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12.2 PROOF OF THEOREM 12.4

LEMMA 12.5. *Let (Γ, d_Γ) be an \mathbf{R} -forest. Let ψ be a weakly bi-Lipschitz forest-map of (Γ, d_Γ) . Let (K_ψ, f, σ_t) be the mapping-telescope of (ψ, Γ) , equipped with a structure of forest-stack as defined in Section 2. Then the semi-flow $(\sigma_t)_{t \in \mathbf{R}^+}$ is a bounded-cancellation and bounded-dilatation semi-flow with respect to any horizontal d_Γ -metric (see Lemma 12.1).*

Proof. The horizontal metric \mathcal{H} agrees with the metric d_Γ on all the strata $f^{-1}(n)$, $n \in \mathbf{Z}$ (see Lemma 12.1). Consider any horizontal geodesic g in the stratum $f^{-1}(0)$. If ψ is weakly bi-Lipschitz with constants μ_0 and K_0 , then for any integer $n \geq 0$, we have $|[g]_n|_n \geq \frac{1}{\mu_0^n} |g|_0 - K_0 \left(\frac{1}{\mu_0^{n-1}} + \frac{1}{\mu_0^{n-2}} + \dots + 1 \right)$. Since $0 < \frac{1}{\mu_0} < 1$, the sum tends to $\frac{\mu_0}{\mu_0 - 1}$ as $n \rightarrow +\infty$. Setting $\lambda_- = \frac{1}{\mu_0}$ and $K = K_0 \frac{\mu_0}{\mu_0 - 1}$, this proves the inequality of item (1) for horizontal geodesics in $f^{-1}(n)$, $n \in \mathbf{Z}$, and an integer time t . For the case in which t is any positive real number and $g \in f^{-1}(r)$, r any real number, just decompose $\sigma_t = \sigma_{t-E[t]} \circ \sigma_{E[t]-(E[r]+1-r)} \circ \sigma_{E[r]+1-r}$. The map σ_t is a homeomorphism from $f^{-1}(r)$ onto $f^{-1}(r+t)$ for any $t \in [0, E[r]+1-r]$. That is, for any real r , $|[g]_{r+t}|_{r+t} = |\sigma_t(g)|_{r+t}$ for $t \in [0, E[r]+1-r]$. The monotonicity of the maps $l_{r,g}$ (see Lemma 12.1, item (2)) implies, for any r and $t \in [0, E[r]+1-r]$, that $|\sigma_t(g)|_{r+t} \geq \frac{1}{\mu_0} |g|_r$. The conclusion follows. \square

LEMMA 12.6. *With the assumptions and notation of Lemma 12.5, if the map ψ is a (strongly) hyperbolic forest-map of (Γ, d_Γ) then the semi-flow $(\sigma_t)_{t \in \mathbf{R}^+}$ is (strongly) hyperbolic with respect to any horizontal d_Γ -metric.*

The proof is similar to that of Lemma 12.5. \square

Proof of Theorem 12.4. By Lemmas 12.5 and 12.6, a mapping-telescope admits a structure of forest-stack $(\tilde{X}, f, \sigma_t, \mathcal{H})$ with horizontal metric \mathcal{H} such that the semi-flow $(\sigma_t)_{t \in \mathbf{R}^+}$ is a strongly hyperbolic semi-flow with respect to \mathcal{H} . Hence Theorem 4.4 implies Theorem 12.4. \square

13. ABOUT MAPPING-TORUS GROUPS

We first recall the definition of a *hyperbolic endomorphism* of a group introduced by Gromov [19].

DEFINITION 13.1 ([19], [3]). An injective endomorphism α of the rank n free group F_n is hyperbolic if there exist $\lambda_\alpha > 1$ and $j_\alpha > 0$ such that for any $w \in F_n$, either $\lambda_\alpha |w| \leq |\alpha^{j_\alpha}(w)|$ or w admits a preimage $\alpha^{-j_\alpha}(w)$ such that $\lambda_\alpha |w| \leq |\alpha^{-j_\alpha}(w)|$, where $|\cdot|$ denotes the usual word-metric.

We recall that a subgroup H in a group G is *malnormal* if $w^{-1}Hw \cap H = \{1\}$ for any element $w \notin H$ of G . We state our theorem about mapping-torus groups as follows:

THEOREM 13.2. *Let α be an injective hyperbolic endomorphism of the rank n free group F_n . If the image of α is a malnormal subgroup of F_n then the mapping-torus group $G_\alpha = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n, t ; t^{-1}x_i t = \alpha(x_i), i = 1, \dots, n \rangle$ is a hyperbolic group.*

13.1 RELATIONSHIPS WITH MAPPING-TELESCOPES

We consider the rank n free group $F_n = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n \rangle$. Let α be an injective endomorphism of F_n . Let $G_\alpha = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n, t ; t^{-1}x_i t = \alpha(x_i), i = 1, \dots, n \rangle$ be the mapping-torus group of (α, F_n) . We consider the Cayley graph Γ associated to the given system of generators. Let l be a loop in Γ whose associated word in the edges of Γ reads a relation $t^{-1}x_i t \alpha(x_i)^{-1}$. We attach a 2-cell by its boundary circle along any such loop l . The resulting topological space is a 2-complex. This is the Cayley complex of the mapping-torus group G_α for the given presentation.

Let us check that the above Cayley complex is a mapping-telescope of a forest-map. We consider the rose \mathcal{R}_n with n petals. We label each edge by a generator x_i of F_n . We denote by ψ the simplicial map on \mathcal{R}_n such that $\psi(x_i)$ is a locally injective path whose associated word in the edges of \mathcal{R}_n reads $\alpha(x_i)$. Let us denote by T the universal covering of \mathcal{R}_n (T is a tree) and by $\pi: T \rightarrow \mathcal{R}_n$ the associated covering-map. We denote by $\widehat{\psi}: T \rightarrow T$ a simplicial lift of ψ to T , that is $\pi \circ \widehat{\psi} = \psi \circ \pi$. We consider the mapping-torus of (ψ, \mathcal{R}_n) , i.e. the 2-complex $\mathcal{R}_n \times [0, 1]/(x, 1) \sim (\psi(x), 0)$. Then the universal covering of this mapping-torus is the mapping-telescope of $\widetilde{\psi}: F \rightarrow F$, where F and $\widetilde{\psi}$ are defined as follows:

- We denote by I the set of integers from 1 to $\text{Card}(F_n / \text{Im}(\alpha))$. The different classes are written $w_i \text{Im}(\alpha)$, $i = 0, 1, \dots$. We denote by $\gamma: I \rightarrow \{w_0, w_1, \dots\}$ the bijection. Then the connected components of F are in bijection with $\mathbf{N}^{\text{Card}(I)}$. Each connected component is the image, by a

bijection μ , of a sequence of $\text{Card}(I)$ integers. Each connected component $\mu(x_0, x_1, \dots)$ of F is homeomorphic to T via $\beta_{(x_0, x_1, \dots)}: \mu(x_0, x_1, \dots) \rightarrow T$.

- We define the restriction of $\tilde{\psi}$ to any connected component $\mu((x_0, x_1, \dots))$ as follows :

If $\text{Card}(I) < +\infty$ then

$$\tilde{\psi}|_{\mu((x_0, x_1, \dots))}: \begin{cases} \mu((x_0, x_1, \dots)) & \rightarrow \mu(E[\frac{x_0}{\text{Card}(I)}], x_1, \dots) \\ x & \rightarrow (\gamma(j)\beta_{(x_0, x_1, \dots)}^{-1}\hat{\psi}\beta_{(x_0, x_1, \dots)})(x) \end{cases}$$

where $j < \text{Card}(I)$ satisfies $E[\frac{x_0}{\text{Card}(I)}] = k \text{Card}(I) + j$.

If $\text{Card}(I) = +\infty$ then

$$\tilde{\psi}|_{\mu((x_0, x_1, \dots))}: \begin{cases} \mu((x_0, x_1, \dots)) & \rightarrow \mu((x_1, x_2, \dots)) \\ x & \rightarrow (\gamma(x_0)\beta_{(x_0, x_1, \dots)}^{-1}\hat{\psi}\beta_{(x_0, x_1, \dots)})(x). \end{cases}$$

The mapping-torus of (ψ, \mathcal{R}_n) is a 2-complex whose 1-skeleton is the rose with $n + 1$ petals in bijection with $\{x_1, \dots, x_n, t\}$. There is one 2-cell for each relation $t^{-1}x_i t \alpha(x_i)^{-1}$. Thus the universal covering described above is the Cayley complex for G_α with the presentation $G_\alpha = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n, t ; t^{-1}x_i t = \alpha(x_i), i = 1, \dots, n \rangle$. We have thus proved

LEMMA 13.3. *Let α be an injective endomorphism of $F_n = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n \rangle$. Let $G_\alpha = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n, t ; t^{-1}x_i t = \alpha(x_i), i = 1, \dots, n \rangle$ be the mapping-torus group of α . Let $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$ be the Cayley complex of G_α for the given presentation. Then $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$ is the mapping-telescope of a forest-map.*

REMARK 13.4. If the endomorphism α is an automorphism then the above Cayley complex is the mapping-telescope of a tree-map. The tree is the universal covering of the rose with n petals. If the endomorphism α is not injective then some element $w \in F_n$ satisfies $w = 1$ in G_α ; the above construction fails because of the corresponding loops in the Cayley graph.

Let α be an injective free group endomorphism. Let G_α be the mapping-torus group of α . Let $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$ be the Cayley complex of G_α for the usual presentation $G_\alpha = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n, t ; t^{-1}x_i t = \alpha(x_i), i = 1, \dots, n \rangle$. By Lemma 13.3, $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$ is a mapping-telescope of a forest-map. We now want to see what happens with respect to metrics and dynamics. The Cayley graph of a group is equipped with a metric which makes each edge isometric to the interval $(0, 1)$. More generally, given a graph Γ , we call *standard metric*, and denote

by d_Γ^s , such a metric on Γ . We will call *mapping-telescope standard metric* any mapping-telescope d_Γ^s -metric on $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$.

LEMMA 13.5. *The mapping-torus group G_α of an injective free group endomorphism acts cocompactly, properly discontinuously and isometrically on the Cayley complex $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$ equipped with any mapping-telescope standard metric.*

Proof. We consider the usual action by left translations of the group on its Cayley graph. This action is extended in a natural way to a free action on the Cayley complex $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$. Let f denote the map giving the strata for the structure of forest-stack of $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$, see Lemma 13.3. For a mapping-telescope metric, all the strata $f^{-1}(r)$ and $f^{-1}(r+1)$ are isometric. And for a mapping-telescope standard metric all the strata $f^{-1}(n)$, $n \in \mathbf{Z}$, are equipped with the standard metric. This readily implies that the above action is isometric. \square

13.2 FREE GROUP ENDOMORPHISMS AND FOREST-MAPS

The main point of Lemma 13.6 below is the so-called ‘bounded-cancellation lemma’ of [7] for free group automorphisms, and of [10] for the injective free group endomorphisms.

LEMMA 13.6. *Let α be an injective free group endomorphism. Let F and $\tilde{\psi}$ be the forest and the forest-map on F given by Lemma 13.3. Then $\tilde{\psi}$ is a weakly bi-Lipschitz forest-map of F equipped with the standard metric d_F^s .*

Proof. If w is any element in $F_n = \langle x_1, \dots, x_n \rangle$, and $|\cdot|_{F_n}$ denotes the word-metric on F_n , then $|\alpha(w)|_{F_n} \leq (\max_{i=1, \dots, n} |\alpha(x_i)|_{F_n})|w|_{F_n}$. By definition of the standard metric, and setting $\mu_0 = \max_{i=1, \dots, n} |\alpha(x_i)|_{F_n}$, the map $\tilde{\psi}$ satisfies $d_F^s(\tilde{\psi}(x), \tilde{\psi}(y)) \leq \mu_0 d_F^s(x, y)$ for any pair of vertices x, y . If x, y are not vertices, then they are joined in their stratum by a horizontal geodesic which is the concatenation of a path between two vertices, with two proper subsets of edges. By construction and simpliciality of $\tilde{\psi}$, proper subsets of edges are dilated by a bounded factor when applying $\tilde{\psi}$, so that the conclusion follows for the upper bound.

If w is any element in F_n then

$$|\alpha^{-1}(w)|_{F_n} \leq (\max_{i=1, \dots, n} |\alpha^{-1}(x_i)|_{F_n})|w|_{F_n}.$$

Setting $\mu_1 = \max_{i=1, \dots, n} |\alpha^{-1}(x_i)|_{F_n}$ we get $|\alpha(w)|_{F_n} \geq \frac{1}{\mu_1}|w|_{F_n}$. Therefore $d_F^s(\tilde{\psi}(x), \tilde{\psi}(y)) \geq \frac{1}{\mu_1} d_F^s(x, y)$ for any pair of vertices x, y . The inequality

for all points x, y does not follow as easily as for the upper bound, since the map $\tilde{\psi}$ might identify points, and this could make the distance decrease sharply. However, assume the existence of a constant K_0 such that $\tilde{\psi}(x) = \tilde{\psi}(y) \Rightarrow d_F^s(x, y) \leq K_0$. Any geodesic in F is the concatenation of a geodesic between two vertices with two proper subsets of edges of F . Thus the inequality $d_F^s(\tilde{\psi}(x), \tilde{\psi}(y)) \geq \frac{1}{\mu_1} d_F^s(x, y) - 2K_0$ follows in a straightforward way from the preceding assertions. Injective free group endomorphisms satisfy the so-called ‘bounded-cancellation lemma’ (see [10], and [7] for the particular case of automorphisms), i.e. there exists $A_\alpha > 0$ such that $|\alpha(w_1 w_2)|_{F_n} \geq |\alpha(w_1)|_{F_n} + |\alpha(w_2)|_{F_n} - A_\alpha$ for any w_1, w_2 in F_n with $|w_1 w_2|_{F_n} = |w_1|_{F_n} + |w_2|_{F_n}$. This inequality gives a constant $K_0 = A_\alpha + 2$ as required above, i.e. such that, if $\tilde{\psi}(x) = \tilde{\psi}(y)$ then $d_F^s(x, y) \leq K_0$. Setting $\mu = \max(\mu_0, \mu_1)$ and $K = 2K_0$, we get Lemma 13.6. \square

LEMMA 13.7. *With the assumptions and notation of Lemma 13.6,*

- 1) *If α is hyperbolic then the forest-map is hyperbolic.*
- 2) *If α is hyperbolic and its image $\text{Im}(\alpha)$ is malnormal, then the forest-map is strongly hyperbolic.*

Proof. (1) is easy to check. Let us prove (2). The notation used is that introduced in Section 13 when defining the forest F and the map $\tilde{\psi}$. If the map is not strongly hyperbolic, there exists an infinite sequence of pairs of connected components (T_i, T'_i) such that T_i and T'_i are identified under $\tilde{\psi}$ along a geodesic g_i and the length of g_i tends to $+\infty$ as $i \rightarrow +\infty$. Thus there exists an infinite number of elements $(u_i, u'_i) \in F_n - \text{Im}(\alpha) \times F_n - \text{Im}(\alpha)$ such that some geodesic word $a_i w_i b_i$ (resp. $a'_i w'_i b'_i$) connects two vertices associated to elements in $u_i \text{Im}(\alpha)$ (resp. in $u'_i \text{Im}(\alpha)$) where the length of the w_i ’s tends to $+\infty$ as $i \rightarrow +\infty$.

Observe that in particular $a_i w_i b_i \in \text{Im}(\alpha)$, $a'_i w'_i b'_i \in \text{Im}(\alpha)$, whereas $a_i w_i b'_i \notin \text{Im}(\alpha)$ and $a'_i w'_i b_i \notin \text{Im}(\alpha)$ because they carry an element of $u_i \text{Im}(\alpha)$ (resp. $u'_i \text{Im}(\alpha)$) to an element of $u'_i \text{Im}(\alpha)$ (resp. of $u_i \text{Im}(\alpha)$). The lengths of the a_i, b_i, a'_i, b'_i can be assumed to be at most the maximum of the lengths of the images under α of the generators of F_n , which is finite. Since there are only a finite number of pairs of elements of bounded lengths, a same pair a_I, b_I (resp. a'_I, b'_I) appears an infinite number of times when listing the sequence of words $a_i w_i b_i$ (resp. $a'_i w'_i b'_i$). The same finiteness argument then gives two words $\omega_1 \subsetneq \omega_2$ with $\omega_2 = \omega \omega_1$ such that $a_I \omega_j b_I \in \text{Im}(\alpha)$, $a'_I \omega_j b'_I \in \text{Im}(\alpha)$, $a_I \omega_j b'_I \notin \text{Im}(\alpha)$ and $a'_I \omega_j b_I \notin \text{Im}(\alpha)$, $j = 1, 2$.

Thus $a_I \omega_1 b_I b_I^{-1} \omega_1^{-1} \omega^{-1} a_I^{-1} \in \text{Im}(\alpha)$, $a'_I \omega_1 b'_I b'_I^{-1} \omega_1^{-1} \omega^{-1} a'_I^{-1} \in \text{Im}(\alpha)$, $a_I \omega_1 b'_I b'_I^{-1} \omega_1^{-1} \omega^{-1} a'_I^{-1} \notin \text{Im}(\alpha)$. Now $(a_I \omega^{-1} a'_I^{-1})^{-1} a_I \omega^{-1} a_I^{-1} (a_I \omega^{-1} a'_I^{-1}) = a'_I \omega^{-1} a'_I^{-1} \in \text{Im}(\alpha)$, whereas $a_I \omega^{-1} a'_I^{-1} \notin \text{Im}(\alpha)$ and $a_I \omega^{-1} a_I^{-1} \in \text{Im}(\alpha)$. We thus get a contradiction to the malnormality of $\text{Im}(\alpha)$ in F_n . This completes the proof. \square

13.3 PROOF OF THEOREM 13.2

From Lemmas 13.6 and 13.7, the Cayley complex $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$ is the mapping-telescope of a strongly hyperbolic forest-map, equipped with the standard metric. A Cayley complex is connected. Thus, from Theorem 12.4, $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$ is a Gromov-hyperbolic metric space for any mapping-telescope standard metric. From Lemma 13.5 the group G_α acts cocompactly, properly discontinuously and isometrically on $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$ equipped with a mapping-telescope standard metric. A classical lemma of geometric group theory (usually attributed to Effremovich, Svàrc, Milnor – see [19] or [17] for instance), applied to quasi geodesic metric spaces, tells us that G_α and $\mathcal{C}(G_\alpha)$ are quasi-isometric so that G_α is a hyperbolic group. \square

REMARK 13.8. Another way of stating our main theorem about ‘forest-stacks’, using the language of trees of spaces, goes roughly as follows: “An oriented **R**-tree of **R**-trees with the gluing-maps satisfying the conditions of hyperbolicity and strong hyperbolicity with uniform constants is Gromov-hyperbolic.” Here ‘oriented **R**-tree’ means an **R**-tree T equipped with an orientation going from the domain to the image of each attaching-map, and a surjective continuous map $f: T \rightarrow \mathbf{R}$ respecting this orientation. As a corollary of our theorem, and in order to illustrate it, we chose to concentrate on mapping-telescopes. We could as well consider spaces similar to mapping-telescopes but where we allow the attaching-maps not to be the same at each step. Our only requirement is to have uniform constants of quasi-isometry, hyperbolicity and so on. Also, with respect to groups, a corollary could have been stated dealing with HNN-extensions rather than just semi-direct products.

Another result which easily follows from our work could be more or less stated as follows. “Let T be a tree of spaces X_i , $i = 0, 1, \dots$. Let $\psi: T \rightarrow T$ be a map of T such that the mapping-telescope of each X_i under ψ is Gromov-hyperbolic. If ψ induces a hyperbolic map on the tree resulting of the collapsing of each X_i to a point, then the mapping-telescope of the tree of spaces T under ψ is Gromov-hyperbolic.” We leave the precise statement of such corollaries to the reader. Together with [14] where a new proof of the

Bestvina-Feighn theorem is given for mapping-tori of surface groups, the last one gives, thanks to [26], a new proof of the full version of the Combination Theorem for mapping-tori of hyperbolic groups, namely : “If G is a hyperbolic group and α is a hyperbolic automorphism of G , then $G \rtimes_{\alpha} \mathbb{Z}$ is a hyperbolic group.”

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