$ depends on the choice of the $\{F_i\}$.

Notice that **Definition 10** does not depend on the choice of the basis $s_1, \cdots, s_N$.

From our constructions we see that $S_t$ is automatically a generic small deformation of $mH$ for $|t|$ sufficiently small.

**Proposition 11.** With the above notation, we have the following properties.

1. The variety $\mathcal{Y}$ is smooth.
2. The birational morphism $\psi_1 : \mathcal{Y} \to \mathcal{Y}$ is an isomorphism away from $\mu^{-1}(\hat{X}_0)$, where $\mu^{-1}(\hat{X}_0)$ is a disjoint union of $d$ isomorphic copies $\hat{X}_{0,i}, \cdots, \hat{X}_{0,d}$ of $\hat{X}_0$. Besides, $\psi_1$ contracts $\hat{X}_{0,i}$ to a point $q_i$ in $\mathcal{Y}$, with $\mu^{-1}(v_0) = \{q_1, \cdots, q_d\}$.
3. Let $Y_0 := \mu^{-1}(E)$. Then $\psi_1|_{Y_0} : Y_0 \to Y_0$ is birational. Besides, the irreducible components of $Y_0$ are $\mathcal{Y}_0, \hat{X}_{0,1}, \cdots, \hat{X}_{0,d}$.
4. For any $t \neq 0$, the fibers $Y_t$ and $Y_t$ are both isomorphic to the degree $d$ cyclic cover of $X$ branched along $S_t$, where $S_t$ is a generic small deformation of $mH$ for $|t|$ sufficiently small. Besides, $S_t$ is smooth for $t$ sufficiently small.

**Proof.**

1. Since $T$ satisfies $\circledast$, $\hat{\phi}^*(T)$ is smooth. Hence $\mathcal{Y}$ is smooth.
2. It follows from Proposition $\circledast$ $v_0 \notin \hat{\phi}^*(T)$ and its equivalent form $\hat{\phi}^*(T) \cap \hat{X}_0 = \emptyset$.
3. It follows from (2).
4. From our constructions we see that $(p_1 \circ \rho)|_{\hat{X}_t}$ maps $(\hat{X}_t, \hat{\phi}^*(T)|_{\hat{X}_t})$ isomorphically onto $(X, S_t)$, hence the first statement follows. Since $T$ satisfies $\circledast$, $\phi^*(T)$ intersects $X_0$...
transversally. In particular, $\phi^*(T)|_{X_0}$ is smooth. Hence $S_t \cong \tilde{\phi}^*(T)|_{\tilde{X}_t} \cong \phi^*(T)|_{X_t}$ is smooth for all but finitely many $t$, in particular for $|t|$ sufficiently small. □

3. Proofs of the Theorems

3.1. Hyperbolicity of cyclic covers of $\mathbb{P}^1$ and $\mathbb{A}^1$.

Firstly, let us look at the hyperbolicity of cyclic covers of $\mathbb{P}^1$.

Let $m, d \geq 2$ be positive integers such that $m$ is a multiple of $d$. Denote by $f : C \to \mathbb{P}^1$ the degree $d$ cyclic cover of $\mathbb{P}^1$ branched along an effective divisor $D$ of degree $m$. We may write

$$D = a_1p_1 + \cdots + a_l p_l,$$

where $p_1, \ldots, p_l \in \mathbb{P}^1$ are distinct closed points, and $\sum_i a_i = m$.

Let $f^\nu : C^\nu \to \mathbb{P}^1$ be the normalization of $f$. By the Riemann-Hurwitz formula, we have

$$\chi_{\text{top}}(C^\nu) = d \cdot \chi_{\text{top}}(\mathbb{P}^1) - \sum_{i=1}^l (d - \#(f^\nu)^{-1}(p_i)),$$

where $\chi_{\text{top}}(\cdot)$ is the topological Euler number. It is clear that $C$ is locally defined by the equation $y^d = x^{a_i}$ near $p_i$, so $\#(f^\nu)^{-1}(p_i) = \gcd(a_i, d)$. Hence

$$\chi_{\text{top}}(C^\nu) = 2d - \sum_{i=1}^l (d - \gcd(a_i, d)).$$

It is easy to see that $C^\nu$ is a disjoint union of $\gcd(d, a_1, \ldots, a_l)$ isomorphic copies of an irreducible smooth projective curve. Therefore, $C$ is Brody hyperbolic if and only if $\chi_{\text{top}}(C^\nu) < 0$.

Lemma 12. With the above notation, assume in addition that one of the following holds:

- $d$ is divisible by 2 or 3, and $l \geq \frac{m}{d} + 3$;
- $d$ is relatively prime to 6, and $l \geq \frac{m}{d} + 2$.

Then $\chi_{\text{top}}(C^\nu) < 0$, i.e. $C$ is Brody hyperbolic.

Proof. Assume to the contrary that $\chi_{\text{top}}(C^\nu) \geq 0$. Define an index set $J := \{j \mid 1 \leq j \leq l, a_j \text{ is not a multiple of } d\}$. Notice that $\gcd(a_i, d) \leq d/2$ if $a_i$ is not a multiple of $d$. So we have $\chi_{\text{top}}(C^\nu) < 0$ as soon as $\#J \geq 5$. Hence we only need to consider cases when $\#J \leq 4$. For simplicity, we may assume that $J = \{1, \ldots, \#J\}$.

After a careful study we get the following table, which illustrates all cases when $\chi_{\text{top}}(C^\nu) \geq 0$, i.e. when $C$ is not Brody hyperbolic, up to permutations of $a_1, \ldots, a_l$. 
With the above notation, assume in addition that Lemma 13.  

Let us identify $\mathbb{A}^1$ with $\mathbb{P}^1 \setminus \{\infty\}$. Denote $C^0 := f^{-1}(\mathbb{A}^1)$. If $D$ is supported away from $\infty$, then $C^0$ is the degree $d$ cyclic cover of $\mathbb{A}^1$ branched along an effective divisor $D$ of degree $m$. Since $\infty \in D$, we have $\#(f^\nu)^{-1}(\infty) = d$. Hence

$$
\chi_{\text{top}}((C^0)^\nu) = \chi_{\text{top}}(C^\nu) - d
$$

$$
= d - \sum_{i=1}^{l} (d - \gcd(a_i, d))
$$

It is easy to see that $(C^0)^\nu$ is a disjoint union of $\gcd(d, a_1, \ldots, a_l)$ isomorphic copies of an irreducible smooth affine curve. Therefore, $C^0$ is Brody hyperbolic if and only if $\chi_{\text{top}}((C^0)^\nu) < 0$.

**Lemma 13.** With the above notation, assume in addition that $D$ is supported away from $\infty$. Moreover, assume that one of the following holds:

- $d$ is even and $l \geq \frac{m}{d} + 2$;
- $d$ is odd and $l \geq \frac{m}{d} + 1$.

Then $\chi_{\text{top}}((C^0)^\nu) < 0$, i.e. $C^0$ is Brody hyperbolic.

**Proof.** Assume to the contrary that $\chi_{\text{top}}((C^0)^\nu) \geq 0$. Define an index set $J := \{j \mid 1 \leq j \leq l, a_j \text{ is not a multiple of } d\}$. Notice that $\gcd(a_j, d) \leq d/2$ if $a_j$ is not a multiple of $d$. So we have $\chi_{\text{top}}((C^0)^\nu) < 0$ as soon as $\#J \geq 3$. Hence we only need to consider cases when $\#J \leq 2$. For simplicity, we may assume that $J = \{1, \ldots, \#J\}$.

After a careful study we get the following table, which illustrates all cases when $\chi_{\text{top}}((C^0)^\nu) \geq 0$, i.e. when $C^0$ is not Brody hyperbolic, up to permutations of $a_1, \ldots, a_l$.

| $\#J$ | $\{a_1/d\}$ | $\{a_2/d\}$ | $\{a_3/d\}$ | $\{a_4/d\}$ | $C^\nu$ | $\gamma$ | $l \leq$ |
|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 0     | $p/q$       | $(q-p)/q$   | 0           | 0           | $\mathbb{P}^1$ | $d$     | $m/d$  |
| 2     | 1/2         | 1/3         | 1/6         | 0           | elliptic | $d/6$  | $m/d + 2$ |
| 3     | 1/2         | 2/3         | 5/6         | 0           | elliptic | $d/6$  | $m/d + 1$ |
| 3     | 1/2         | 1/4         | 1/4         | 0           | elliptic | $d/4$  | $m/d + 2$ |
| 3     | 1/2         | 3/4         | 3/4         | 0           | elliptic | $d/4$  | $m/d + 1$ |
| 3     | 1/3         | 1/3         | 1/3         | 0           | elliptic | $d/3$  | $m/d + 2$ |
| 3     | 2/3         | 2/3         | 2/3         | 0           | elliptic | $d/3$  | $m/d + 1$ |
| 4     | 1/2         | 1/2         | 1/2         | 1/2         | elliptic | $d/2$  | $m/d + 2$ |
| #/J | \( \{a_1/d\} \) | \( \{a_2/d\} \) | \((C^0)_{\gamma}^c \) | \( \gamma \) | \( l \leq \) |
|-----|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------|--------|
| 0   | 0              | 0              | \( A^1 \)      | \( d \) | \( m/d \) |
| 2   | 1/2            | 1/2            | \( A^1 \setminus \{0\} \) | \( d/2 \) | \( m/d + 1 \) |

**Table 2.** Cyclic covers of \( A^1 \) that are not hyperbolic

We use the following notation for Table 2. It is clear that \( #J \leq 2 \) if \( \chi_{\text{top}}((C^0)^c) \geq 0 \). Denote by \((C^0)_{\gamma}^c \) a connected component of \((C^0)^c \). Let \( \gamma := \gcd(d, a_1, \ldots, a_i) \) be the number of connected components of \((C^0)^c \). The fact that \( \gamma \) is always an integer gives certain divisibility condition on \( d \).

3.2. **Proofs.** To begin with, we will study the enumerative geometry problem of counting the intersections of a generic hypersurface with the generators of the projective cone \( \tilde{\phi}(E) \) (see also [Zai09, 1.3]).

A map \( \alpha : \mathbb{P}^1 \to E \) is called a ruling if it parametrizes a fiber of the \( \mathbb{P}^1 \)-bundle projection \( \rho_E : E \to H \). We say that \( \alpha \) corresponds to \( x \in H \) if \( \alpha \) parametrizes \( \tilde{\rho}_E(x) \).

**Lemma 14.** With the above notation, the following properties hold for a general hypersurface \( T \in |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)| \):

1. \( \phi(v_0) \) is not contained in \( T \);
2. For any ruling \( \alpha : \mathbb{P}^1 \to E \), \( (\tilde{\phi} \circ \alpha)^*(T) \) is supported at \( > (m-n) \) points.

**Proof.** Define \( |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|^0 := \{ T \in |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)| : \phi(v_0) \) is not contained in \( T \} \). Denote by \( \alpha_x : \mathbb{P}^1 \to E \) the ruling of \( E \) corresponding to \( x \in H \).

We define an incidence variety \( Z \) as

\[
Z := \{ (T, x) \in |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|^0 \times H : (\tilde{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^*(T) \text{ is supported at } \leq (m-n) \text{ points} \}.
\]

Denote the two projections from \( Z \) by \( pr_1 \) and \( pr_2 \). Let \( Z_x \) be the fiber of \( pr_2 : Z \to H \) over \( x \). Then

\[
Z_x \cong \{ T \in |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|^0 : (\tilde{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^*(T) \text{ is supported at } \leq (m-n) \text{ points} \}.
\]

By Proposition 8 8, \( (\tilde{\phi} \circ \alpha_x) \) parametrizes a line in \( \mathbb{P}^N \). Therefore, the rational map

\[
(\tilde{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^* : |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|^0 \to |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^1}(m)|
\]

is a projection between projective spaces. In particular, \( (\tilde{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^* : |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|^0 \to |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^1}(m)| \) is a flat morphism for any \( x \in H \).

Let \( W_k := \{ D \in |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^1}(m)| : D \text{ is supported at } \leq k \text{ points} \} \). Then \( \dim W_k = k \). It is clear that \( Z_x = ((\tilde{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^*)^{-1}(W_{m-n}) \), so

\[
\dim Z_x = \dim((\tilde{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^*)^{-1}(W_{m-n}) = \dim |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|_0^0 - \dim |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^1}(m)| + \dim W_{m-n} = \dim |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|_0^0 - n
\]

Hence \( \dim Z = \dim Z_x + \dim H = \dim |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|_0^0 - 1 \) for a general choice of \( x \), which implies that \( \dim pr_1(Z) \leq \dim |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|_0^0 - 1 \). Thus the map \( pr_1 \) is not surjective, which means that a general hypersurface \( T \in |\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|^0 \) will satisfy property (2). The lemma then follows automatically.\( \square \)
Since property \([*]\) holds for a general hypersurface \(T \in |O_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|\), Lemma 14 implies that the following property also holds for general \(T\).

\(\phi^*(T)\) is smooth, does not contain \(t_0\) and intersects \(X_0\) transversally. Besides, \((\phi \circ \alpha_x)^*(T)\) is supported at \(\geq (m - n + 1)\) points for any \(x \in H\).

From now on we always fix a general hypersurface \(T \in |O_{\mathbb{P}^N}(m)|\). Then we may assume that \(T\) satisfies \([**]\).

The following theorem is the main tool to prove Theorem 2.

**Theorem 15** ([Kob98, 3.11.1]). Let \(\pi : X \rightarrow R\) be a proper family of connected complex analytic spaces. If there is a point \(r_0 \in R\) such that the fiber \(X_{r_0}\) is Brody hyperbolic, then there exists an open neighborhood (in the Euclidean topology) \(U \subset R\) of \(r_0\) such that for each \(r \in U\), the fiber \(X_r\) is Brody hyperbolic.

We will prove the following theorem, a stronger result that implies Theorem 2.

**Theorem 16.** Let \(X\) be a smooth projective variety with \(\dim X = n\). Let \(L\) be a globally generated ample line bundle on \(X\). Suppose that there exists a smooth hypersurface \(H \subset |L|\) that is Brody hyperbolic. Let \(m, d \geq 2\) be positive integers such that \(m\) is a multiple of \(d\). For a generic small deformation \(S\) of \(mH \subset |L^\otimes m|\), let \(Y\) be the degree \(d\) cyclic cover of \(X\) branched along \(S\). Then \(Y\) is Brody hyperbolic if one of the following holds:

- \(d\) is divisible by 2 or 3, and \(m \geq d\lceil \frac{n+2}{d} \rceil\);
- \(d\) is relatively prime to 6, and \(m \geq d\lceil \frac{n+2}{d} \rceil\).

**Proof.** We first show that \(Y_0\) is Brody hyperbolic.

Proposition 11 implies that the birational morphism \(\psi|_{Y_0} : Y_0 \rightarrow Y_0\) induces an isomorphism between \(Y_0 \setminus (\tilde{X}_{0,1} \cup \cdots \cup \tilde{X}_{0,d})\) and \(Y_0 \setminus \{q_1, \cdots, q_d\}\). Therefore, it suffices to show that \(Y_0\) is Brody hyperbolic.

Define \(p_{Y_0} : Y_0 \rightarrow H\) to be the composition map \(Y_0 \rightarrow E \rightarrow H\). Since \(H\) is Brody hyperbolic, we only need to show that every fiber \(p_{Y_0}^{-1}(x)\) is Brody hyperbolic. It is clear that \(p_{Y_0}^{-1}(x)\) is the degree \(d\) cyclic cover of \(\rho^{-1}(x)\) branched along \(\phi^*(T)|_{\rho^{-1}(x)}\). Applying the pull back of a ruling \(\alpha_x\) yields that \(p_{Y_0}^{-1}(x) \cong C_x\), where \(C_x\) is the degree \(d\) cyclic cover of \(\mathbb{P}^1\) branched along \((\phi \circ \alpha_x)^*(T)\).

Let \(l_x := \#\text{Supp}((\phi \circ \alpha_x)^*(T))\). Since \(T\) satisfies \([**]\), \(l_x \geq m - n + 1\) for any \(x \in H\).

If \(d\) is divisible by 2 or 3, then \(m \geq d\lceil \frac{n+2}{d} \rceil \geq \frac{d}{d-1}(n+2)\). Hence \(l_x \geq m - n + 1 \geq m + 3\). If \(d\) is relatively prime to 6, then \(m \geq d\lceil \frac{n+1}{d} \rceil \geq \frac{n+1}{d-1}(n+1)\). Hence \(l_x \geq m - n + 1 \geq m + 2\). Then Lemma 12 implies that \(C_x\) is Brody hyperbolic.

Summing up, we always have that \(p_{Y_0}^{-1}(x) \cong C_x\) is Brody hyperbolic for any \(x \in H\). Therefore, \(Y_0\) is Brody hyperbolic.

We may apply Theorem 15 to the family \(\mathcal{Y} \rightarrow \mathbb{A}^1\) with \(r_0 = 0\). Thus \(Y_t\) is Brody hyperbolic for \(|t|\) sufficiently small. By Proposition 11, \(Y_t\) is isomorphic to the degree \(d\) cyclic cover of \(X\) branched along \(S_t\), where \(S_t\) is a generic small deformation of \(mH\) for \(|t|\) sufficiently small. The theorem then follows. \(\square\)
Next we give another deformation type theorem of hyperbolicity when the special fiber has multiple irreducible components. It will be used to prove Theorem 3. Note that some cases of Theorem 17 have already been used in [SZ05, Zai09].

**Theorem 17.** Let \( \pi : \mathcal{X} \rightarrow R \) be a proper family of connected complex analytic spaces over a nonsingular complex curve \( R \). Let \( r_0 \in R \) be a point. Denote the irreducible components of the fiber \( X_{r_0} \) by \( X_{r_0,1}, \ldots, X_{r_0,k} \). Suppose these data satisfy the following properties:

1. \( X_{r_0,i} \) is a Cartier divisor on \( \mathcal{X} \) for each \( 1 \leq i \leq k \);
2. For any partition of indices \( I \cup J = \{1, \ldots, k\} \), \( \bigcap_{i \in I} X_{r_0,i} \setminus \bigcup_{j \in J} X_{r_0,j} \) is Brody hyperbolic.

Then there exists an open neighborhood (in the Euclidean topology) \( U \subset R \) of \( r_0 \) such that for each \( r \in U \setminus \{r_0\} \), the fiber \( X_r \) is Brody hyperbolic.

**Proof.** Assume to the contrary that there exists a sequence of points \( \{r_n\} \) converging to \( r_0 \) such that \( X_{r_n} \) is not Brody hyperbolic for each \( n \). Then there is a complex line \( h_n : \mathbb{C} \rightarrow X_{r_n} \). By taking a subsequence of \( \{r_n\} \) if necessary, we may assume that \( \{h_n\} \) converges to a complex line \( h : \mathbb{C} \rightarrow X_{r_0} \). Then by applying the generalized Hurwitz theorem [Kob98, 3.6.11] to \( (\mathcal{X}, X_{r_0}) \), we have that

\[
h(\mathbb{C}) \subset \bigcap_{i \in I} X_{r_0,i} \setminus \bigcup_{j \in J} X_{r_0,j},
\]

where \( I = \{i : h(0) \in X_{r_0,i}\} \) and \( J = \{j : h(0) \notin X_{r_0,j}\} \). However, \( \bigcap_{i \in I} X_{r_0,i} \setminus \bigcup_{j \in J} X_{r_0,j} \) is Brody hyperbolic, we get a contradiction! \( \square \)

The following theorem is a stronger result that implies Theorem 3.

**Theorem 18.** With the notation of Theorem 17, assume in addition that \( X \setminus H \) is Brody hyperbolic. Then \( Y \) is Brody hyperbolic if one of the following holds:

- \( d \) is even and \( m \geq d\lfloor \frac{n+1}{d-1} \rfloor \);
- \( d \) is odd and \( m \geq d\lfloor \frac{n}{d-1} \rfloor \).

**Proof.** We first prove that \( \overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0 \setminus (\hat{X}_{0,1} \cup \cdots \cup \hat{X}_{0,d}) \) is Brody hyperbolic.

Consider the restriction of \( p_{\overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0} : \overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0 \rightarrow H \) on the open subset \( \overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0 \setminus (\hat{X}_{0,1} \cup \cdots \cup \hat{X}_{0,d}) \). Since \( H \) is Brody hyperbolic, we only need to show that \( p_{\overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0}^{-1}(x) \setminus (\hat{X}_{0,1} \cup \cdots \cup \hat{X}_{0,d}) \) is Brody hyperbolic for any \( x \in H \).

It is clear that \( \overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0 \) is the degree \( d \) cyclic cover of \( E \) branched along \( \hat{\phi}^*(T)|_E \), and \( \hat{X}_{0,1} \cup \cdots \cup \hat{X}_{0,d} = \hat{\mu}^{-1}(\hat{X}_0) \). Therefore, \( p_{\overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0}^{-1}(x) \setminus (\hat{X}_{0,1} \cup \cdots \cup \hat{X}_{0,d}) \) is the preimage of \( \rho_{E}^{-1}(x) \setminus \hat{X}_0 \) under the covering map \( p_{\overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0}^{-1}(x) \rightarrow \rho_{E}^{-1}(x) \). Applying the pull back of a ruling \( \alpha_x \) with \( \{\alpha_x(\infty)\} = \rho_{E}^{-1}(x) \cap \hat{X}_0 \) yields that \( p_{\overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0}^{-1}(x) \setminus (\hat{X}_{0,1} \cup \cdots \cup \hat{X}_{0,d}) \cong C^0_x \) (with the notation of Lemma 13 and Proof 3.2 because \( \hat{\phi} \circ \alpha_x \cdot T(x) \) is supported away from \( \infty \)).

Since \( T \) satisfies \( ** \), \( t_x \geq m - n + 1 \) for any \( x \in H \). If \( d \) is even, then \( m \geq d\lfloor \frac{n+1}{d-1} \rfloor \geq \frac{d}{d-1}(n+1) \). Hence \( t_x \geq m - n + 1 \geq \frac{m}{d} + 2 \). If \( d \) is odd, then \( m \geq d\lfloor \frac{n}{d-1} \rfloor \geq \frac{d}{d-1} \cdot n \). Hence \( t_x \geq m - n + 1 \geq \frac{m}{d} + 1 \). Then Lemma 13 implies that \( C^0_x \) is Brody hyperbolic.

Summing up, we always have that \( p_{\overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0}^{-1}(x) \setminus (\hat{X}_{0,1} \cup \cdots \cup \hat{X}_{0,d}) \cong C^0_x \) is Brody hyperbolic for any \( x \in H \). Therefore, \( \overline{\mathcal{Y}}_0 \setminus (\hat{X}_{0,1} \cup \cdots \cup \hat{X}_{0,d}) \) is Brody hyperbolic.
On the other hand, \( \tilde{X}_{0,i} \setminus \tilde{Y}_0 \) is isomorphic to \( \tilde{X}_0 \setminus E \), which is again isomorphic to \( X \setminus H \). Hence \( \tilde{X}_{0,i} \setminus \tilde{Y}_0 \) is Brody hyperbolic for any \( 1 \leq i \leq d \). We may apply Theorem 17 to the family \( \tilde{Y} \to \mathbb{A}^1 \) with \( r_0 = 0 \). Thus \( Y_t \) is Brody hyperbolic for \( |t| \) sufficiently small. By Proposition 11 \( Y_t \) is isomorphic to the degree \( d \) cyclic cover of \( X \) branched along \( S_t \), where \( S_t \) is a generic small deformation of \( mH \) for \( |t| \) sufficiently small. The theorem then follows. 

Finally, we apply our arguments to hyperbolicity of the complements. We first state a theorem which relates various notions of hyperbolicity of complements.

**Theorem 19** (Green [Gre77]; Howard [How]). Let \( X \) be a compact complex space. Let \( S \) be an effective Cartier divisor on \( X \). If both \( S \) and \( X \setminus S \) are Brody hyperbolic, then \( X \setminus S \) is complete hyperbolic and hyperbolically embedded in \( X \).

Next we give a deformation type theorem of hyperbolicity of complements of Cartier divisors, which will be used to prove Theorem 6.

**Theorem 20.** Let \( \pi : \mathcal{X} \to R \) be a proper family of connected complex analytic spaces. Let \( S \) be an effective Cartier divisor on \( X \). Assume that there is a point \( r_0 \in R \) satisfying the following properties:

1. Both \( S_{r_0} \) and \( X_{r_0} \setminus S_{r_0} \) are Brody hyperbolic.
2. \( S \) does not contain any irreducible component of \( X_{r_0} \).

Then there exists an open neighborhood (in the Euclidean topology) \( U \subset R \) of \( r_0 \) such that for each \( r \in U \), both \( S_r \) and \( X_r \setminus S_r \) are Brody hyperbolic.

**Proof.** Let \( U_r := X_r \setminus S_r \). Since \( S_{r_0} \) is Brody hyperbolic, Theorem 15 implies that \( S_r \) is Brody hyperbolic for \( r \) sufficiently close to \( r_0 \). Therefore, it suffices to show that \( U_r \) is Brody hyperbolic for \( r \) in a small neighborhood of \( r_0 \).

Assume to the contrary that there exists a sequence of points \( \{r_n\} \) converging to \( r_0 \) such that \( U_{r_n} \) is not Brody hyperbolic for each \( n \). Hence \( U_{r_n} \) is not hyperbolically embedded in \( X_{r_n} \). Then there is a limit complex line \( h_n : \mathbb{C} \to X_{r_n} \) coming from \( U_n \). By taking a subsequence of \( \{r_n\} \) if necessary, we may assume that \( \{h_n\} \) converges to a complex line \( h : \mathbb{C} \to X_{r_0} \). Then by applying the generalized Hurwitz theorem [Kob98, 3.6.11] to \((\mathcal{X}, S)\), \( h(\mathbb{C}) \) is either contained in \( S_{r_0} \) or \( U_{r_0} \). However, both \( S_{r_0} \) and \( U_{r_0} \) are Brody hyperbolic, we get a contradiction! \hfill \( \square \)

21 (Proof of Theorem 4). We first prove that \( X_0 \setminus \phi^*(T) \) is Brody hyperbolic.

It is clear that the birational morphism \( \psi : E \to X_0 \) induces an isomorphism between \( E \setminus \tilde{X}_0 \) and \( X_0 \setminus \{v_0\} \). Therefore, it suffices to show that \( E \setminus \hat{\phi}^*(T) \) is Brody hyperbolic.

Consider the restriction of \( \rho_E : E \to H \) on the open subset \( E \setminus \hat{\phi}^*(T) \). Since \( H \) is Brody hyperbolic, we only need to show that \( \rho^{-1}_E \cap (\hat{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^*(T) \) is Brody hyperbolic. Applying the pull back of a ruling \( \alpha_x \) yields that \( \rho^{-1}_E \cap (\hat{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^*(T) \cong \mathbb{P}^1 \setminus (\hat{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^*(T) \).

Since \( T \) satisfies \( \langle \star \rangle \) \( l_x \geq m - n + 1 \) for any \( x \in H \). Then the assumption \( m \geq n + 2 \) implies that \( l_x \geq 3 \). Hence \( \mathbb{P}^1 \setminus (\hat{\phi} \circ \alpha_x)^*(T) \) is Brody hyperbolic, which means that \( \rho^{-1}_E \setminus \hat{\phi}^*(T) \) is also Brody hyperbolic. Consequently, \( X_0 \setminus \phi^*(T) \) is Brody hyperbolic.

On the other hand, since \( \hat{\phi}^*(T) \) is disjoint from \( \tilde{X}_0 \), no fiber of \( \rho_E \) is contained in \( \hat{\phi}^*(T) \). Hence the restriction of \( \rho_E \) on \( \hat{\phi}^*(T) \) is a finite morphism onto \( H \). Then \( H \) being Brody
hyperbolic implies that $\phi^*(T)|_{X_0}$ is Brody hyperbolic. Recall that $\phi^*(T)|_{X_0} \cong \tilde{\phi}^*(T)|_E$, so $\phi^*(T)|_{X_0}$ is also Brody hyperbolic.

So far we have shown that both $\phi^*(T)|_{X_0}$ and $X_0 \setminus \phi^*(T)$ are Brody hyperbolic. Applying Theorem 20 to the family $X \to \mathbb{A}^1$ with $S = \phi^*(T)$ and $r_0 = 0$ yields that both $\phi^*(T)|_{X_1}$ and $X_1 \setminus \phi^*(T)$ are Brody hyperbolic for $|t|$ sufficiently small. Since $(X_t, \phi^*(T)|_{X_t})$ is isomorphic to $(X, S_t)$, both $S_t$ and $X \setminus S_t$ are Brody hyperbolic for $|t|$ sufficiently small.

By Proposition 11, $S_t$ is a generic small deformation of $mH$ for $|t|$ sufficiently small. The first statement of the theorem then follows. The last statement follows directly from Theorem 19.

4. Applications and Examples

4.1. Hypersurfaces in $\mathbb{P}^n$.

Let us introduce some notation to describe the moduli spaces of hypersurfaces in $\mathbb{P}^n$ with various hyperbolic conditions.

- Let $\mathbb{P}_{n,\delta}$ be the projective space of dimension $\binom{n+\delta}{n} - 1$ whose points parametrizes hypersurfaces of degree $\delta$ in $\mathbb{P}^n$.
- Let $H_{n,\delta} \subset \mathbb{P}_{n,\delta}$ be the subset corresponding to Brody hyperbolic hypersurfaces.
- Denote by $HE_{n,\delta}$ the subset of $\mathbb{P}_{n,\delta}$ consisting of the hypersurfaces of degree $\delta$ in $\mathbb{P}^n$ with hyperbolically embedded complements.

The following theorem (which essentially implies Theorem 3) produces Brody hyperbolic hypersurfaces that are cyclic covers of $\mathbb{P}^n$.

**Theorem 22.** Let $k, \delta$ be positive integers such that $\delta$ is a multiple of $k$. Suppose one of the following conditions holds.

1. $H_{n,k}$ is non-empty and $\delta \geq (n + 3)k$;
2. $HE_{n,k} \cap H_{n,k}$ is non-empty and $\delta \geq (n + 2)k$.

Then there exists a Brody hyperbolic smooth hypersurface $W$ of degree $\delta$ in $\mathbb{P}^{n+1}$, such that $W$ is a cyclic cover of $\mathbb{P}^n$ under some linear projection.

**Proof.**

(1) Choose a smooth hypersurface $D \in H_{n,k}$. Let $d := \delta/k$. For any $d \geq n + 3$, apply Theorem 2 to $(X, L, H, d, m) := (\mathbb{P}^n, \mathcal{O}(k), D, d, d)$, which yields that there exists a degree $d$ cyclic cover $Y$ of $\mathbb{P}^n$ branched along a smooth hypersurface $S$ of degree $\delta$ such that $Y$ is Brody hyperbolic. Let $W$ be the degree $\delta$ cyclic cover of $\mathbb{P}^n$ branched along $S$. Then $W \to Y$ is a finite surjective morphism. Thus $Y$ being Brody hyperbolic implies that $W$ is also Brody hyperbolic.

(2) Choose a smooth hypersurface $D \in HE_{n,k} \cap H_{n,k}$. Let $d := \delta/k$. For any $d \geq n + 2$, apply Theorem 3 to $(X, L, H, d, m) := (\mathbb{P}^n, \mathcal{O}(k), D, d, d)$. The rest of the proof is the same as (1).

Next, we give a new proof to [Zai09, 1.1] using Mori’s degeneration method.

**Theorem 23 (Zaidenberg [Zai09]).** Let $X = (F(z_0, \cdots, z_n) = 0)$ be a Brody hyperbolic hypersurface of degree $k$ in $\mathbb{P}^n$ ($n \geq 2$). We may realize $\mathbb{P}^n$ as the hyperplane $(z_{n+1} = 0)$ in $\mathbb{P}^{n+1}$. Denote by $C(X) := (F(z_0, \cdots, z_n) = 0) \subset \mathbb{P}^{n+1}$ the projective cone over $X$. Let $dC(X) := (F^d = 0) \subset \mathbb{P}^{n+1}$ be the $d$-th thickening of $C(X)$ where $d \geq 2$ is a positive...
integer. Then a generic small deformation of $dC(X)$ (in the sense of [Zai09]) is Brody hyperbolic. In particular, $H_{n,k} \neq \emptyset$ implies that $H_{n+1,dk} \neq \emptyset$ for $d \geq 2$.

**Proof.** Firstly, let us recall Mori’s degeneration method from [Mor75].

Let $\mathbb{P}(1^{n+2}, k)$ be a weighted projective space of dimension $(n + 2)$ with coordinates $z_0, \cdots, z_{n+1}, w$. Let $G$ be a general homogeneous polynomial of degree $dk$ in $z_0, \cdots, z_{n+1}$. Consider the family of complete intersections

$$Y_t := \left(tw - F(z_0, \cdots, z_n) = w^d - G(z_0, \cdots, z_{n+1}) = 0\right) \subset \mathbb{P}(1^{n+2}, k).$$

For $t \neq 0$ we can eliminate $w$ to obtain a degree $dk$ smooth hypersurface

$$Y_t \cong \left(F^d(z_0, \cdots, z_n) = t^dG(z_0, \cdots, z_{n+1})\right) \subset \mathbb{P}^{n+1}.$$  

For $t = 0$ we see that $O_{Y_0}(1)$ is not very ample but realizes $Y_0$ as a degree $d$ cyclic cover

$$h : Y_0 \to C(X) = (F(z_0, \cdots, z_n) = 0) \subset \mathbb{P}^{n+1}$$

of $C(X)$ branched along $(F = G = 0)$.

Next, we will show that $Y_0$ is Brody hyperbolic. Let us fix a general homogeneous polynomial $G$ from now on. By Lemma [14] a general hypersurface $T := (G = 0)$ satisfies that $T$ does not contain the vertex $[0, \cdots, 0, 1]$ of $C(X)$, and that

$$#(T \cap \ell) \geq dk - n$$

for any generator $\ell$ of $C(X)$. Applying Lemma [12] to $(d, m, l) := (d, dk, #(T \cap \ell))$ yields that $h^{-1}(\ell)$ is Brody hyperbolic if $#(T \cap \ell) \geq k + 3$. Since $X$ is a Brody hyperbolic hypersurface of degree $d$ in $\mathbb{P}^n$ with $n \geq 2$, it is clear that $k \geq n + 3$. Hence

$$#(T \cap \ell) \geq dk - n \geq k + 3.$$

Thus $h^{-1}(\ell)$ is Brody hyperbolic, which together with $X$ being Brody hyperbolic implies that $Y_0$ is Brody hyperbolic.

Finally, Theorem [15] implies that $Y_t$ is Brody hyperbolic for $|t|$ sufficiently small. Hence we prove the theorem. $\square$

The following theorem is an improvement of [Zai92, p. 147, Corollary of Theorem II.2], where they assumed $\delta \geq (2n + 1)k$ (without assuming $\delta$ being a multiple of $k$).

**Theorem 24.** If $H_{n,k}$ is non-empty, then $HE_{n,\delta} \cap H_{n,\delta}$ is a non-empty open subset of $\mathbb{P}_{n,\delta}$ (in the Euclidean topology) for any $\delta \geq (n+2)k$ with $\delta$ being a multiple of $k$.

**Proof.** Let $m = \delta/k \geq n + 2$. Apply Theorem [6] to $X = \mathbb{P}^n$, $L = O_{\mathbb{P}^n}(k)$, $H \in H_{n,k}$ yields that both $S$ and $\mathbb{P}^n \setminus S$ are Brody hyperbolic for a generic small deformation $S$ of $mH \in |O_{\mathbb{P}^n}(\delta)|$. Theorem [19] implies that $S \subset HE_{n,\delta} \cap H_{n,\delta}$ for any generic small deformation $S$ of $mH$, hence $HE_{n,\delta} \cap H_{n,\delta}$ is non-empty. The openness of $HE_{n,\delta} \cap H_{n,\delta}$ follows from Theorem [19] and [20]. $\square$

4.2. **Surfaces.**

The following theorem provides new examples of hyperbolic surfaces in $\mathbb{P}^3$ of minimal degree 15.

**Theorem 25.** Let $\delta = d \cdot k$ be the product of two positive integers $d \geq 3$, $k \geq 5$. Then there exists a smooth Brody hyperbolic surface $X_\delta$ of degree $\delta$ in $\mathbb{P}^3$ that is a cyclic cover of $\mathbb{P}^2$ under some linear projection.
Proof. According to [Zai89], for any $k \geq 5$ there exists a smooth curve $D$ in $\mathbb{P}^2$ of degree $k$ with $\mathbb{P}^2 \setminus D$ being Brody hyperbolic. Then the proof is along the same line as of Theorem 22 (2), except that we apply Theorem 18 instead of Theorem 3 when $d = 3$. □

Next, we prove Theorem 5.

Theorem 26 (=Theorem 5). Let $l \geq 3$, $k \geq 5$ be two positive integers. Let $D$ be a smooth plane curve of degree $k$ such that $\mathbb{P}^2 \setminus D$ is Brody hyperbolic. (The existence of such $D$ was shown by Zaidenberg in [Zai89].) Let $S$ be a generic small deformation of $2lD$. Then the double cover of $\mathbb{P}^2$ branched along $S$ is Brody hyperbolic.

Proof. Apply Theorem 3 to $(\mathbb{P}^2, \mathcal{O}(k), D, 2, 2l)$. □

Example 27. Let $(X_0, L_0)$ be a primitively polarized K3 surface of degree $2l$ for $l \in \mathbb{Z}_{>0}$. For any $m \geq 4$, denote by $M_0 := L_0^m$. Pick a general member $H \in |L_0|$, then $H$ is smooth and $g(H) \geq 2$. Let $S_0$ be a generic small deformation of $mH$ that is smooth. Then Theorem 6 implies that $S_0$ and $X_0 \setminus S_0$ are both Brody hyperbolic.

There exists a deformation $(X, M)$ of $(X_0, M_0)$ over $\Delta$ such that $(X_t, M_t)$ is a primitively polarized K3 surface of degree $2lm^2$ for $t \in \Delta \setminus \{0\}$. It is clear that $h^0(X_t, M_t)$ does not depend on the choice of $t$ in $\Delta$. Hence Grauert’s theorem implies that $\pi_*M$ is a locally free sheaf on $\Delta$, where $\pi : \mathcal{X} \to \Delta$ is the projection map. In other words, $\{H^0(X_t, M_t)\}_{t \in \Delta}$ forms a holomorphic vector bundle over $\Delta$. Now we may deform $S_0$ to a family of divisors $S_t \in |M_t|$ for $|t|$ sufficiently small. By choosing a generic deformation, we may assume that $S_t$ is smooth for $|t|$ sufficiently small. Hence Theorem 20 implies that both $S_t$ and $X_t \setminus S_t$ are Brody hyperbolic for $|t|$ sufficiently small. Moreover, $X_t \setminus S_t$ is complete hyperbolic and hyperbolically embedded in $X_t$ by Theorem 19.

As a consequence, for any $l \geq 1$ and $m \geq 4$ there exists a primitively polarized K3 surface $(X, M)$ of degree $2lm^2$ and a smooth curve $S \in |M|$, such that $X \setminus S$ is complete hyperbolic and hyperbolically embedded in $X$. Notice that the minimal degree of $(X, M)$ is 32.

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