

# Lecture 6: Isoperimetric sets of large volume on spaces with nonnegative Ricci curvature and Euclidean volume growth

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# Main result

Let  $(M^n, g)$  be a **smooth** Riemannian manifold satisfying:

- ▶  $\text{Ric}_g \geq 0$ ;
- ▶  $\text{AVR}(g) > 0$ , where

$$\text{AVR}(g) := \lim_{r \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{Vol}_g(B_r(x))}{\omega_n r^n} .$$

Theorem (Antonelli-B.-Fogagnolo-Pozzetta)

If  $(M^n, g)$  satisfies a further *assumption on the structure at infinity*, then for any  $V > \bar{V}$  there exists an isoperimetric region of volume  $V$ .

Corollary (Antonelli-B.-Fogagnolo-Pozzetta)

Let  $(M^n, g)$  be a manifold with  $\text{Sec}_g \geq 0$  and Euclidean volume growth. Then for any  $V > \bar{V}$  there exists an isoperimetric region of volume  $V$ .

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# Plan of the talk

- ▶ Isoperimetric sets on non-smooth manifolds: lack of compactness and loss of mass
- ▶ The **assumption on the structure at infinity**
  - ▶ Motivation
  - ▶ Equivalent characterization
- ▶ Strategy of proof
- ▶ Open problems and related questions

# Isoperimetric problem, non compact ambient space

- ▶ The family of sets with uniformly bounded mass and perimeter is not compact in  $L^1_{\text{loc}}$ .
- ▶ **Enemy to existence:** Minimizing sequences may lose mass at infinity.
- ▶ **Key tool:** Generalized existence of isoperimetric sets.
- ▶ **Moral:** Isoperimetric sets exist whenever escaping to infinity is not “isoperimetrically convenient”.

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# Structure at infinity

- ▶ **Tangent cones at infinity:** Consider limit points of

$$\left( M, \frac{d_g}{R_k}, \frac{\text{Vol}_g}{R_k^n}, x \right) \xrightarrow{pmGH} (X, d_X, \mathcal{H}_X^n, x), \quad R_k \rightarrow \infty.$$

- ▶ **Pointed limits at infinity:** Let  $x_k \rightarrow \infty$ , consider limits

$$(M, d_g, \text{Vol}_g, x_k) \xrightarrow{pmGH} (Y, \rho, \mathcal{H}_Y^n, y).$$

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# Tangent cones are metric cones

Let  $(X, d_X, \mathcal{H}_X^n, x)$  be a tangent cone at infinity of  $(M^n, g)$ .

► Volume rigidity:

$$\mathcal{H}_X^n(B_r(x)) = \text{AVR}(g)\omega_n r^n, \quad \text{for every } r > 0.$$

► Volume cone implies metric cone: There exists  $(Z, d_Z, \mathcal{H}_Z^{n-1})$ , an  $\text{RCD}(n-1, n-2)$  m.m.s., such that

$$(X, d_X, x) \simeq (C(Z), d_C, O), \quad O \text{ is a tip point.}$$

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# The isoperimetric problem on cones

## Theorem (Antonelli-Pasqualetto-Pozzetta-Semola)

Let  $C(Z)$  be a metric cone over an  $\text{RCD}(n-1, n-2)$  m.m.s.  $(Z, d_Z, \mathcal{H}_Z^{n-1})$ . Then,  $E$  is an isoperimetric set in  $C(Z)$  iff it coincides with a ball centered at a tip point.

## Proof.

- ▶ Let  $O \in C(Z)$  a tip point, then  $B_r(O)$  saturates the sharp isoperimetric inequality for any  $r > 0$ . Hence  $E := B_r(O)$  is an isoperimetric set.
- ▶ If  $E \subset C(Z)$  is isoperimetric, then it saturates the sharp isoperimetric inequality. We can apply the rigidity in the isoperimetric inequality in  $\text{RCD}(0, N)$  spaces [Antonelli-Pasqualetto-Pozzetta-Semola '22].



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# The isoperimetric problem on cones

- ▶ **Uniqueness:** Isoperimetric sets are unique iff there exists a unique tip point  $O \in C(Z)$ .

Uniqueness of the tip point iff  $C(Z)$  does not split any line.

- ▶  **$\varepsilon$ -Stability:** If  $C(Z)$  does not split any line, then isoperimetric sets are stable.

- ▶ **Second variation:** Pick  $B_1(O)$ , consider the perturbation

$$u \in C_0(Z) \rightarrow \Sigma_u := \{(u(z) + 1, z) : z \in Z\} \subset C(Z).$$

The second variation of  $u \rightarrow \text{Per}(\Sigma_u)$  gives the Jacobi operator

$$u \rightarrow \mathcal{L}_Z u := -\Delta_Z u - (n-1)u.$$

- ▶ **Rigidity in Obata's theorem:** If  $C(Z)$  does not split, then  $\mathcal{L}_Z \geq \varepsilon$  for some  $\varepsilon > 0$ .

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# What we have seen so far

Let  $(M^n, g)$  satisfy  $\text{Ric}_g \geq 0$  and  $\text{AVR}(g) > 0$ .

- ▶ **Tangent cone at infinity:** At big scales,  $(M, d_g, \text{Vol}_g)$  is GH-close to an  $\text{RCD}(0, n)$  cone;
- ▶ **Isoperimetric problem on cones:** Tangent cones at infinity to  $M$  admit a unique and  $\varepsilon$ -stable isoperimetric set for each volume  $V > 0$ , provided they do not split a line.

## Theorem (Perturbation, rough)

*Fix  $\varepsilon > 0$ . If at any sufficiently big scale  $(M, g)$  is close to a model space admitting  $\varepsilon$ -stable isoperimetric sets of each volume, then  $(M, g)$  admits isoperimetric regions of big volume.*

Assumption on the structure at infinity

No tangent cone at infinity splits a line.

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### Assumption on the structure at infinity

No tangent cone at infinity splits a line.

# Assumption on the structure at infinity

Write  $M^n = N^{n-k} \times \mathbb{R}^k$ , for some  $k \leq n$ , where  $N$  does not split any line.

Assumption on the structure at infinity

No tangent cone at infinity to  $N$  splits a line.

Topogonov's theorem implies the following.

**Lemma**

*If  $M^n = N^{n-k} \times \mathbb{R}^k$  satisfies  $\text{Sec}_g \geq 0$  and  $\text{AVR}(g) > 0$ , then the tangent cone at infinity to  $N$  is unique and does not split any line.*

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# Main result

## Theorem (Antonelli-B.-Fogagnolo-Pozzetta)

Let  $(M^n, g)$  be a manifold with  $Ric \geq 0$  and *Euclidean volume growth*, i.e.

$$\lim_{r \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{Vol}_g(B_r(x))}{\omega_n r^n} = \text{AVR}(g) \in (0, 1).$$

Write  $M^n = N^{n-k} \times \mathbb{R}^k$ ,  $0 \leq k < n$  where  $N^{n-k}$  does not split any line, and assume that *no tangent cone at infinity to  $N^{n-k}$  splits a line*.

Then for any  $V > \bar{V}$  there exists an isoperimetric region of volume  $V$ .

“If all the models at infinity of  $N$  have  $\varepsilon$ -stable isoperimetric sets, then  $(M, g)$  admits isoperimetric sets of big volume”.

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$$\lim_{r \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\text{Vol}_g(B_r(x))}{\omega_n r^n} = \text{AVR}(g) \in (0, 1).$$

Write  $M^n = N^{n-k} \times \mathbb{R}^k$ ,  $0 \leq k < n$  where  $N^{n-k}$  does not split any line, and assume that *no tangent cone at infinity to  $N^{n-k}$  splits a line*.

Then for any  $V > \bar{V}$  there exists an isoperimetric region of volume  $V$ .

“If all the models at infinity of  $N$  have  $\varepsilon$ -stable isoperimetric sets, then  $(M, g)$  admits isoperimetric sets of big volume”.

# Characterization in terms of pointed limits at infinity

Definition (Pointed limits to infinity)

$$\mathcal{F}_\infty(M, g) := \{(Y, \rho, \mathcal{H}_Y^n, y) : "x_k \rightarrow y''\},$$

i.e.  $\mathcal{F}_\infty(M, g)$  is the collection of pmGH-limits

$$(M, d_g, \text{Vol}_g, x_k) \xrightarrow{\text{pmGH}} (Y, \rho, \mathcal{H}_Y^n, y), \quad \text{where } x_k \rightarrow \infty.$$



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# Assumption II

Assume for simplicity that  $M$  does not split any line.

## Assumption II

There exists  $\varepsilon > 0$  such that

$$\text{AVR}(Y) \geq \text{AVR}(g) + \varepsilon \quad \forall (Y, \rho, \mathcal{H}_Y^n) \in \mathcal{F}_\infty(M, g).$$

$$\text{AVR}(Y) := \lim_{r \rightarrow \infty} \frac{\mathcal{H}_Y^n(B_r(y))}{\omega_n r^n}.$$

## Proposition

If no tangent cone at infinity of  $M$  splits a line, then **Assumption II** is satisfied.

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- ▶ Let  $y_k \in M$ ,  $y_k \rightarrow \infty$  such that

$$(M, d_g, \text{Vol}_g, y_k) \xrightarrow{\text{pmGH}} (Y, \rho, \mathcal{H}_Y^n, y), \quad k \rightarrow \infty.$$

Fix  $x \in M$ , set  $R_k := d(y_k, x)$ , up to subsequence

$$\left( M, \frac{d_g}{R_k}, \frac{\text{Vol}_g}{R_k^n}, x \right) \xrightarrow{\text{pmGH}} (C(Z), d_{C(Z)}, \mathcal{H}_{C(Z)}^n, O), \quad y_k \rightarrow y_\infty \in C(Z).$$

Notice that  $d_{C(Z)}(y_\infty, O) = 1$ , hence  $y_\infty$  is not a tip point.

- ▶ Volume monotonicity:

$$\lim_{r \rightarrow 0} \frac{\mathcal{H}_{C(Z)}^n(B_r(y_\infty))}{\omega_n r^n} \leq \text{AVR}(Y).$$

- ▶ Cone splitting, Gromov's compactness theorem: there exists  $\varepsilon > 0$  such that, for any tangent cone at infinity  $(C(Z), O)$  it holds

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# Ingredients of proof

- ▶ Generalized existence theorem
- ▶ Concavity of the isoperimetric profile
- ▶ Sharp Isoperimetric inequality on  $\text{RCD}(0, N)$  spaces

## Strategy of proof

Fix  $V > 0$ . Let  $E_k \subset M$  be a minimizing sequence of volume  $V$ .

### Theorem (Generalized existence)

*There exist  $(Y_1, \rho_1, y_1), \dots, (Y_m, \rho_m, y_m)$ , pointed limits at infinity, and isoperimetric sets*

$$E^0 \subset M, \quad E^1 \subset Y_1, \dots, E^m \subset Y_m,$$

*such that*

$$E_k \rightarrow E^0 \cup E^1 \cup \dots \cup E^m \quad \text{in } L^1 \text{ as } k \rightarrow \infty.$$

*Moreover*

$$|E^0| + |E^1| + \dots + |E^m| = V,$$

*and*

$$\text{Per}(E^0) + \text{Per}(E^1) + \dots + \text{Per}(E^m) \leq I_M(V).$$

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# Concavity of the isoperimetric profile

## Theorem (Antonelli-B.-Fogagnolo-Pozzetta)

If  $(M^n, g)$  is *non-collapsed* and  $\text{Ric} \geq 0$  then  $I_M^{\frac{n}{n-1}}$  is concave. In particular  $I_M$  is strictly subadditive.

$$I_M(V) \leq I_M(|E^0|) + \dots + I_M(|E^m|) \leq \text{Per}(E^0) + \dots + \text{Per}(E^m) \leq I_M(V)$$

## Corollary

There exists  $0 \leq i \leq m$  such that  $E^j = \emptyset$  for  $j \neq i$ .

[Bavard, Pansu '86], [Bayle '03], [Mondino, Nardulli '16], [Antonelli, B., Fogagnolo, Pozzetta '21].

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- ▶ If  $i = 0$ , then we have done
- ▶ If not, we assume wlog  $E_k \rightarrow E^1 \subset Y_1$ . We have

$$|E^1| = V, \quad \text{Per}(E^1) \leq I_M(V).$$

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$$\text{Per}(E^1) \geq n \omega_n^{\frac{1}{n}} \text{AVR}(Y_1)^{\frac{1}{n}} |E_1|^{\frac{n-1}{n}} = n \omega_n^{\frac{1}{n}} \text{AVR}(Y_1)^{\frac{1}{n}} V^{\frac{n-1}{n}}.$$

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[Kasue and Washio, '90]: there exists a metric  $g$  on  $\mathbb{R}^n$ ,  $n \geq 4$  such that:

- ▶  $\text{Ric}_g \geq 0$  and  $(\mathbb{R}^n, g)$  does not split any line;
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- ▶  $(\mathbb{R}^n, g)$  has Euclidean volume growth and the tangent cone at infinity is  $\mathbb{R} \times C(S_r^{n-2})$ ;
- ▶  $(\mathbb{R}^n, g)$  does not satisfy our assumption;
- ▶  $(\mathbb{R}^n, g)$  admits isoperimetric regions of any volume.

## Question

Does any manifold with nonnegative Ricci curvature and Euclidean volume growth admit isoperimetric regions of large volume?

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- ▶ How do they relate to cross-sections of cones at infinity?
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