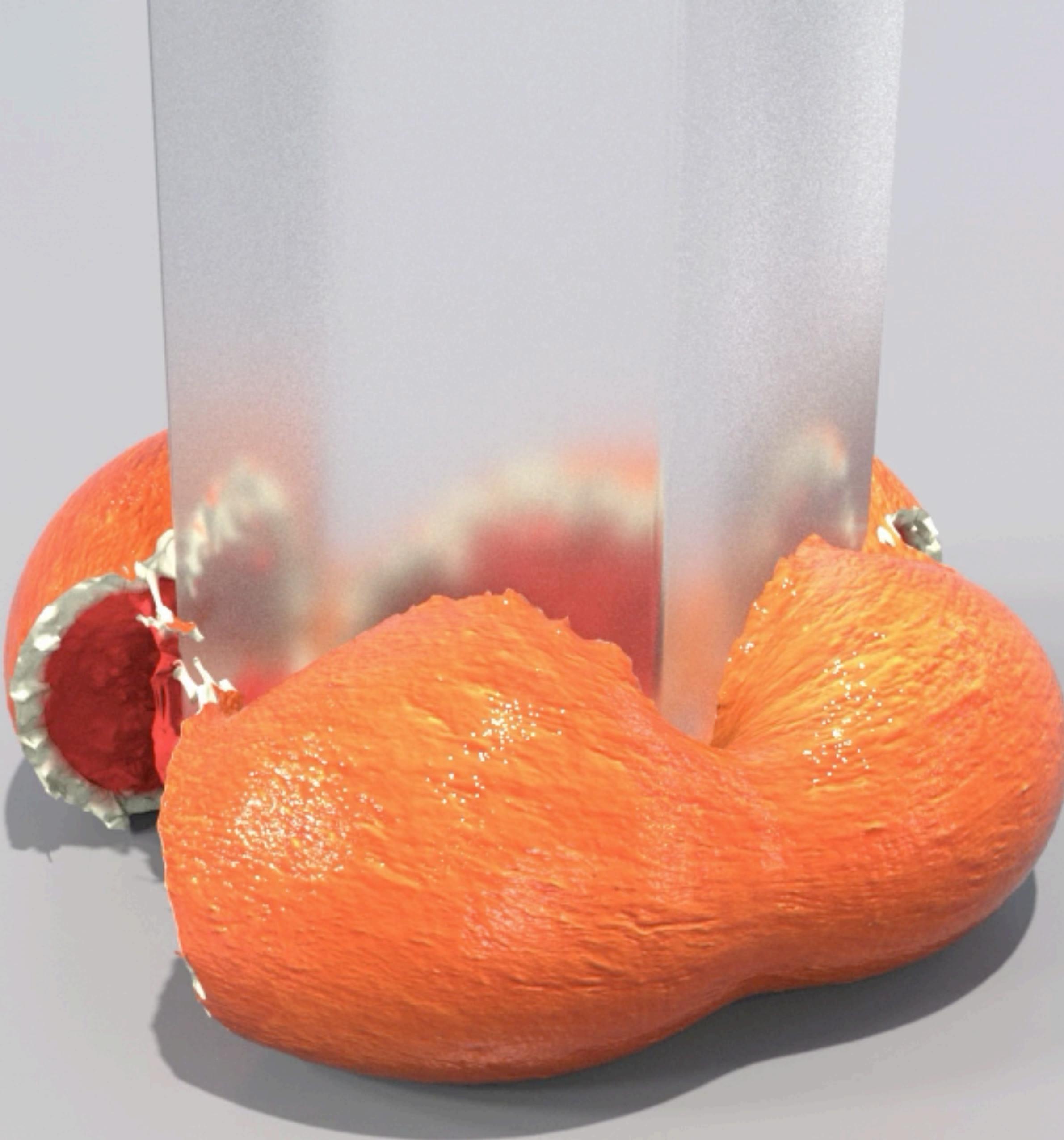


Capturing Surfaces with Differential Forms

Stephanie Wang, UC San Diego

October 1st, 2021 Toronto Geometry Colloquium

UC San Diego



UCLA

About me...

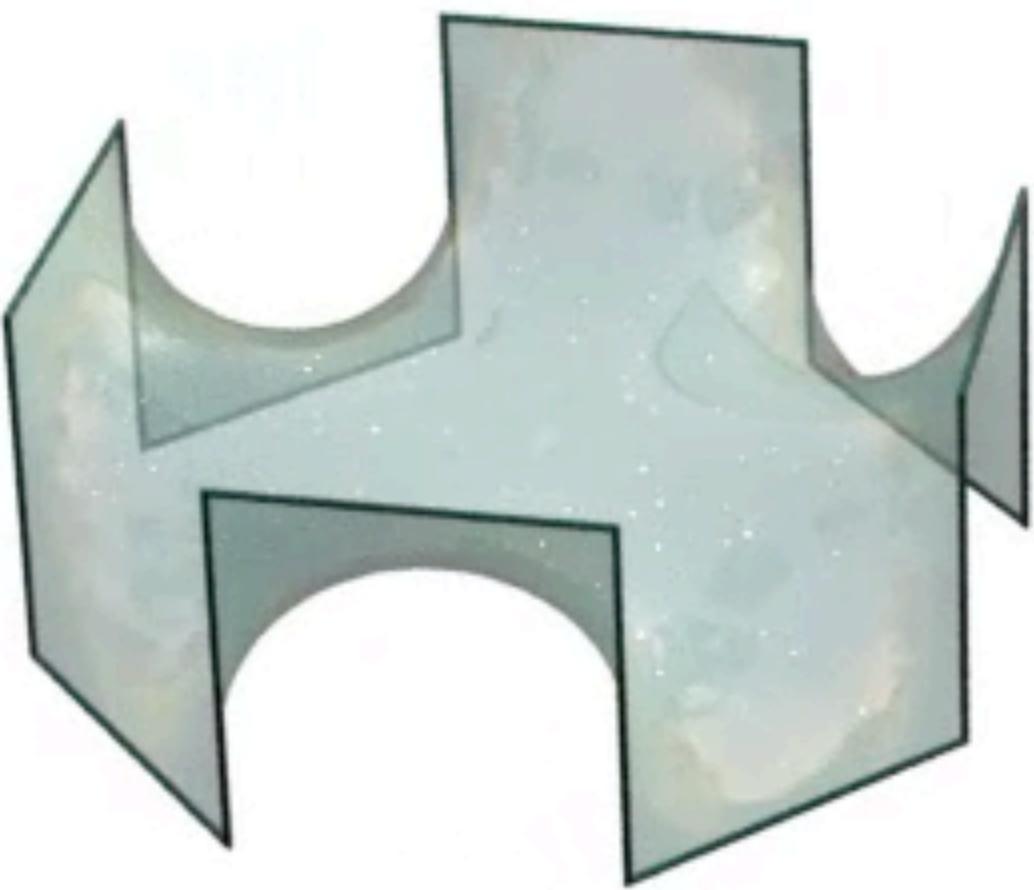
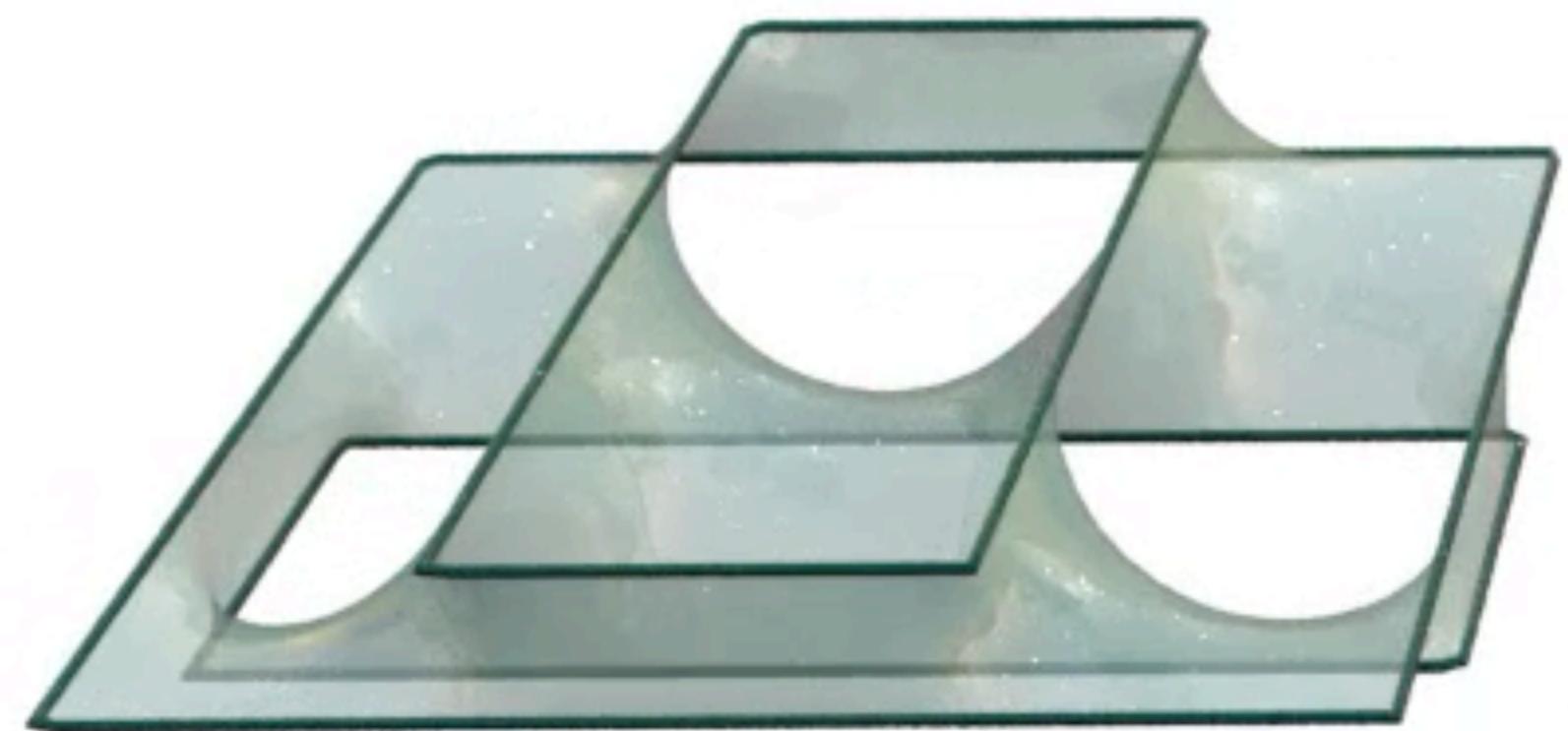
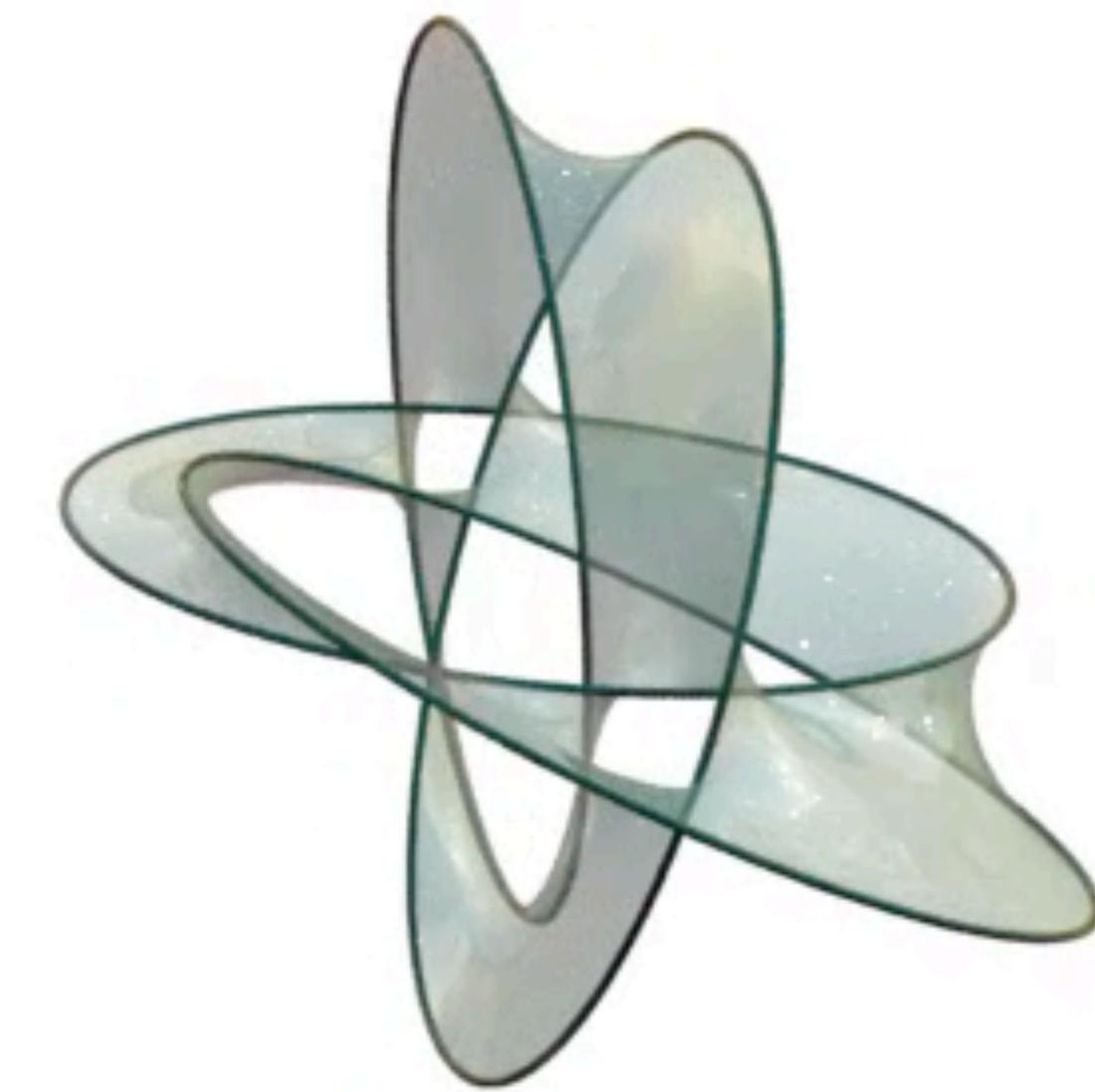
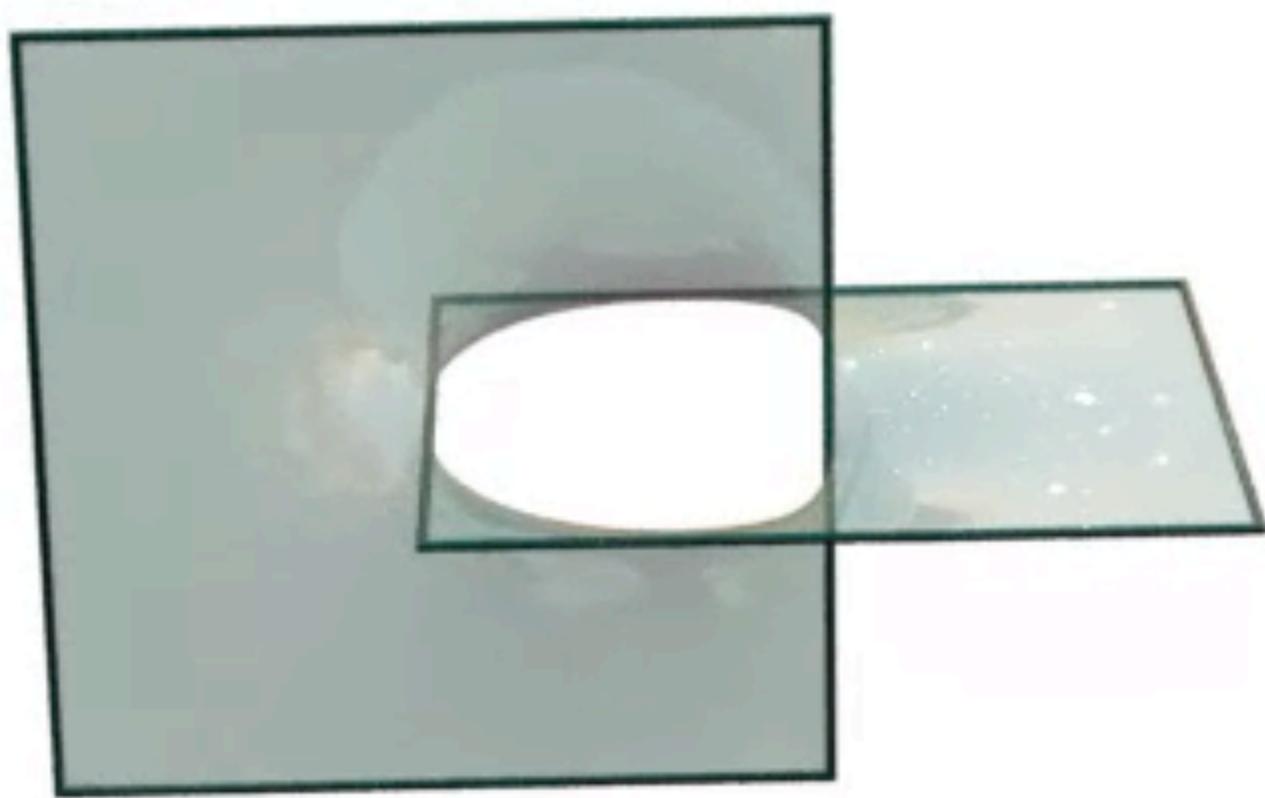
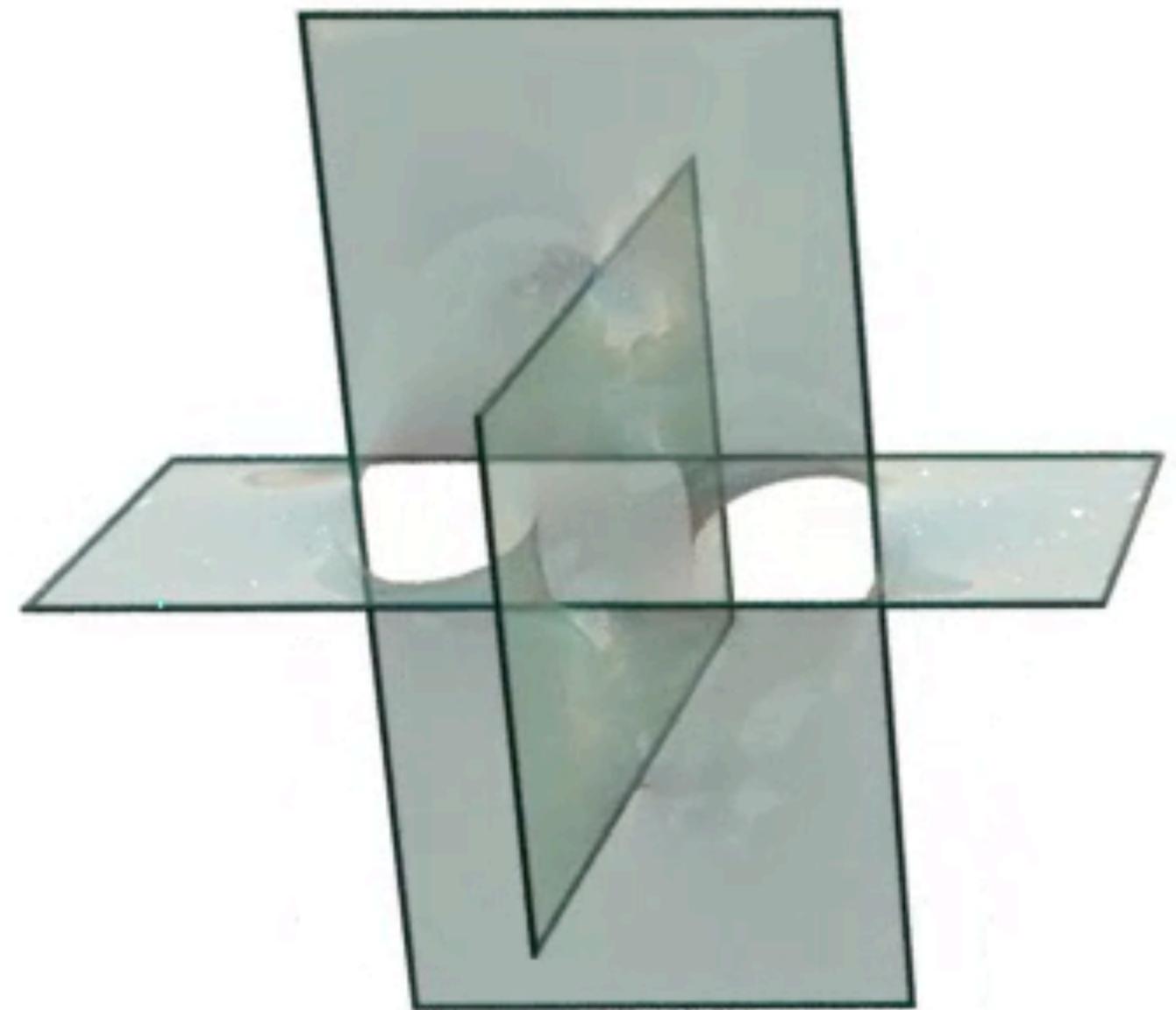
- Ph.D. in Mathematics, UCLA, 2020
- Dissertation: A Material Point Method for Elastoplasticity with Ductile Fracture and Frictional Contact
- Material Point Method (MPM) = multi-spices simulation with automatic collision



UCLA

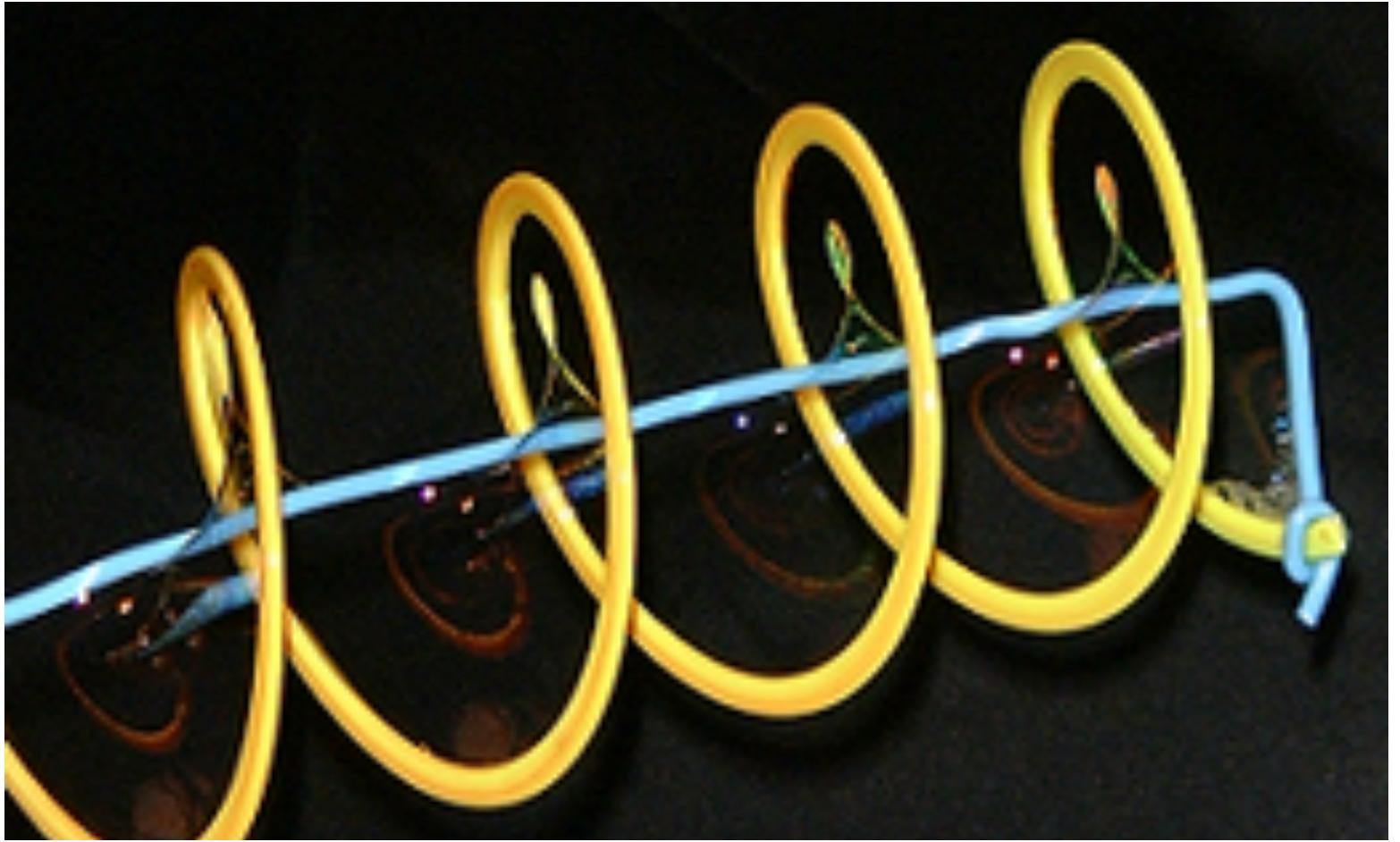
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- Ph.D. in Mathematics, UCLA, 2020
- Dissertation: A Material Point Method for Elastoplasticity with Ductile Fracture and Frictional Contact
- Material Point Method (MPM) = multi-spices simulation with automatic collision
- Postdoc at Computer Science and Engineering, UC San Diego
- Recent paper: Computing Minimal Surfaces with Differential Forms, Stephanie Wang and Albert Chern, ACM Transactions on Graphics (TOG)—Proceedings of ACM SIGGRAPH 2021.



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Helicoid formed by soap film on a helical frame PC: [Blinking Spirit](#)



RUBATO by Eva Hild PC: David Eppstein

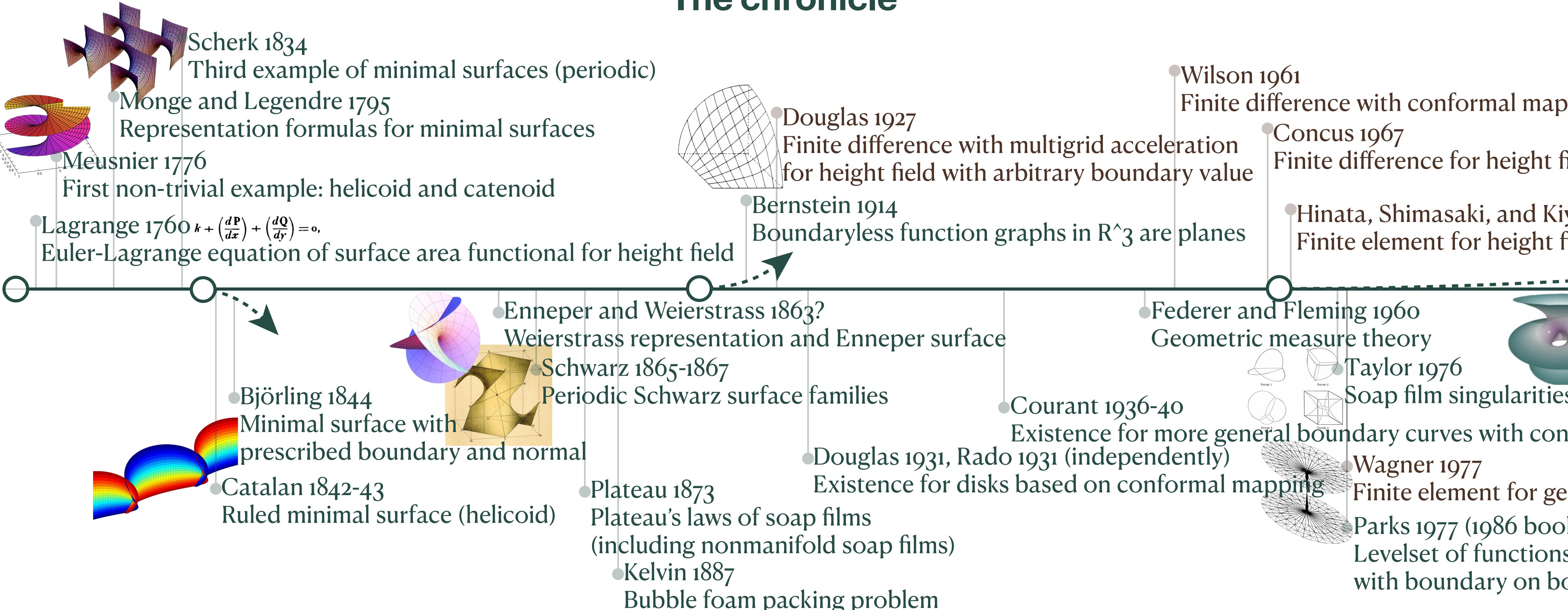
Münich Olympiapark PC: [Tiiia Monto](#)



UC San Diego

A brief history of minimal surfaces

The chronicle



UC San Diego

Plateau problem

finding the minimal surface with a given boundary curve

- M : a (3-dimensional) ambient manifold.
- Given a closed boundary curve $\Gamma \hookrightarrow M$ (that is, $\partial\Gamma = \emptyset$).
- Find a surface $\Sigma \hookrightarrow M$ that

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{minimize} && \text{Area}(\Sigma) \\ & \text{s.t.} && \partial\Sigma = \Gamma \end{aligned}$$

“Area functional is not convex.”

—well-known geometric processing fact.

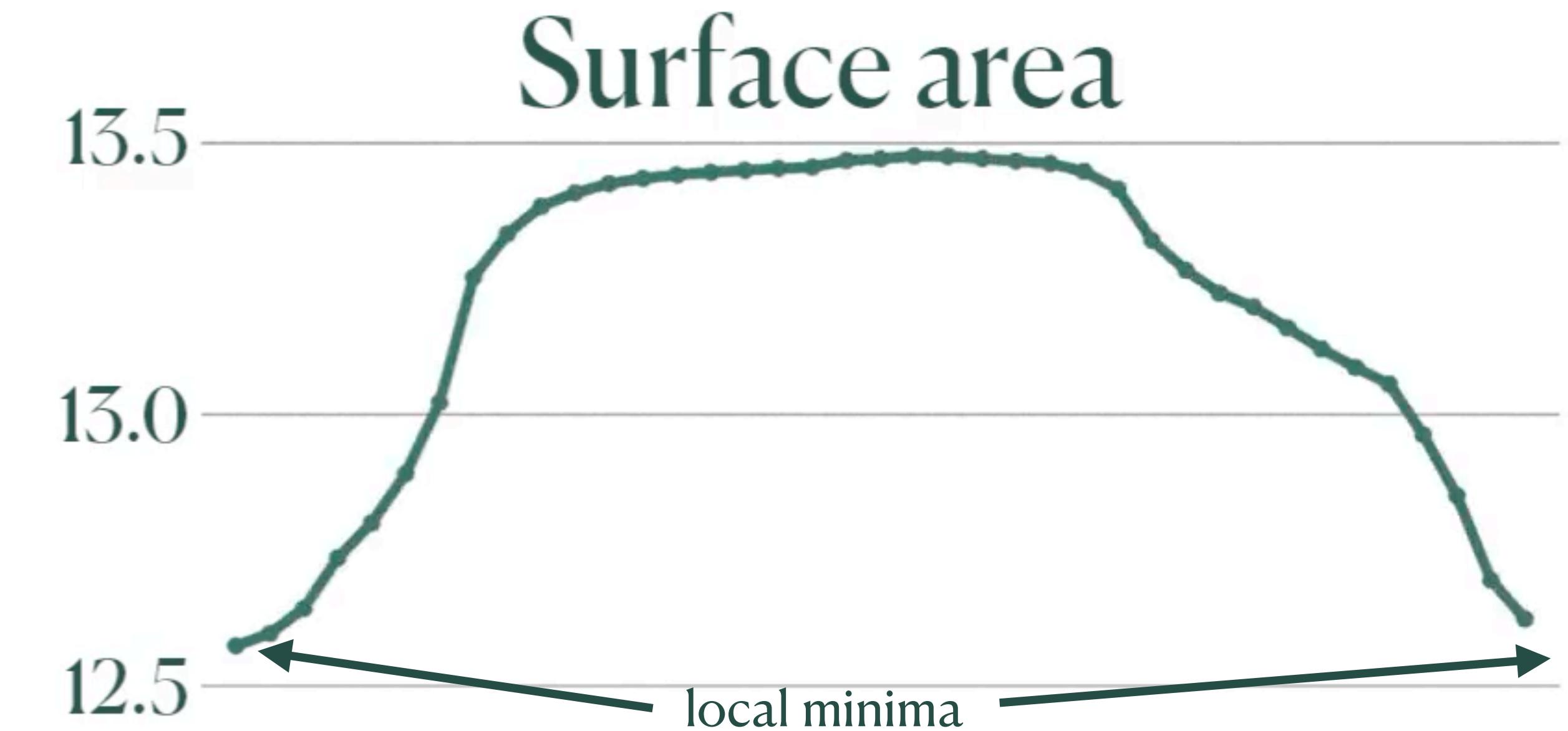
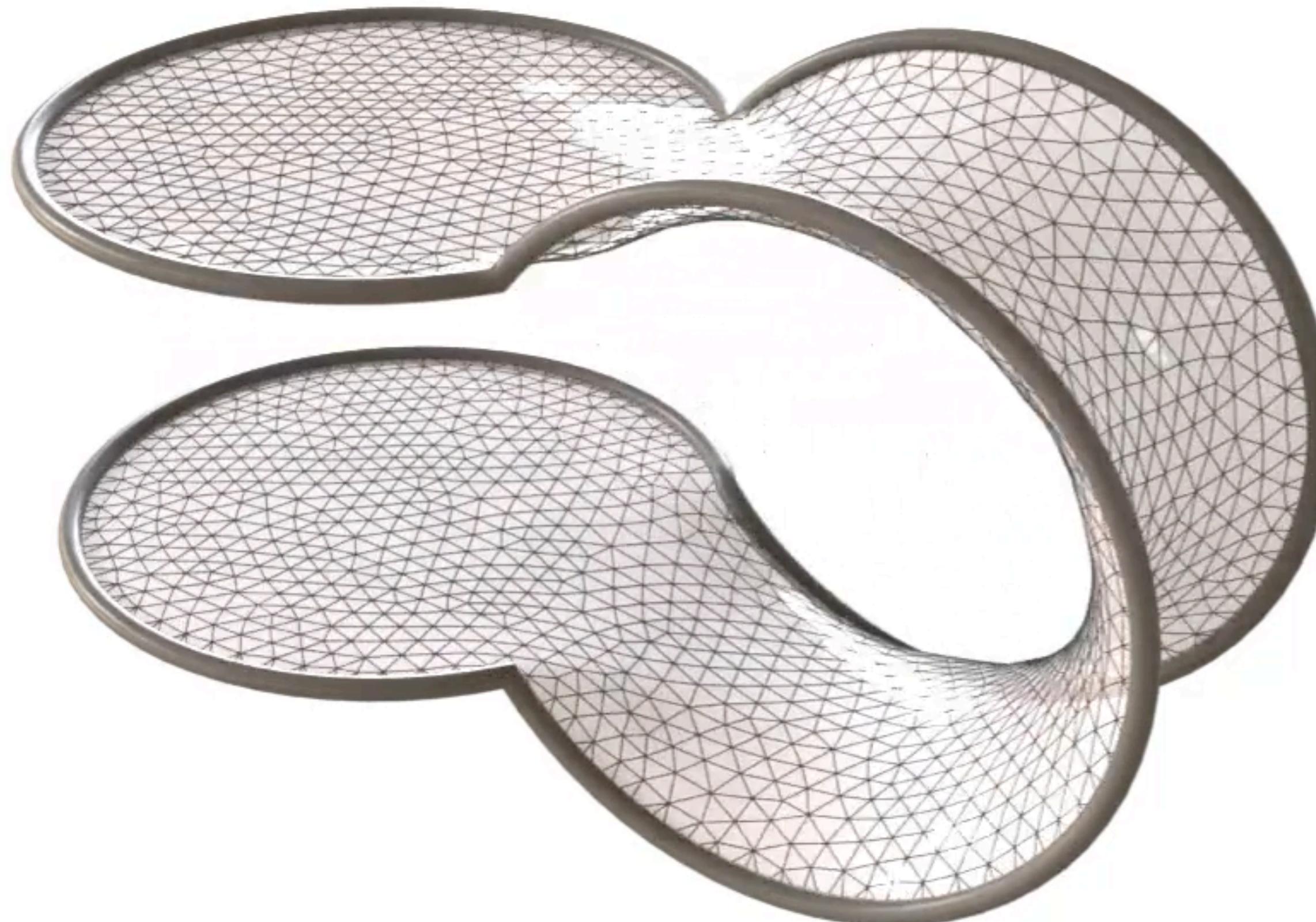
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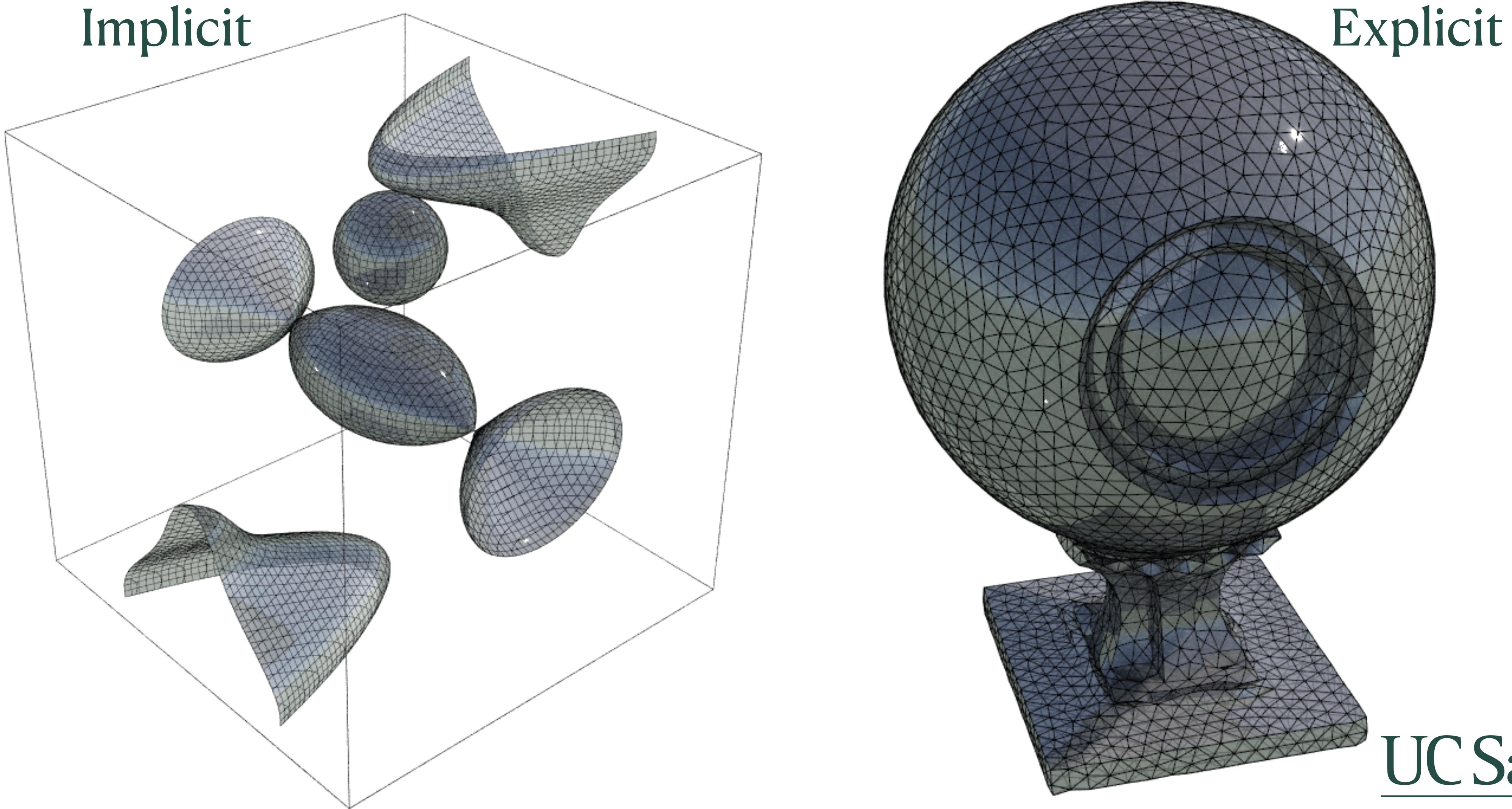
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Surface representations

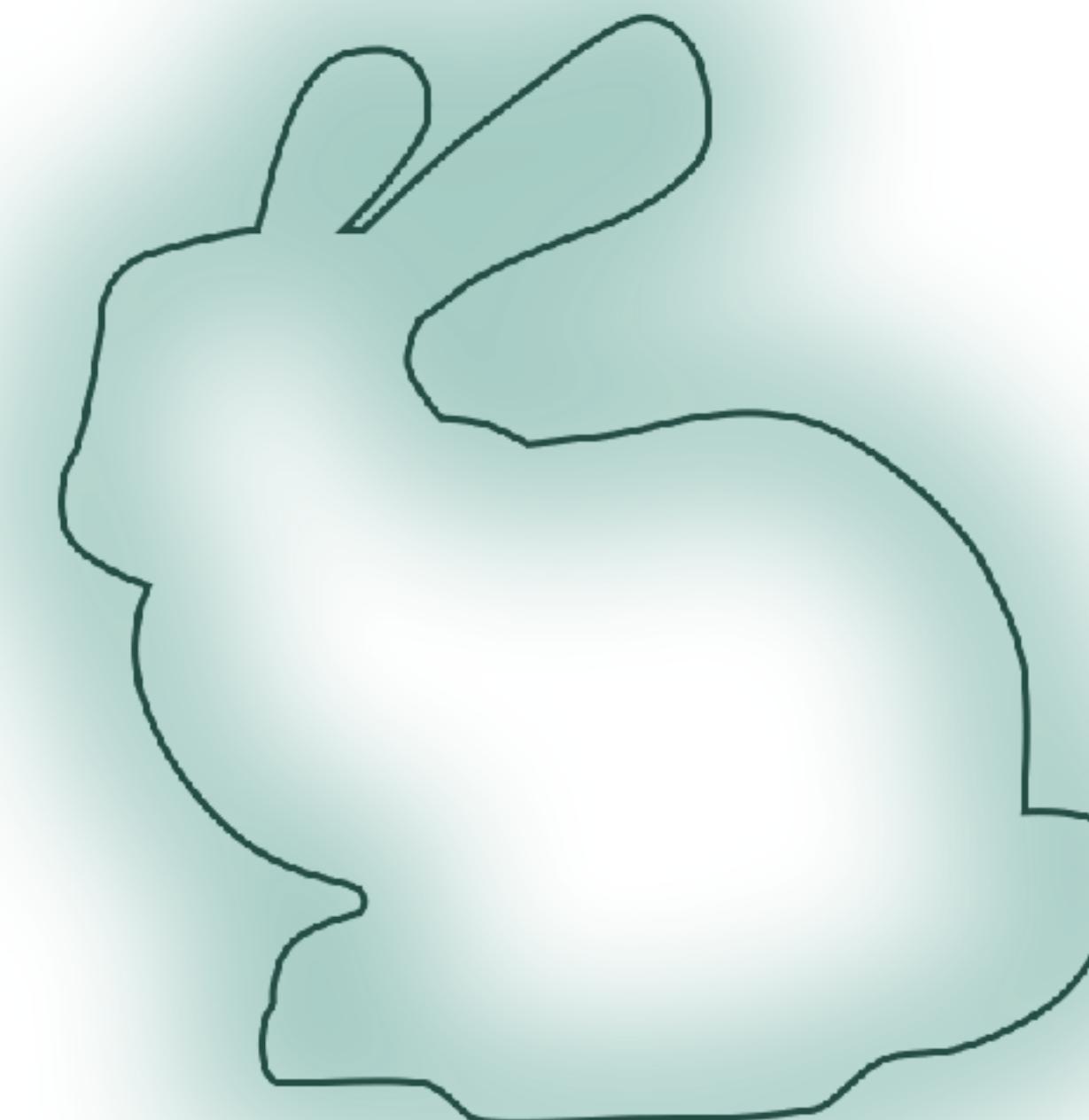


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Level-set-based methods

no boundary for level sets

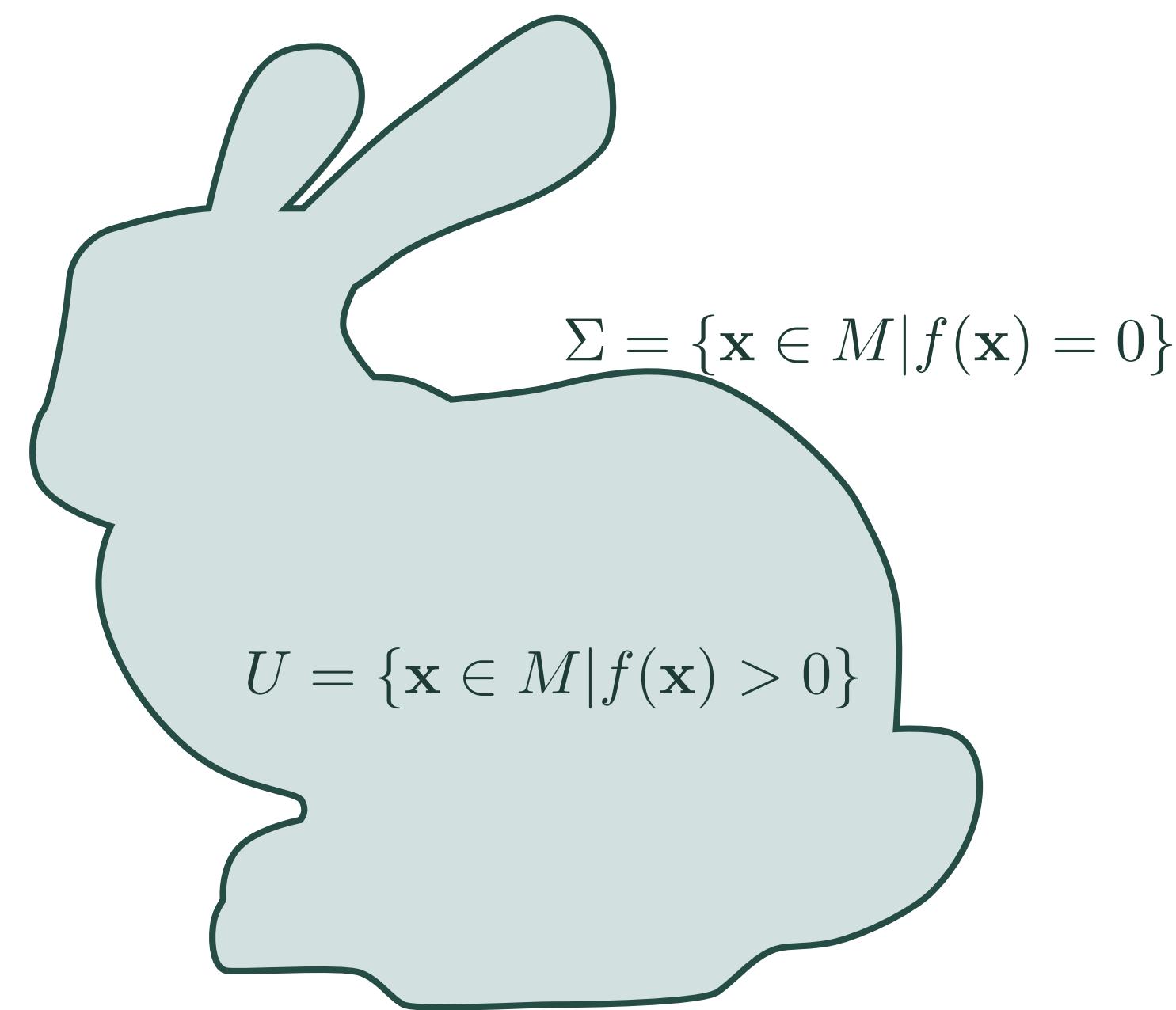
- Surface is implicitly stored with a spatial function $f : M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$
 - Level set $\Sigma = \{\mathbf{x} \in M | f(\mathbf{x}) = 0\}$



Level-set-based methods

no boundary for level sets

- Surface is implicitly stored with a spatial function $f : M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$
 - Level set $\Sigma = \{\mathbf{x} \in M | f(\mathbf{x}) = 0\}$
- Inherently, $\Sigma = \partial\{\mathbf{x} \in M | f(\mathbf{x}) > 0\} = \partial U$ boundary of an open region.
- $\partial\Sigma = \partial\partial U = \emptyset$.

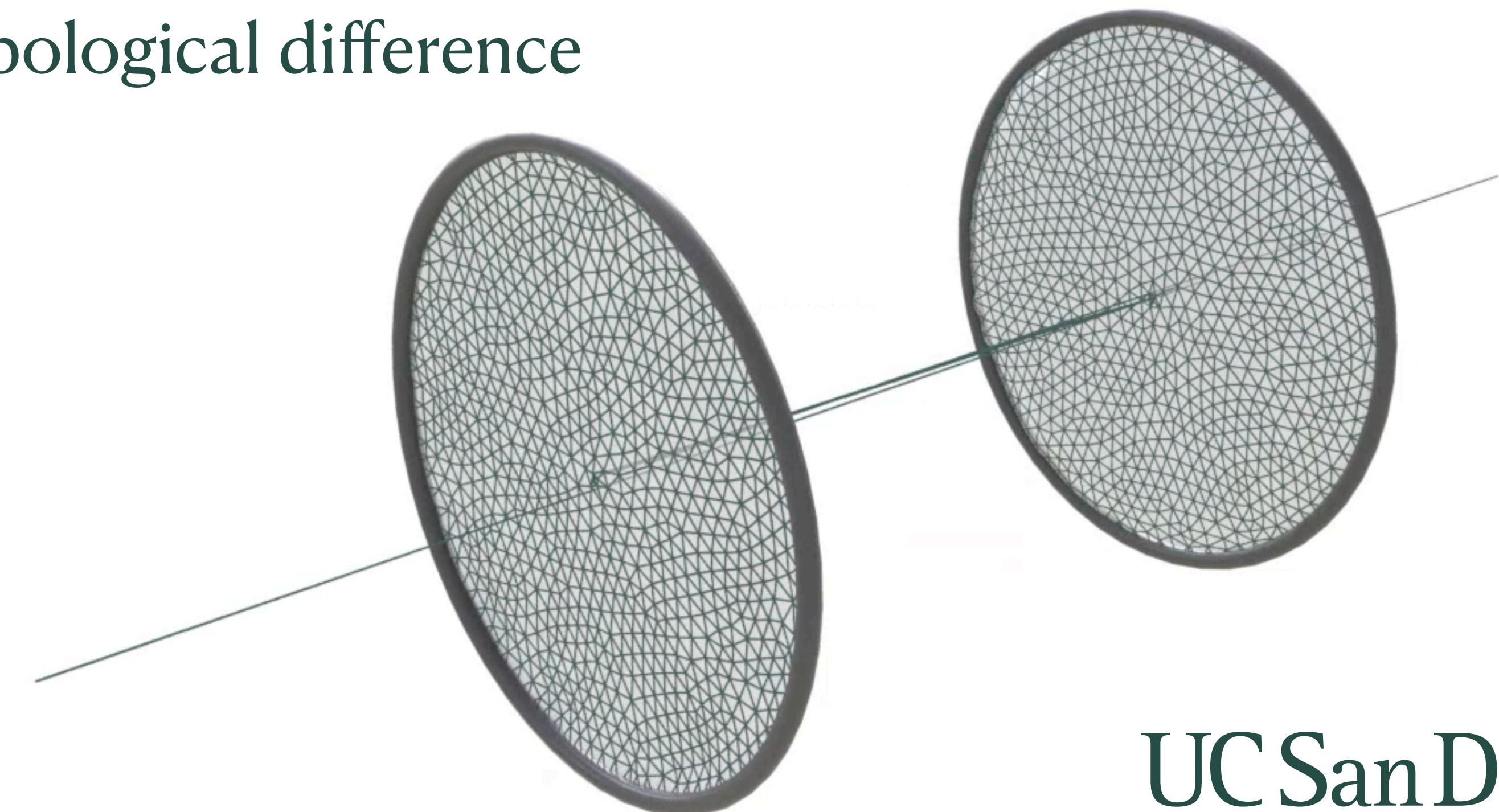


Mesh-based methods

- Discrete curvature flow
- Ill-conditioned Laplacian for low quality mesh

Mesh-based methods

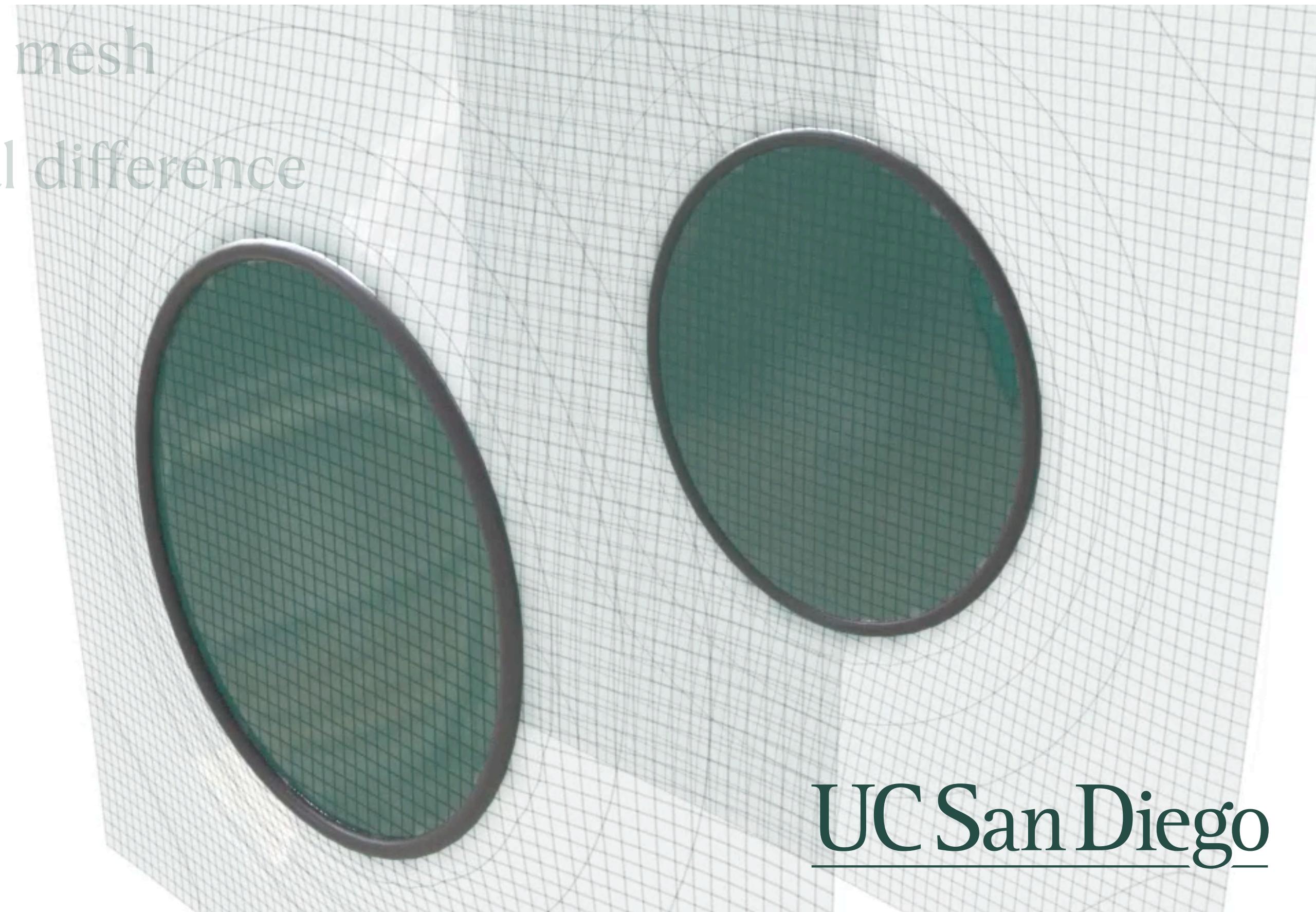
- Discrete curvature flow
- Ill-conditioned Laplacian for low quality mesh
- Discrete operation to resolve topological difference



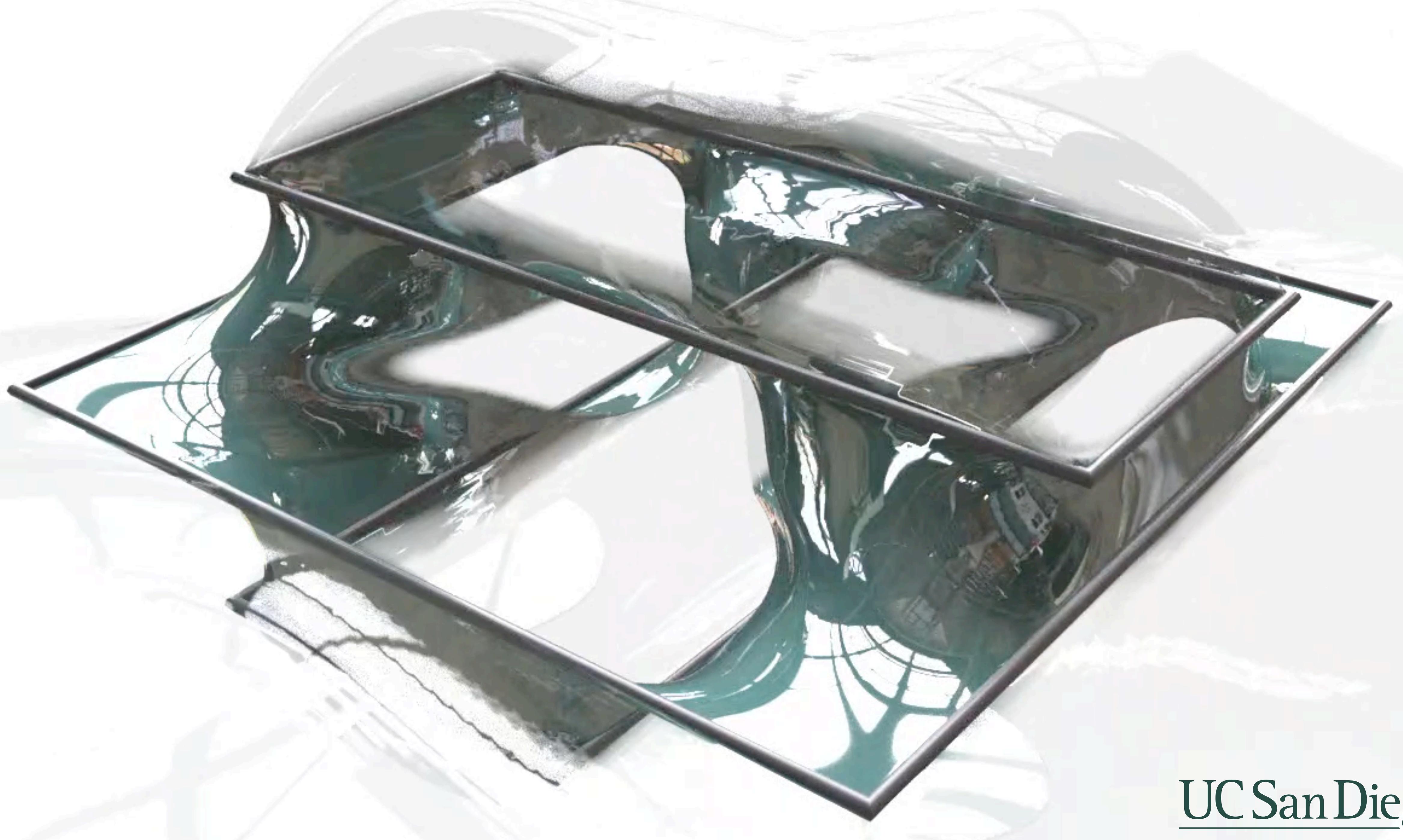
Our method

connectivity represented differently

- Discrete curvature flow
- Ill-conditioned Laplacian for low quality mesh
- Discrete operation to resolve topological difference



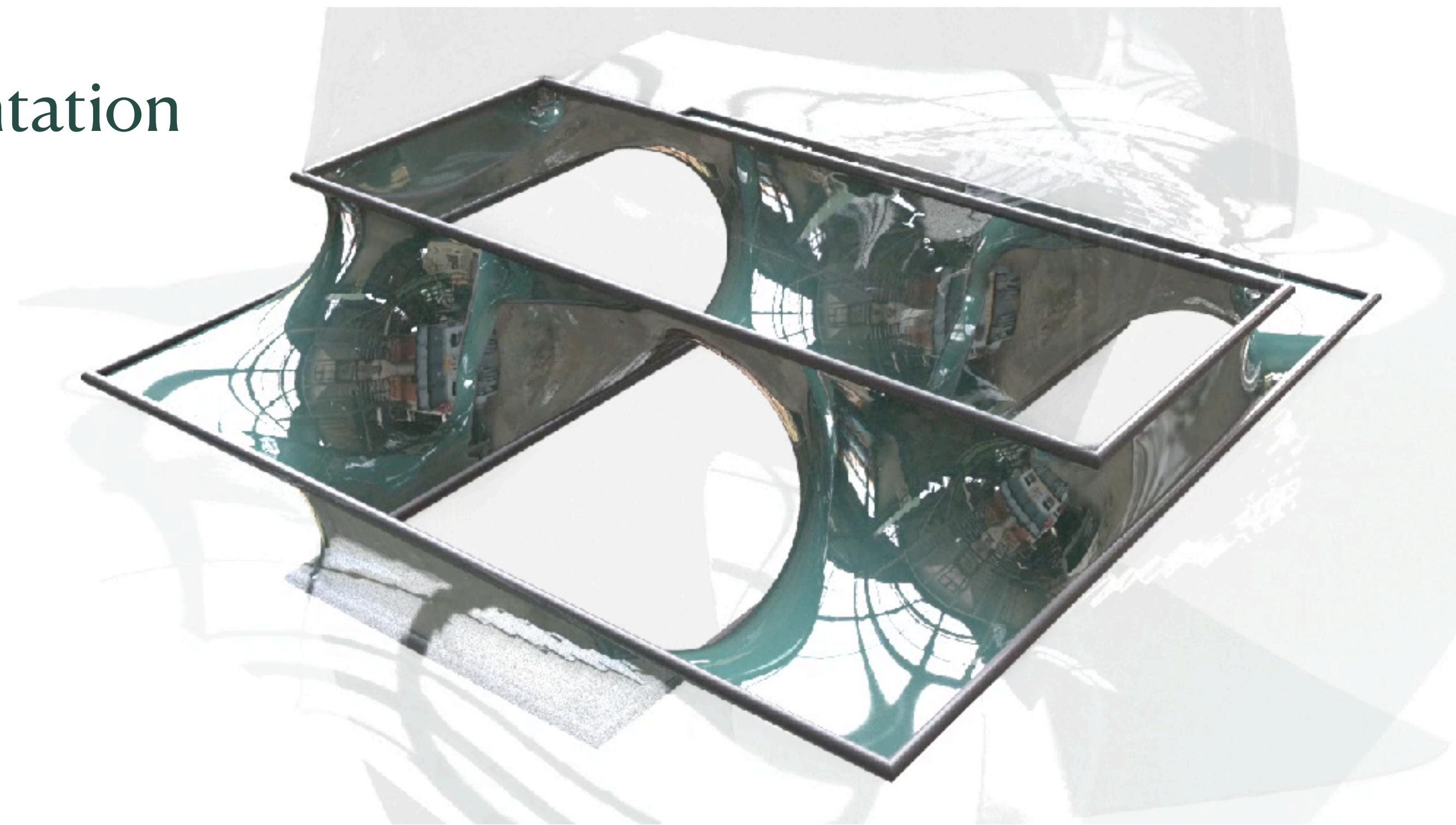
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Outline

- Differential forms and surface representation
- Plateau problem
- Fast ADMM algorithms and results
- Generalized mass norm minimization



Differential forms

$$\int_U f(x, y, z) dx dy dz \quad 3\text{-form}$$

(U : a volumetric region)

$$\int_{\Sigma} F dy dz + G dz dx + H dx dy \quad 2\text{-form}$$

(Σ : a surface)

$$\int_{\Gamma} f dx + g dy + h dz \quad 1\text{-form}$$

(Γ : a curve)

$$f(x_a, y_b, z_b) \quad 0\text{-form}$$

Differential forms and Dirac delta

$$\int_M \varphi(x, y, z) f(x, y, z) dx dy dz$$

φ : a test function (0-form)

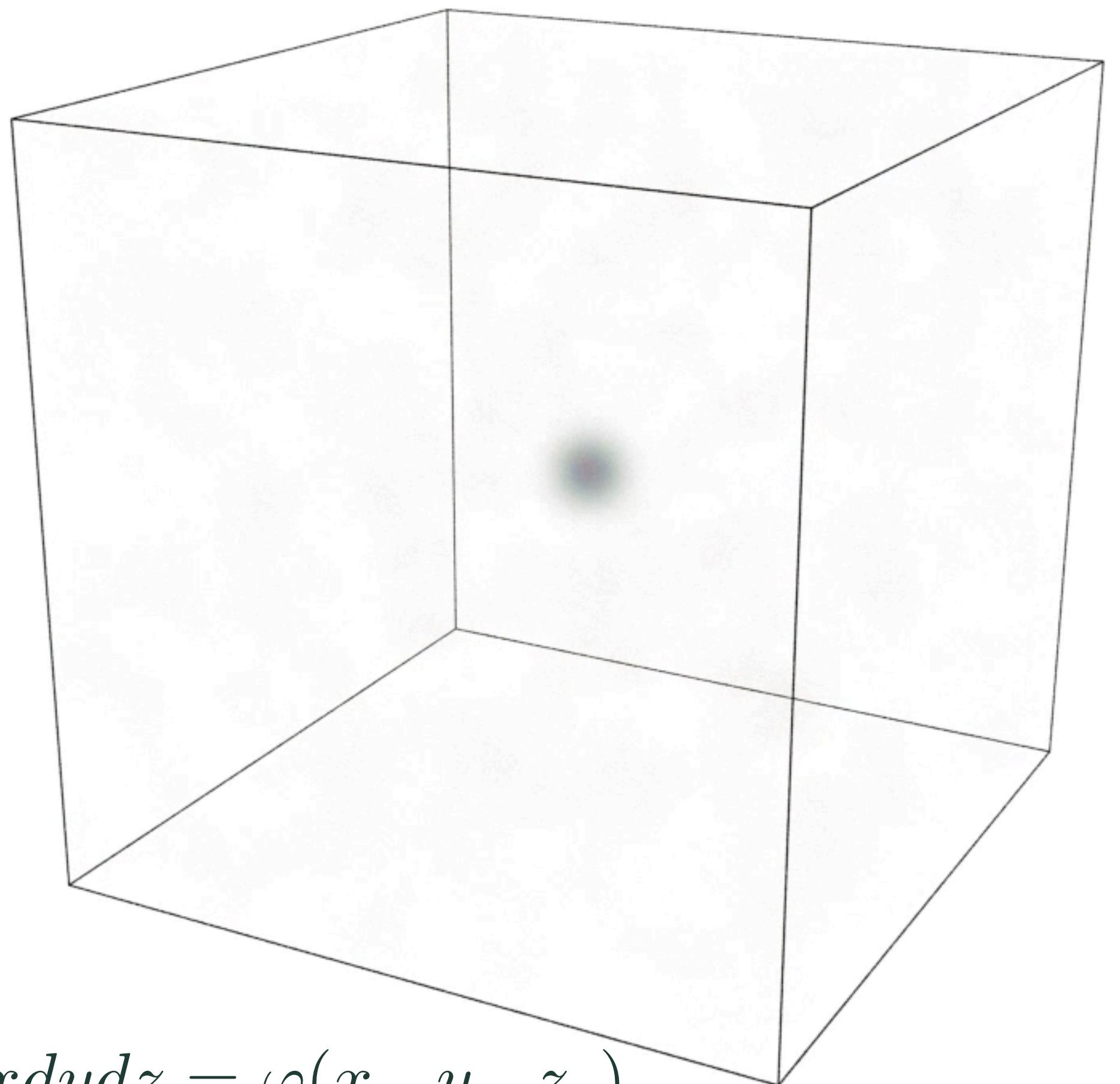
$$\int_M \varphi(x, y, z) \delta_p(x, y, z) dx dy dz = \varphi(x_p, y_p, z_p)$$

$\delta_p(x, y, z) dx dy dz$

3-form

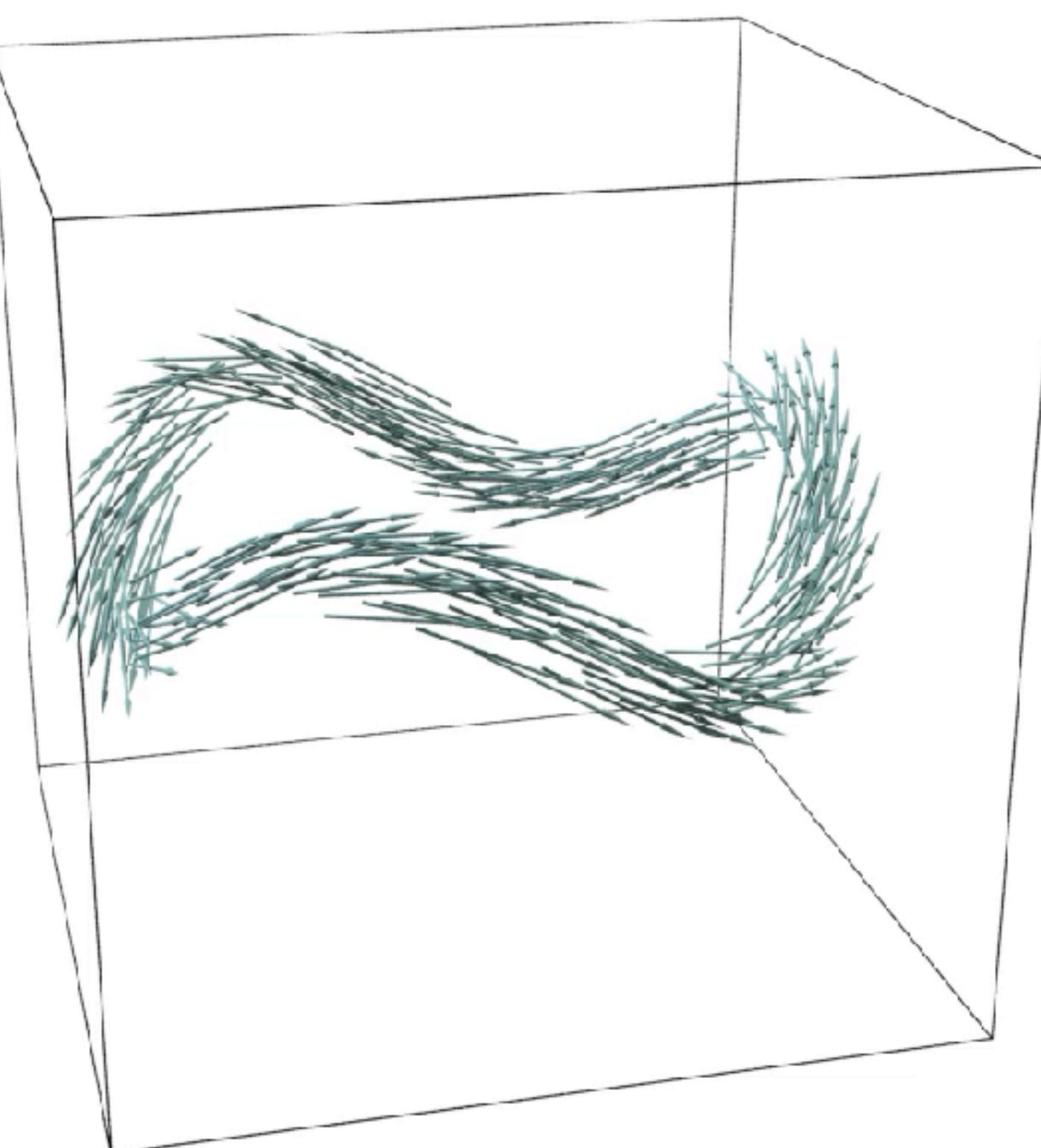
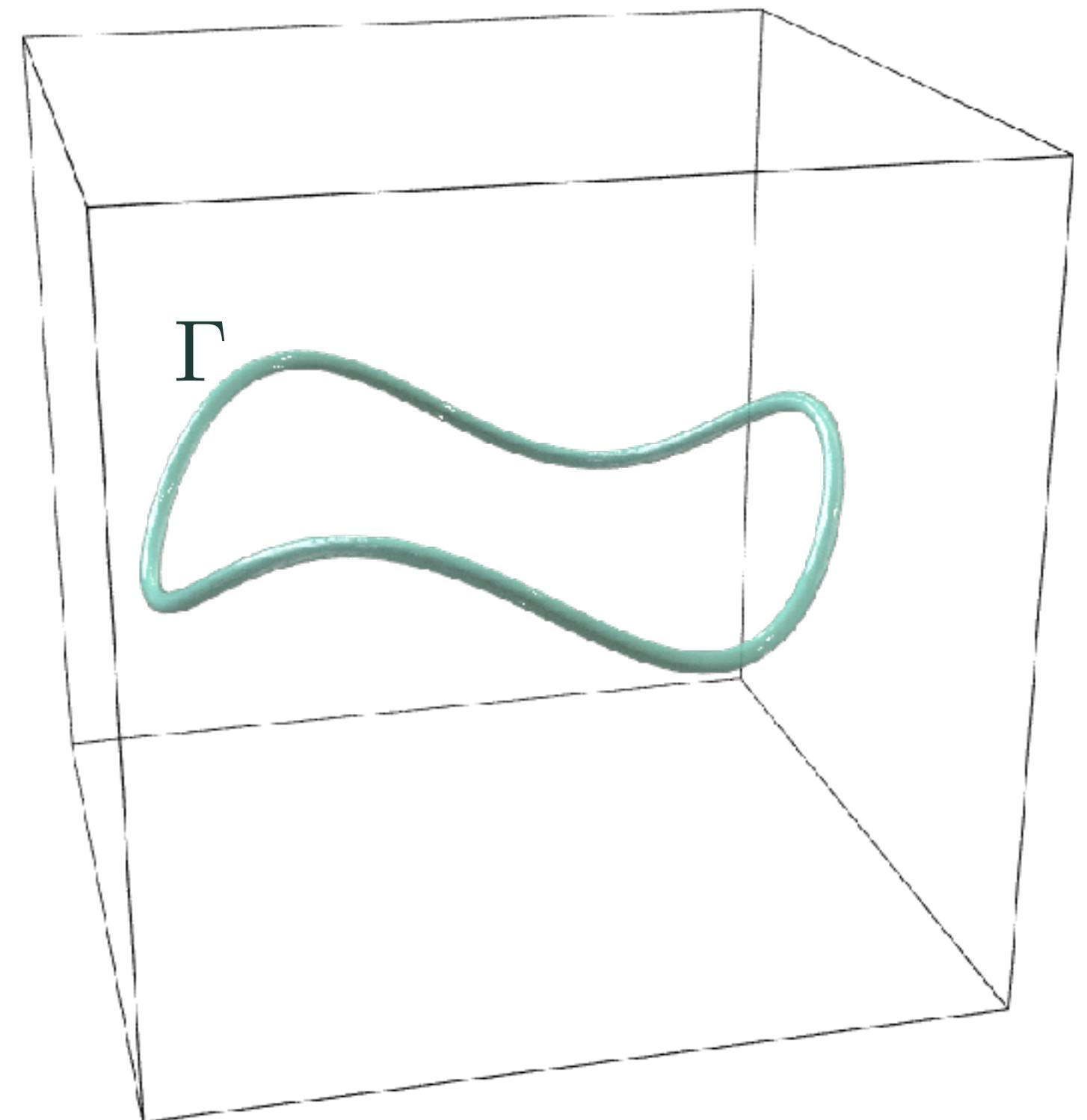
3-forms as measures

$$\varphi: \text{a test function (0-form)}$$
$$\int_M \varphi(x, y, z) \delta_p(x, y, z) dx dy dz = \varphi(x_p, y_p, z_p)$$



$\delta_p(x, y, z) dx dy dz$ Dirac delta 3-form

2-forms as curves



$$\int_M \eta \wedge \delta_\Gamma = \int_\Gamma \eta$$

$\eta = f dx + g dy + h dz$: a test 1-form

$$\delta_p : \varphi \mapsto \varphi(p)$$

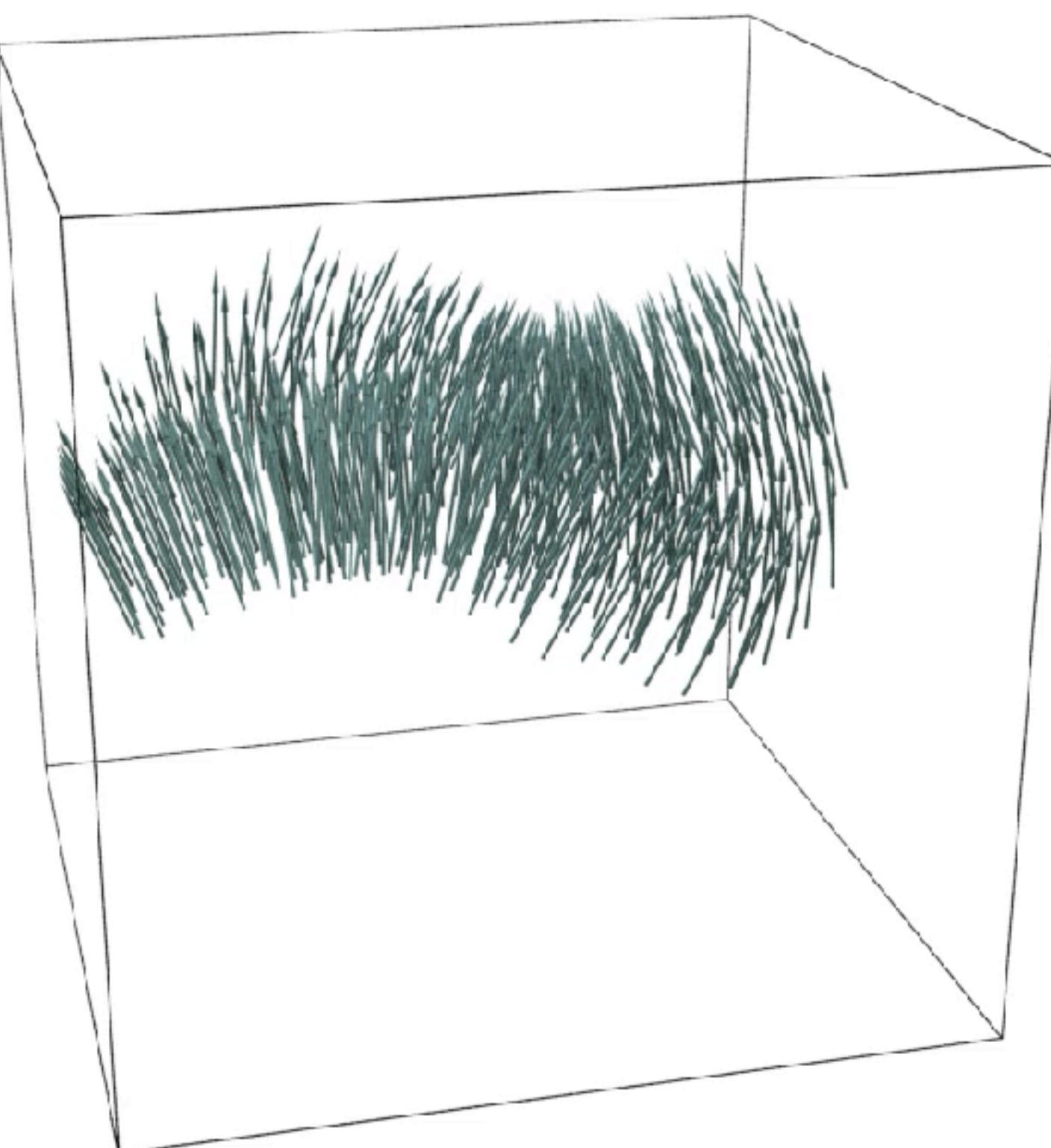
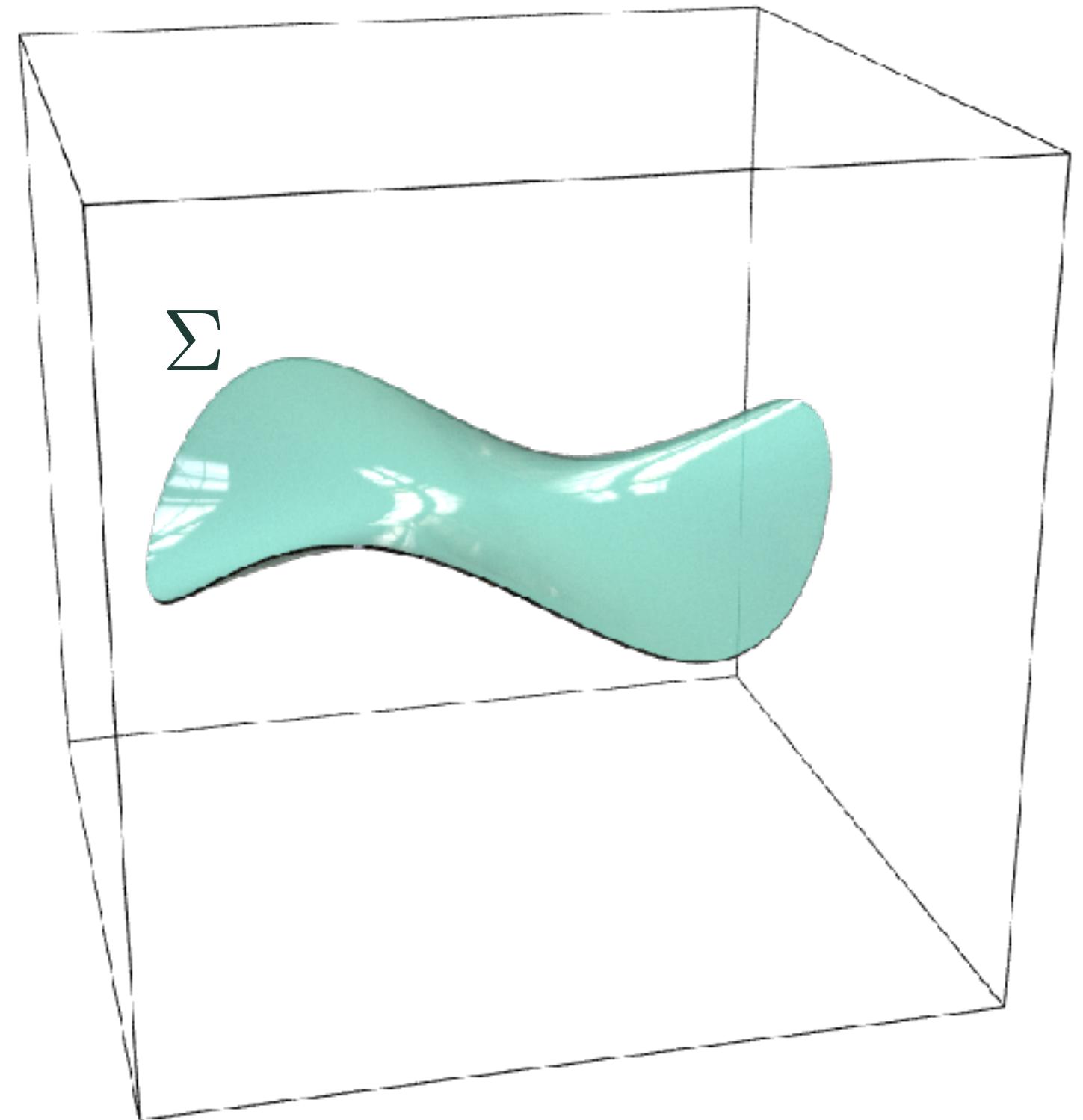
Dirac-delta 3-form

$\eta = f dx + g dy + h dz$: a test 1-form

$$\delta_\Gamma : \eta \mapsto \int_\Gamma \eta$$

Dirac-delta form for a curve Γ

1-forms as surfaces



$$\int_M \omega \wedge \delta_\Sigma = \int_\Sigma \omega$$

$\omega = Fdydz + Gdzdx + Hdxdy$: a test 2-form

$$\varphi \mapsto \varphi(x_p, y_p, z_p)$$

Dirac-delta 3-form

$$\delta_\Gamma : \eta \mapsto \int_\Gamma \eta$$

Dirac-delta 2-form of a curve Γ

$$\delta_\Sigma : \omega \mapsto \int_\Sigma \omega$$

Dirac-delta 1-form of a surface Σ

Plateau problem

(the problem of minimal surfaces)

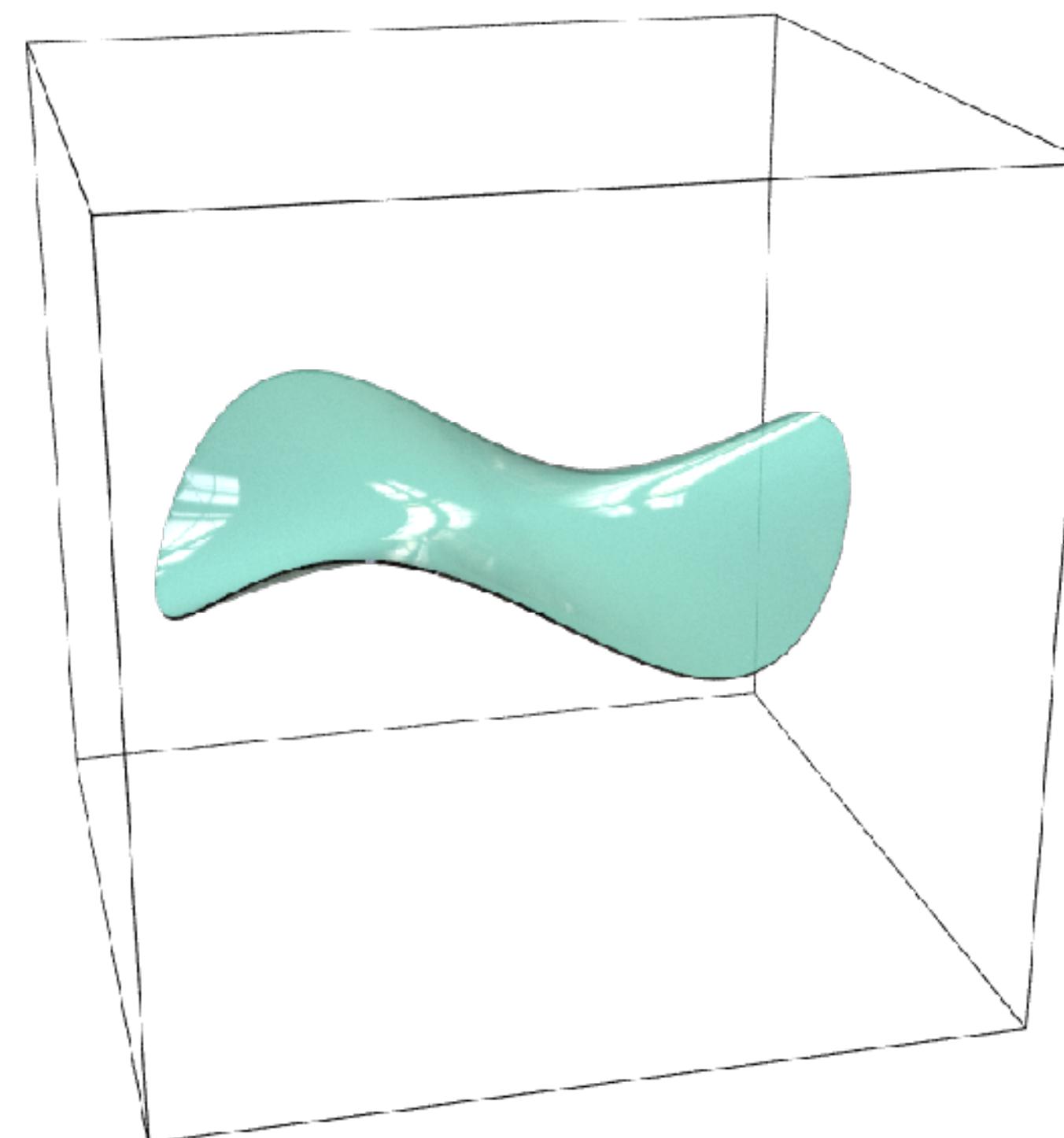
Variable

$$\Sigma$$

Constraint $\partial\Sigma = \Gamma$

a given space curve

Objective $\text{Area}(\Sigma)$



Plateau problem

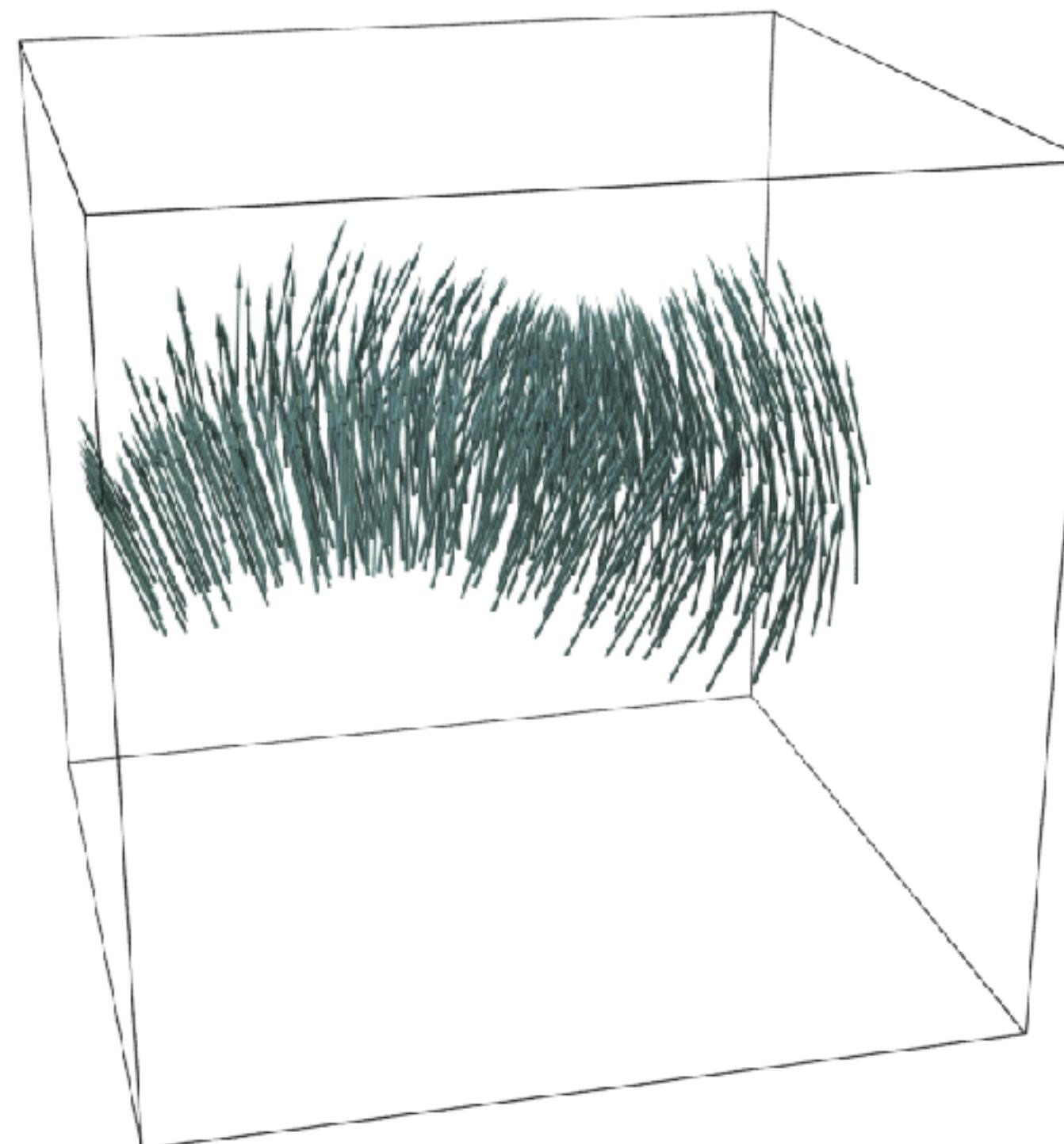
(the problem of minimal surfaces)

Variable

$$\delta_{\Sigma}$$

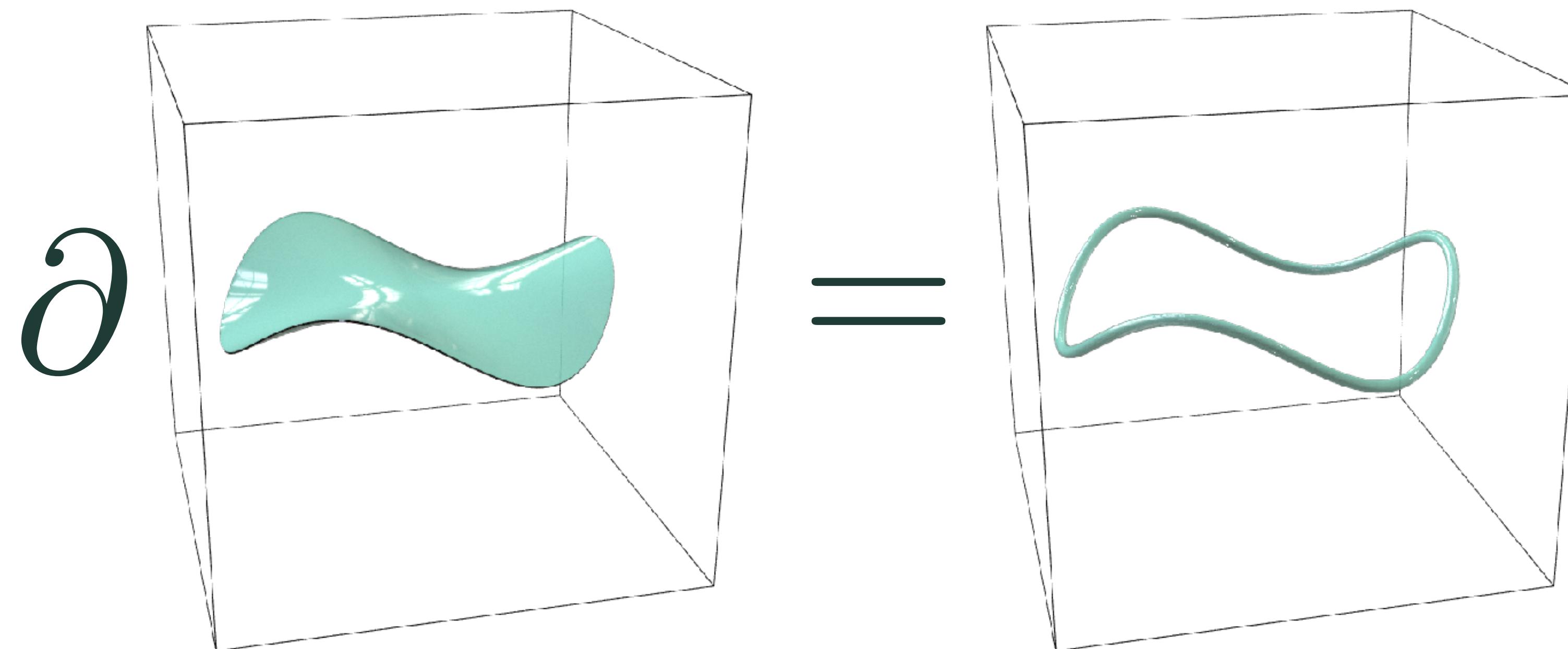
Constraint $\partial\Sigma = \Gamma$ a given space curve

Objective Area(Σ)



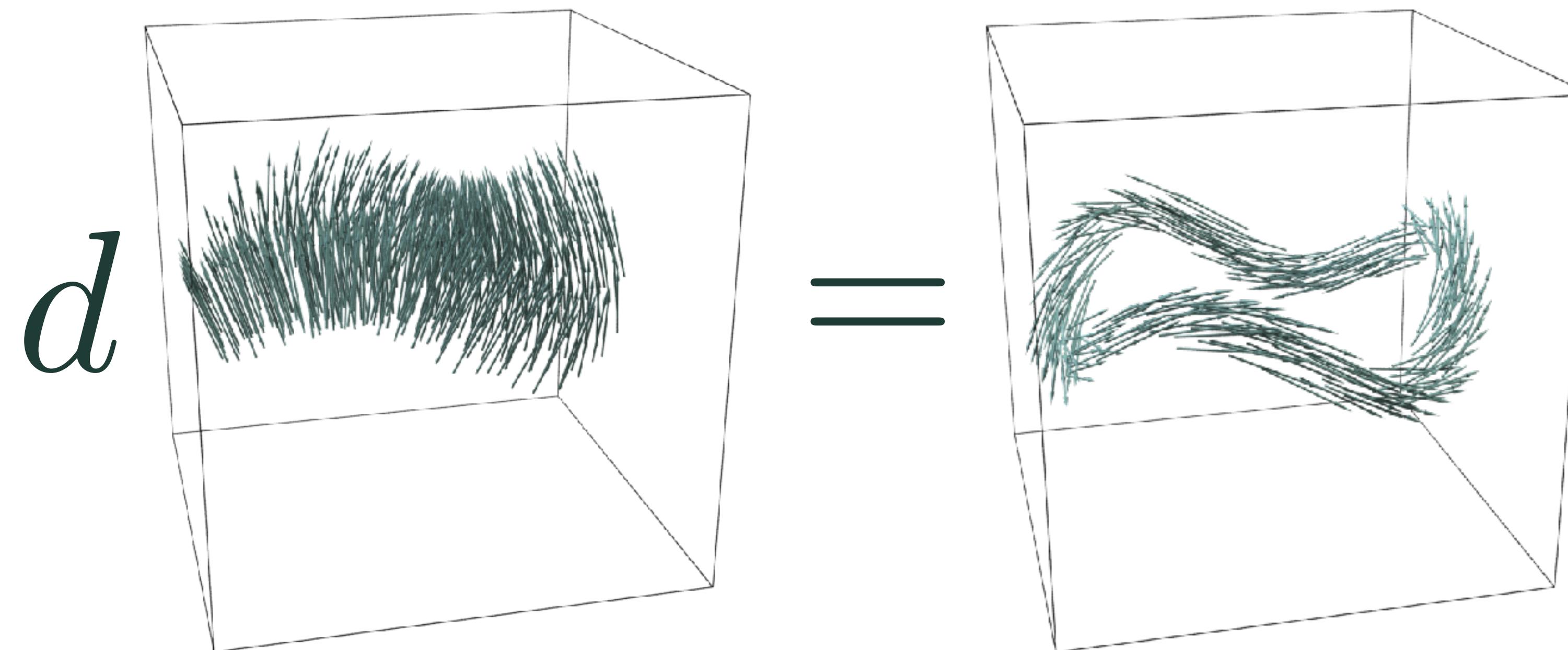
$$\partial\Sigma = \Gamma$$

the boundary constraint



$$\partial\Sigma = \Gamma$$
$$d\delta_\Sigma = \delta_\Gamma$$

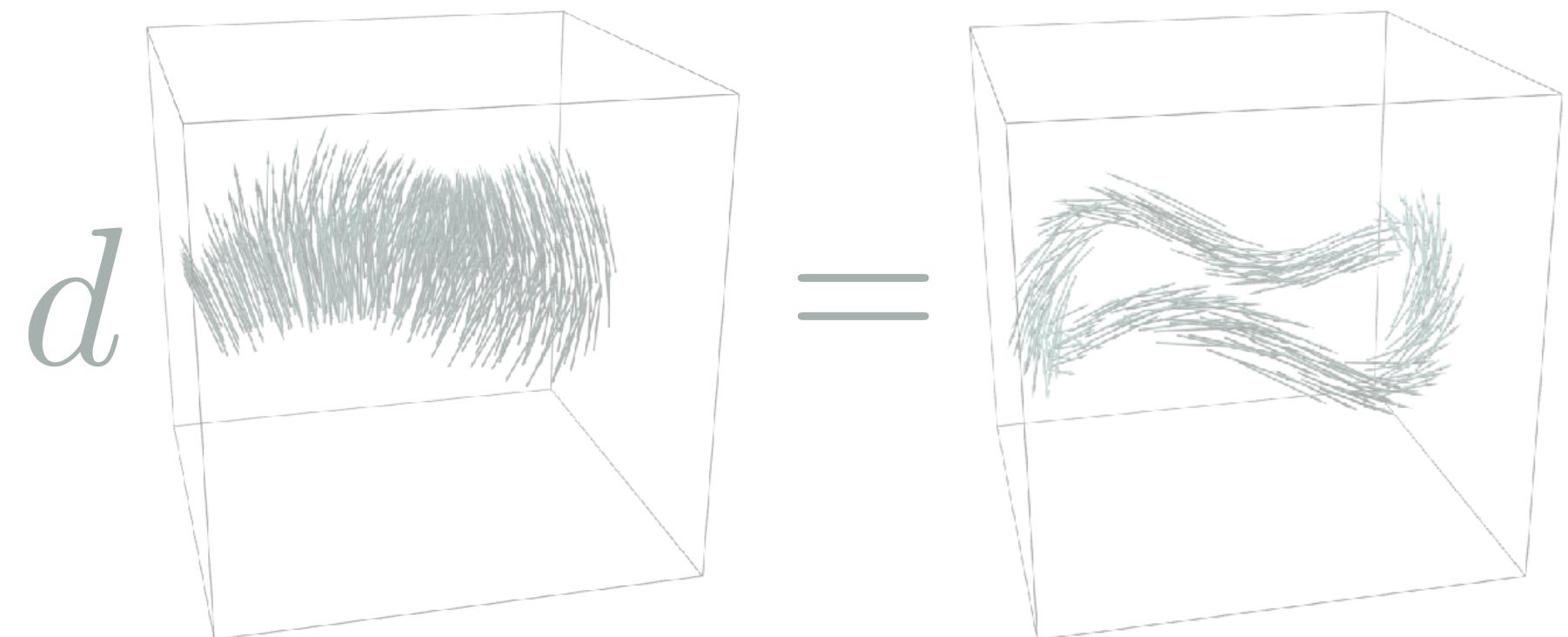
the boundary constraint



$$\partial\Sigma = \Gamma$$
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the boundary constraint

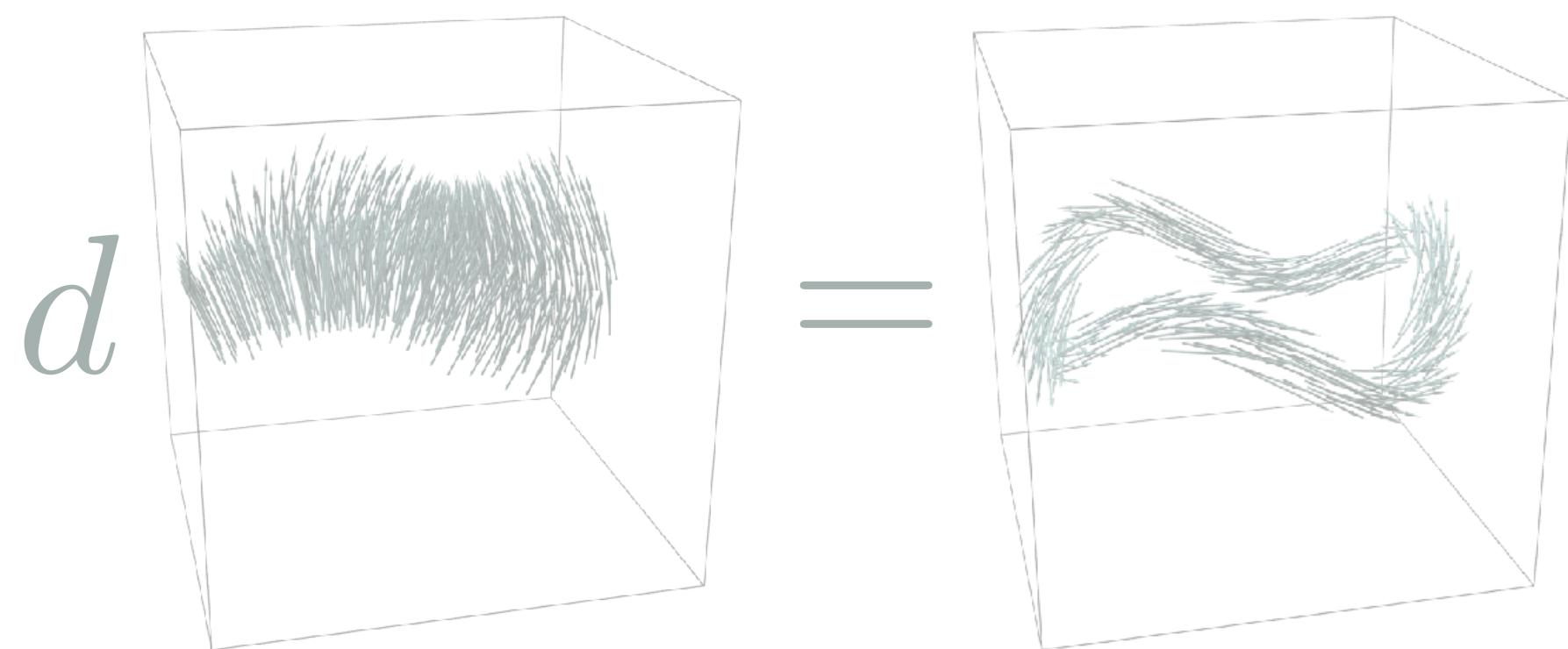
- Stokes' Theorem $\int_{\partial N} \nu = \int_N d\nu$
- In other words, $\delta_{\partial N}[\nu] = \delta_N \circ d[\nu]$



$$\partial\Sigma = \Gamma$$
$$d\delta_\Sigma = \delta_\Gamma$$

the boundary constraint

- f' is the weak derivative of f if $\forall \varphi \in C^\infty, \int \varphi f' = \oint \varphi f - \int \varphi' f$



$$\frac{\partial \Sigma}{d\delta_\Sigma} = \Gamma$$

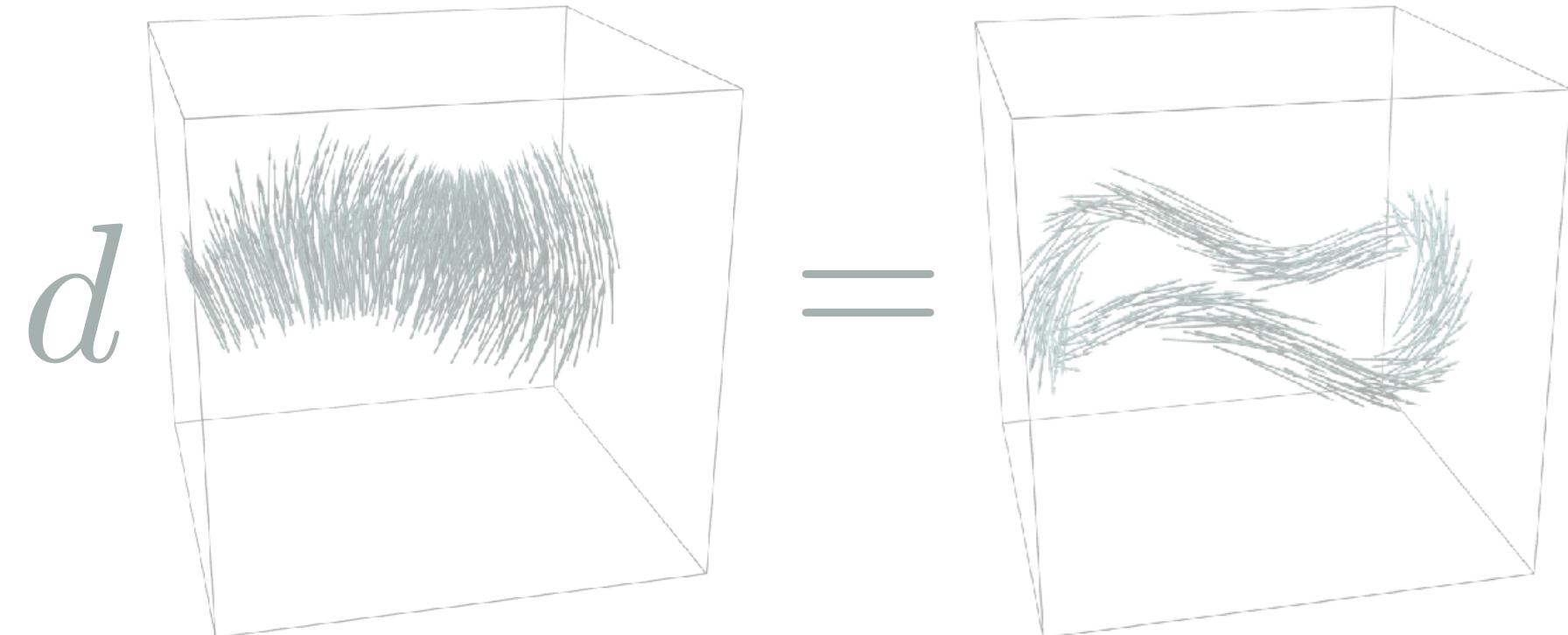
the boundary constraint

- f' is the weak derivative of f if $\forall \varphi \in C^\infty, \int \varphi f' = \oint \varphi f - \int \varphi' f$

- $d\eta$ is the weak derivative of $\eta \in \Omega^{n-k}$ if

$$\forall \omega \in C^\infty \Omega^{k-1}(M), (-1)^{k-1} \int_M \omega \wedge d\eta = \oint_{\partial M} \omega \wedge \eta - \int_M d\omega \wedge \eta$$

an arbitrary smooth (k-1) form



$$\partial\Sigma = \Gamma$$

$$d\delta_\Sigma = \delta_\Gamma$$

the boundary constraint

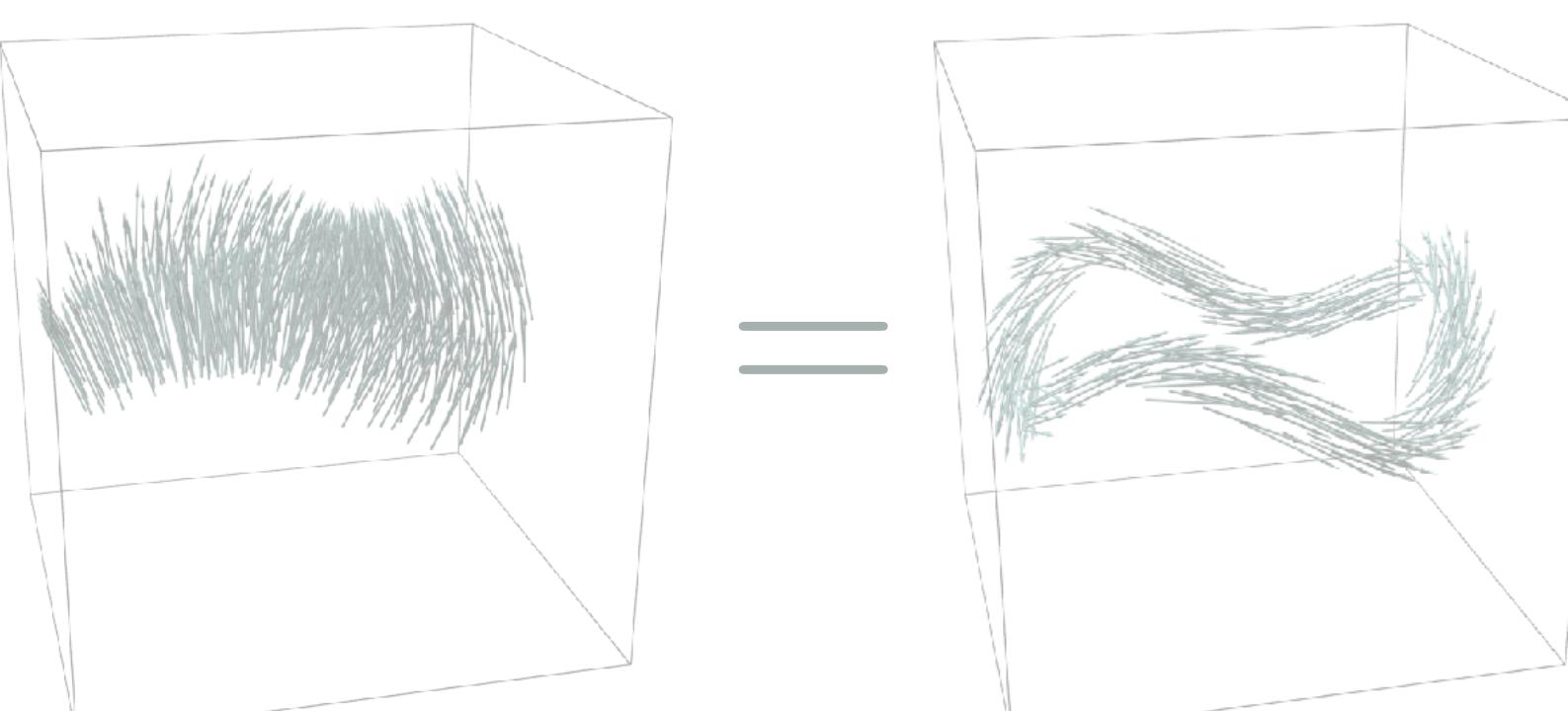
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an arbitrary smooth (k-1) form

- For Dirac-delta 1-form $\eta = \delta_\Sigma$,

$$(-1) \int_M \omega \wedge d\delta_\Sigma = \oint_{\partial M} \omega \wedge \delta_\Sigma - \int_M d\omega \wedge \delta_\Sigma$$

$$d$$


$$=$$

$$= - \int_M d\omega \wedge \delta_\Sigma$$

$$= - \oint_{\partial\Sigma} \omega = - \int_M \omega \wedge \delta_{\partial\Sigma}$$

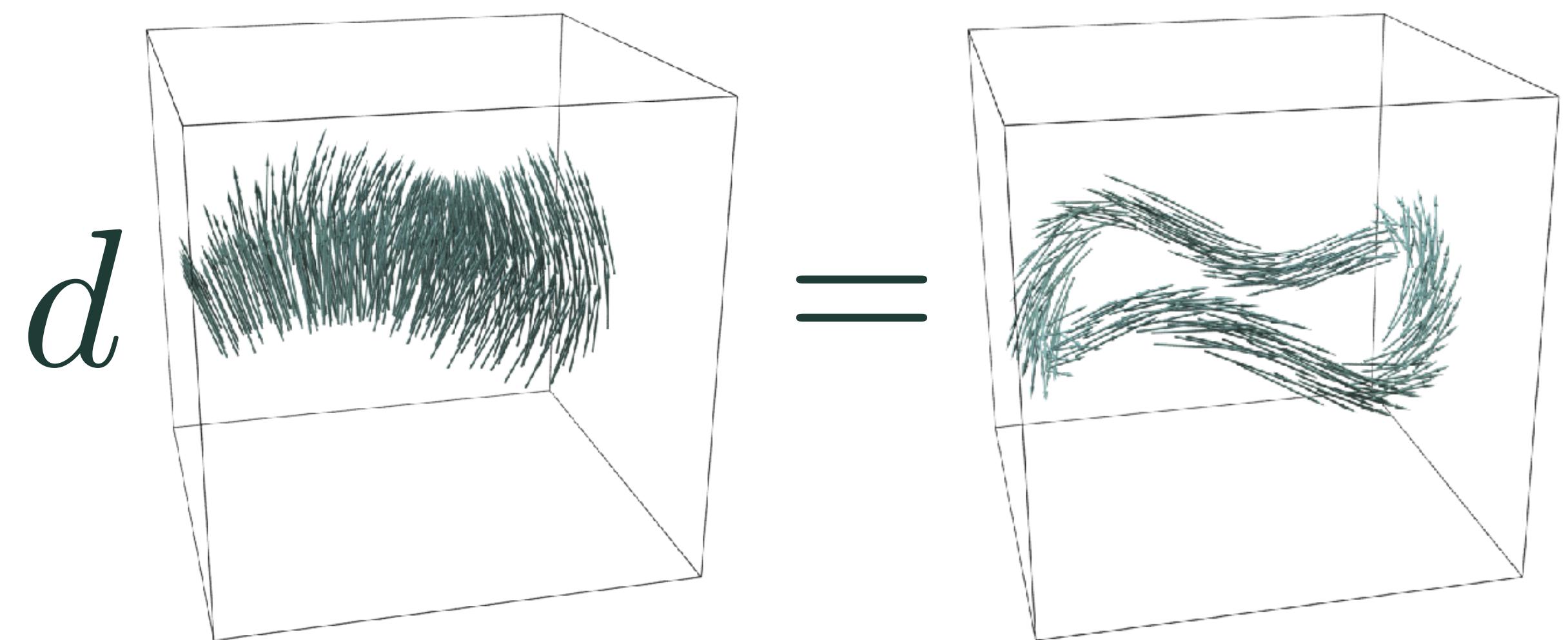
Plateau problem

(the problem of minimal surfaces)

Variable δ_Σ

Constraint $\partial\Sigma = \Gamma$ a given space curve

Objective Area(Σ)



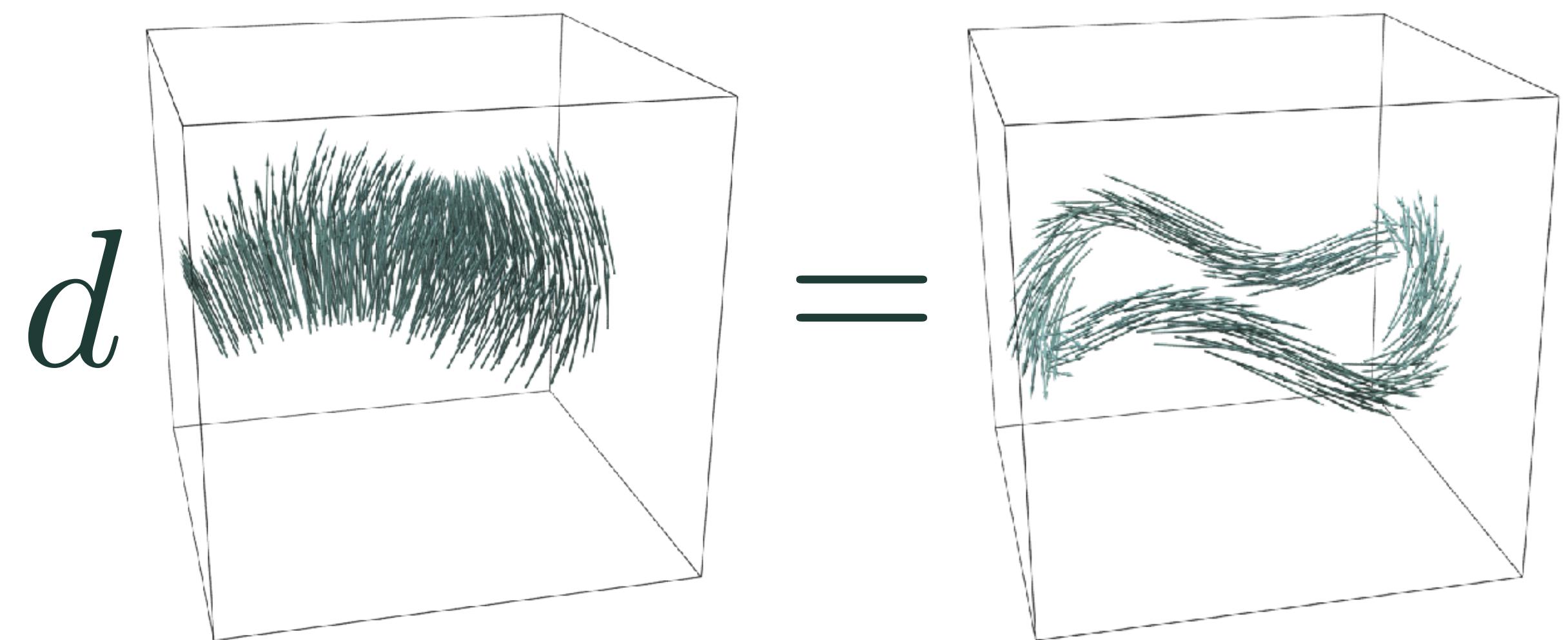
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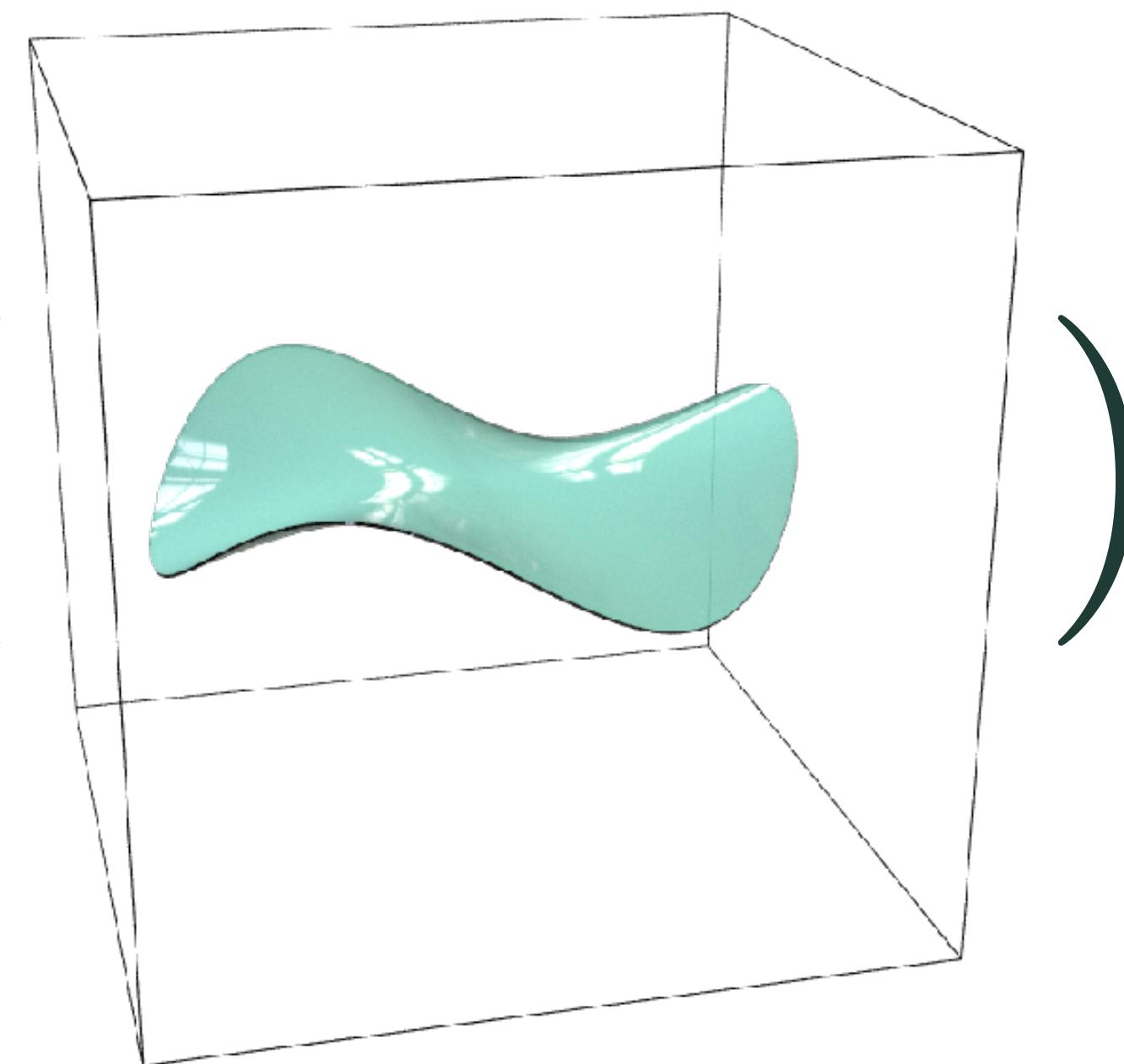
Objective Area(Σ)



$\text{Area}(\Sigma)$

the area functional

$\text{Area}($

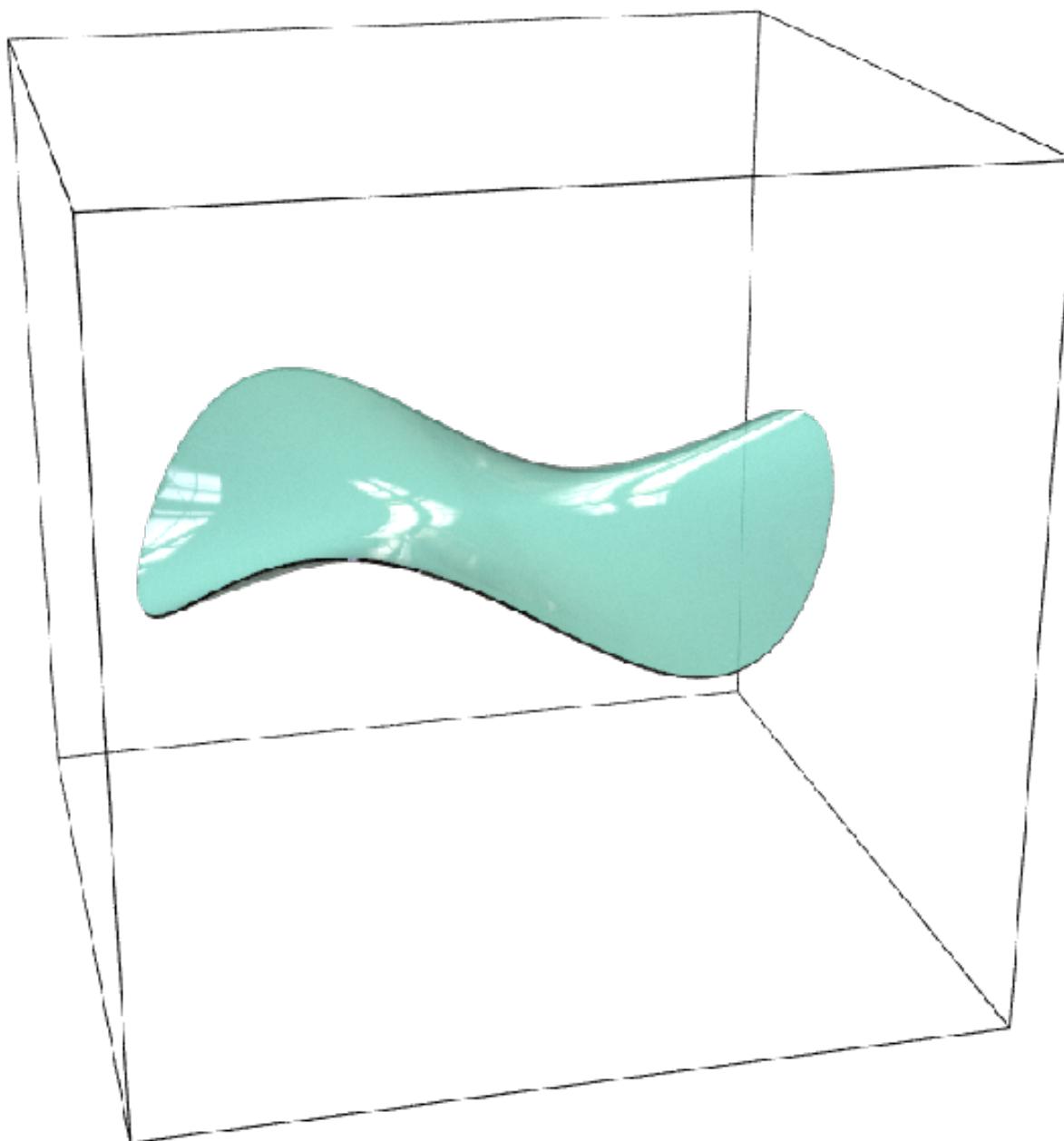


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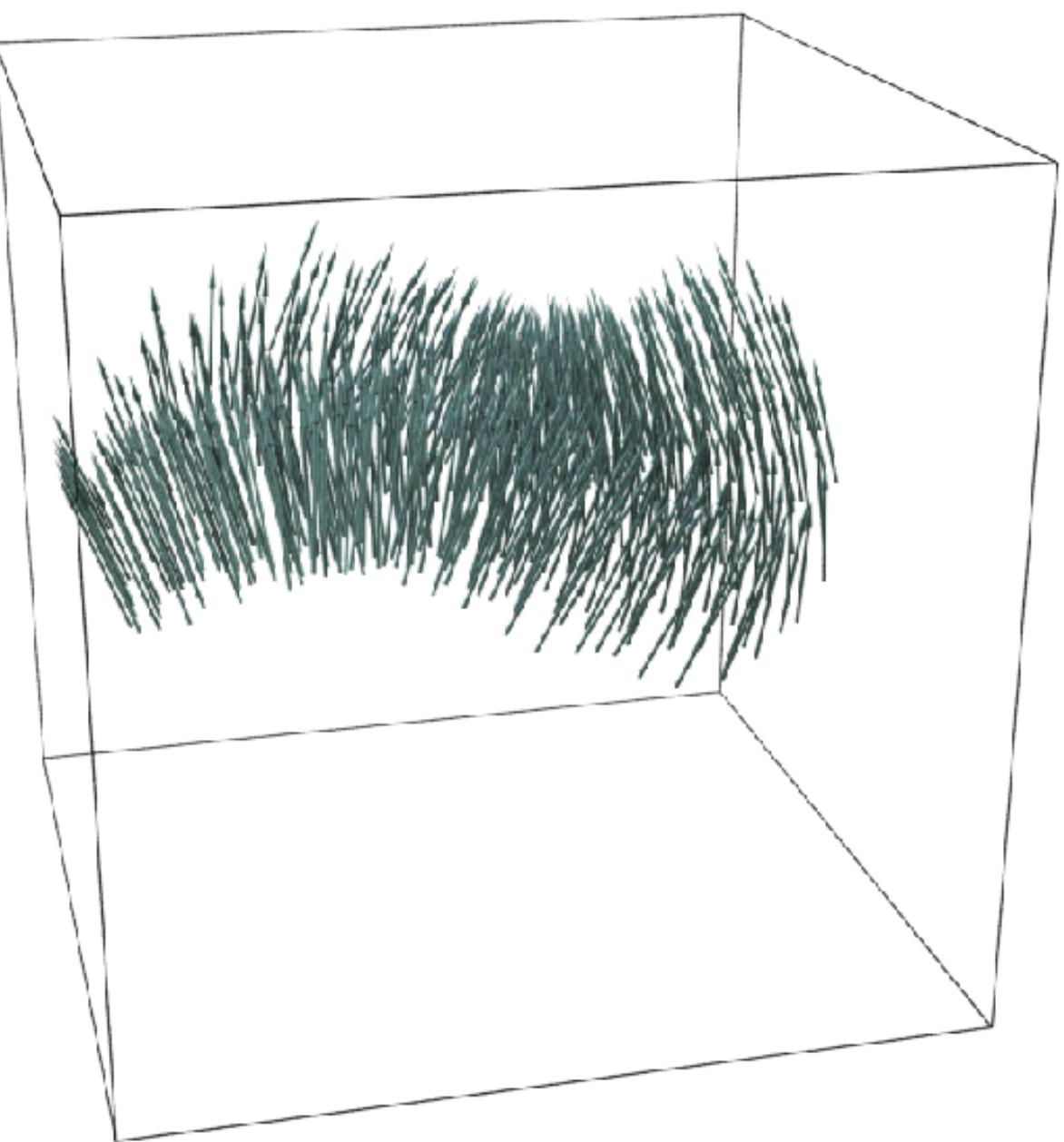
$$\text{Area}(\Sigma) = \|\delta_\Sigma\|_{\text{mass}}$$

the area functional

$$\text{Area}() = \| \quad \|_{\text{mass}}$$



$$= \|$$



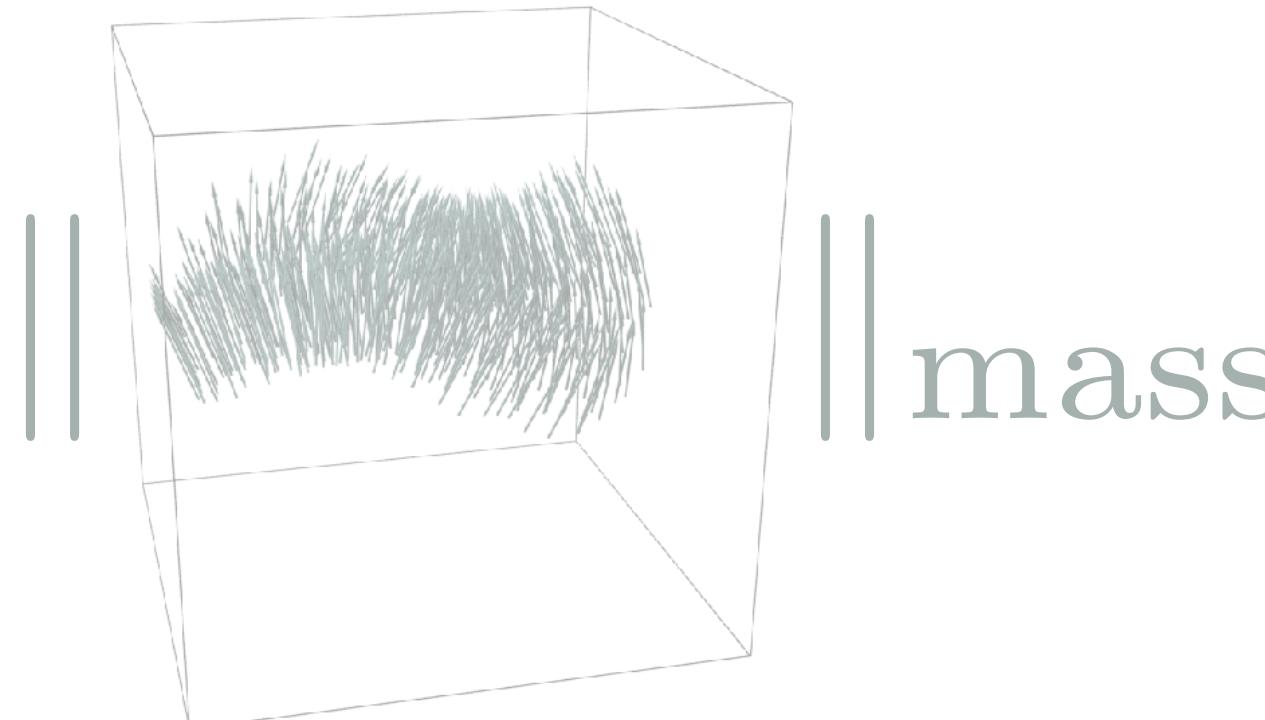
$$\|_{\text{mass}}$$

$$\text{Area}(\Sigma) = \|\delta_\Sigma\|_{\text{mass}}$$

the area functional = operator norm w.r.t. sup-norm

- Operator norm for $(n-k)$ -form $\eta : C^\infty \Omega^k(M) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$

$$\|\eta\|_{\text{mass}} = \sup_{\omega \in C^\infty \Omega^k(M), \|\omega\|_{L^\infty} \leq 1} |\eta[\omega]|$$



$$\text{Area}(\Sigma) = \|\delta_\Sigma\|_{\text{mass}}$$

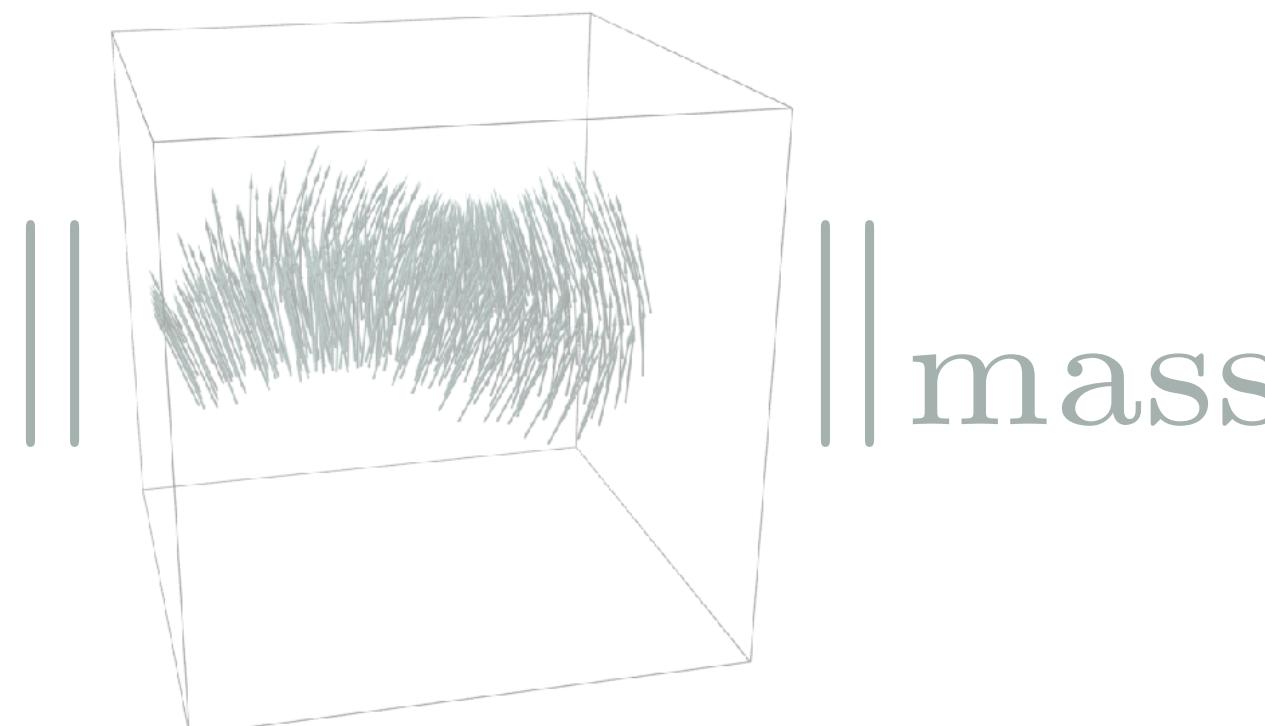
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- Sup-norm for k -smooth form $\omega \in C^\infty \Omega^k(M)$

$$\|\omega\|_{L^\infty} = \sup_{p \in M} |\omega|_p$$



$$\text{Area}(\Sigma) = \|\delta_\Sigma\|_{\text{mass}}$$

the area functional = operator norm w.r.t. sup-norm

- Operator norm for $(n-k)$ -form $\eta : C^\infty \Omega^k(M) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$

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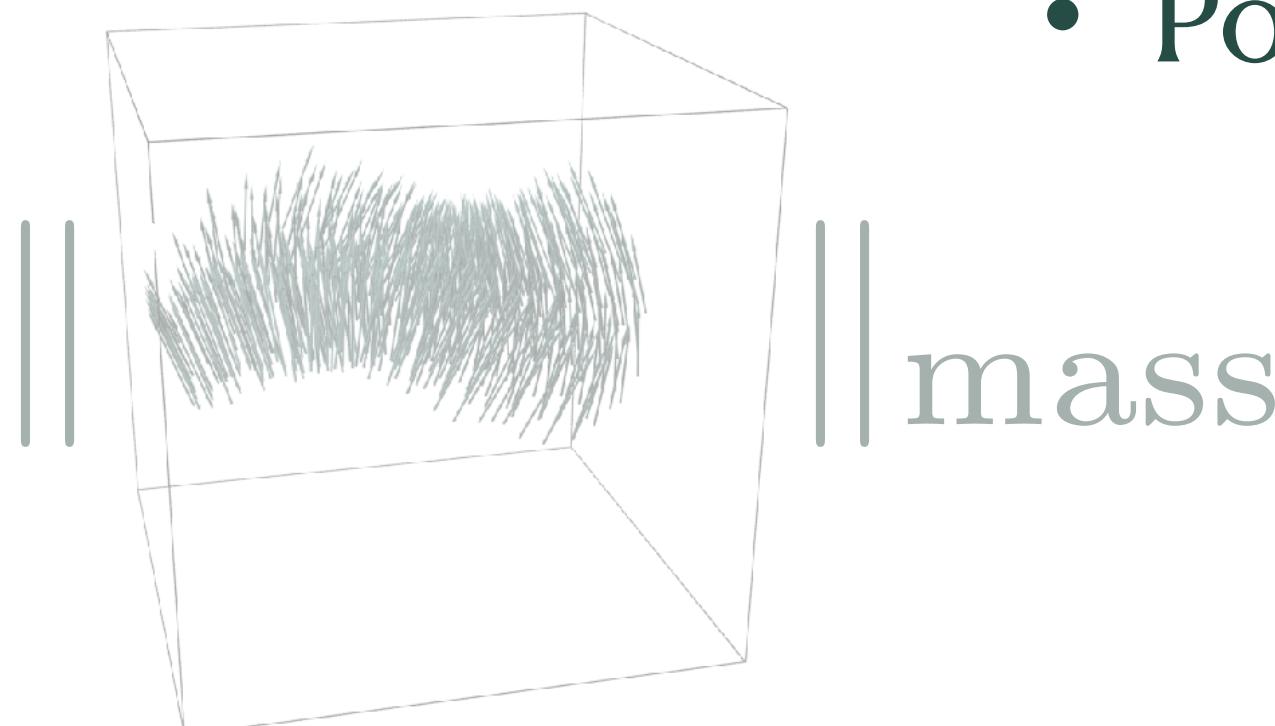
- Sup-norm for k -smooth form $\omega \in C^\infty \Omega^k(M)$

$$\|\omega\|_{L^\infty} = \sup_{p \in M} |\omega|_p$$

- Pointwise Euclidean ℓ^2 norm

$$|\omega|_p = \sqrt{\star(\omega \wedge \star\omega)_p}$$

$$\omega = f_1 dx_2 dx_3 + f_2 dx_3 dx_1 + f_3 dx_1 dx_2, |\omega| = \sqrt{f_1^2 + f_2^2 + f_3^2}$$

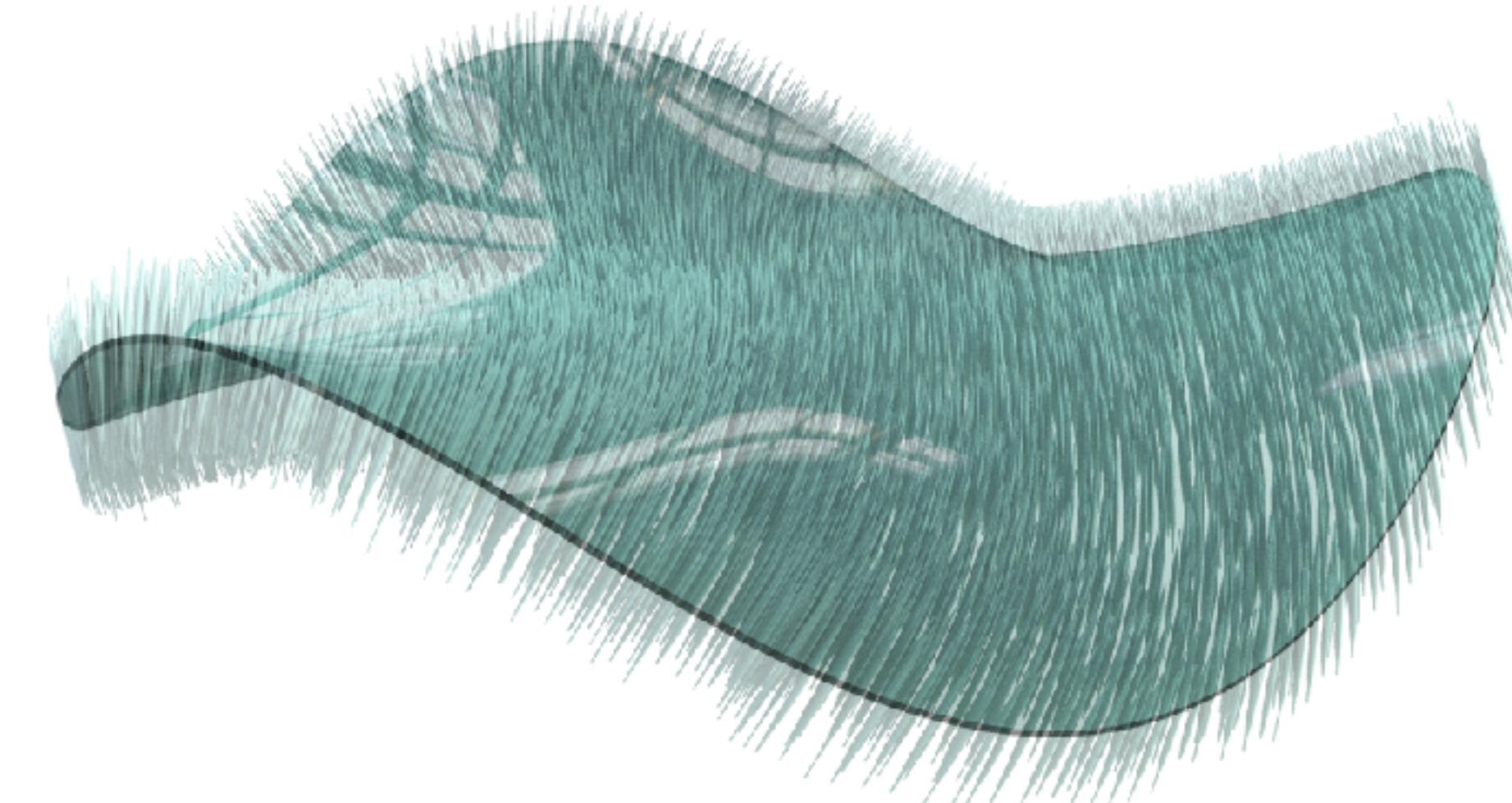
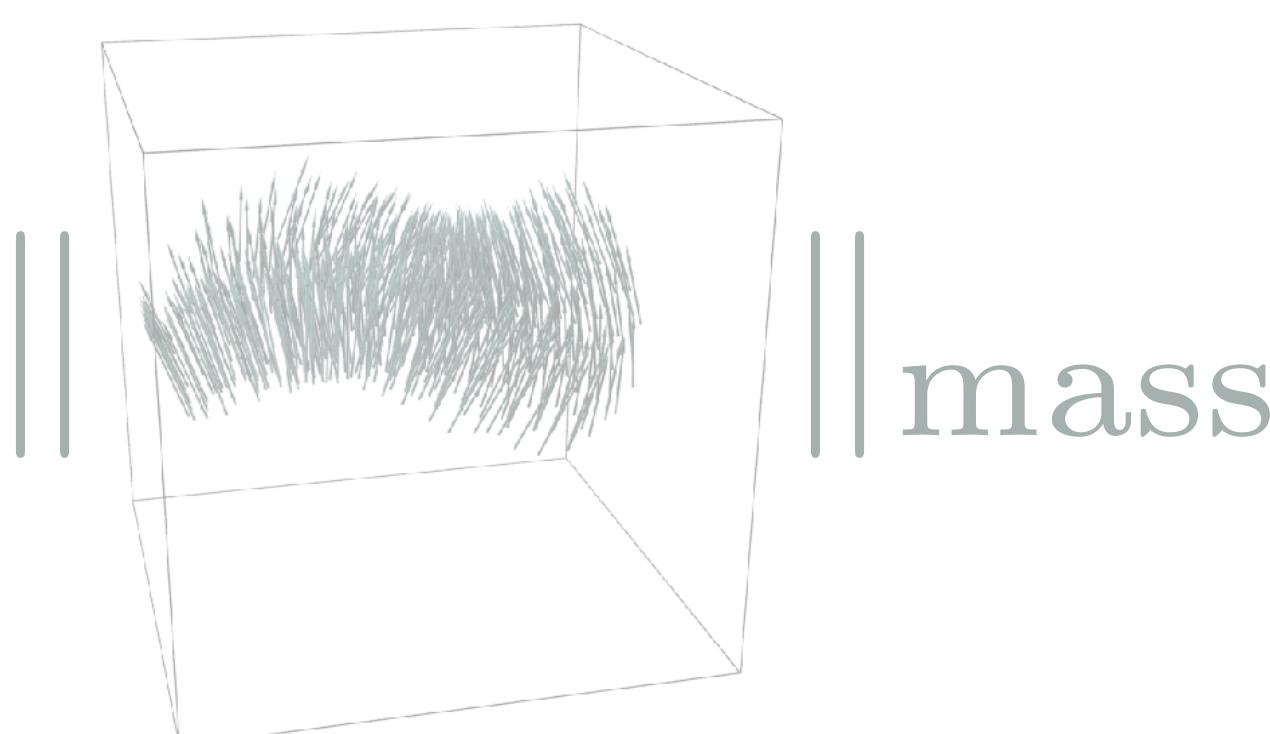


$$\text{Area}(\Sigma) = \|\delta_\Sigma\|_{\text{mass}}$$

the area functional = operator norm w.r.t. sup-norm

- Dirac-delta form for surfaces $\delta_\Sigma^\sharp \approx \frac{1}{\epsilon} \mathbf{n}_\Sigma$

$$\begin{aligned}\|\delta_\Sigma\|_{\text{mass}} &= \sup_{\substack{\omega \in C^\infty \Omega^k(M) \\ \|\omega\|_{L^\infty} \leq 1}} \left| \int_M \omega \wedge \delta_\Sigma \right| \\ &= \sup_{\substack{\mathbf{v} \in C^\infty(M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^3) \\ |\mathbf{v}| \leq 1}} \int_\Sigma \mathbf{v} \cdot \mathbf{n}_\Sigma dS \\ &= \int_\Sigma \mathbf{n}_\Sigma \cdot \mathbf{n}_\Sigma dS = \int_\Sigma 1 dS = \text{Area}(\Sigma)\end{aligned}$$



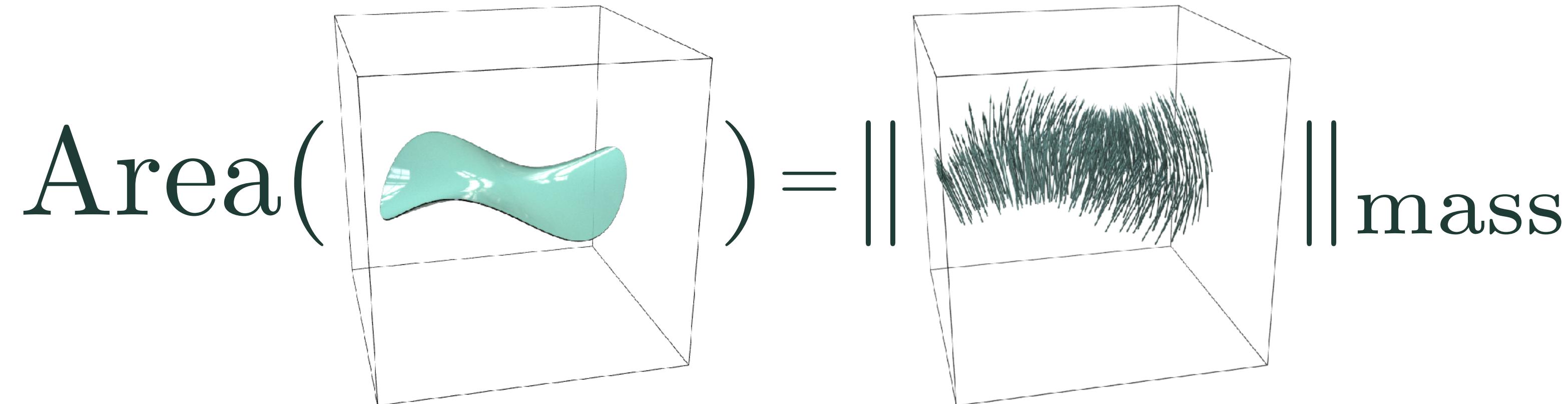
Plateau problem

(the problem of minimal surfaces)

Variable δ_Σ

Constraint $d\delta_\Sigma = \delta_\Gamma$ a given space curve

Objective Area(Σ)



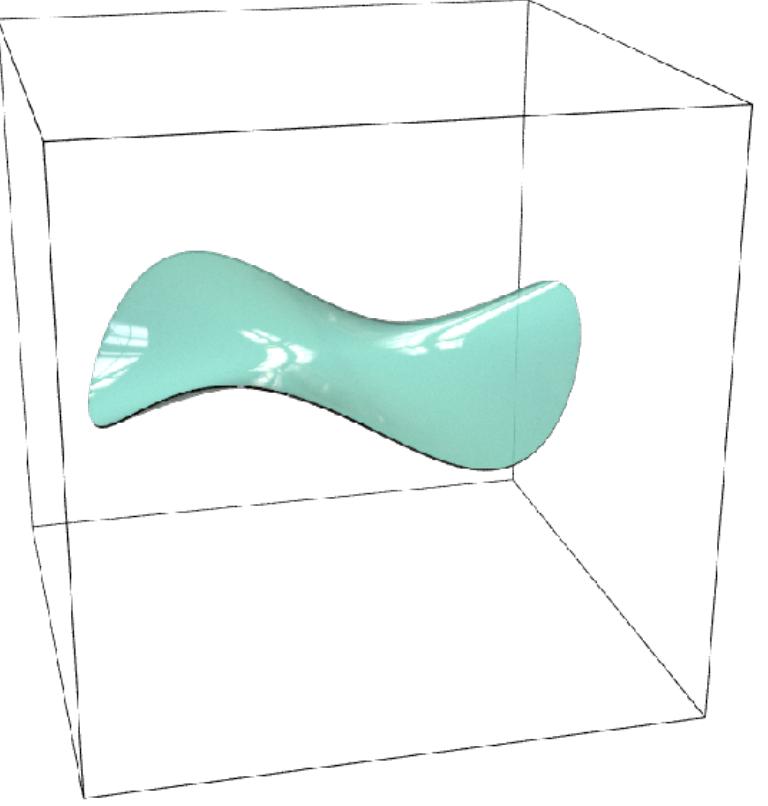
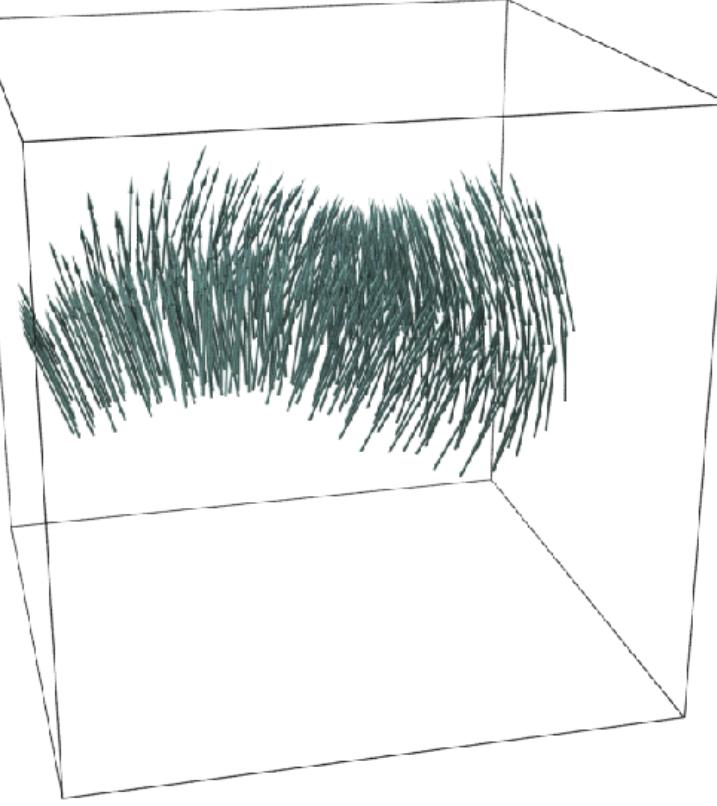
Plateau problem

(the problem of minimal surfaces)

Variable δ_Σ

Constraint $d\delta_\Sigma = \delta_\Gamma$ a given space curve

Objective $\|\delta_\Sigma\|_{\text{mass}}$

Area() = ||  || mass

Plateau problem

(the problem of minimal surfaces)

Variable δ_Σ

Constraint $d\delta_\Sigma = \delta_\Gamma$
a given space curve

Objective $\|\delta_\Sigma\|_{\text{mass}}$

Plateau problem

(the problem of minimal surfaces)

Variable δ_Σ

Constraint $d\delta_\Sigma = \delta_\Gamma$
a given space curve

Objective $\|\delta_\Sigma\|_{\text{mass}}$

Variable η any 1-form

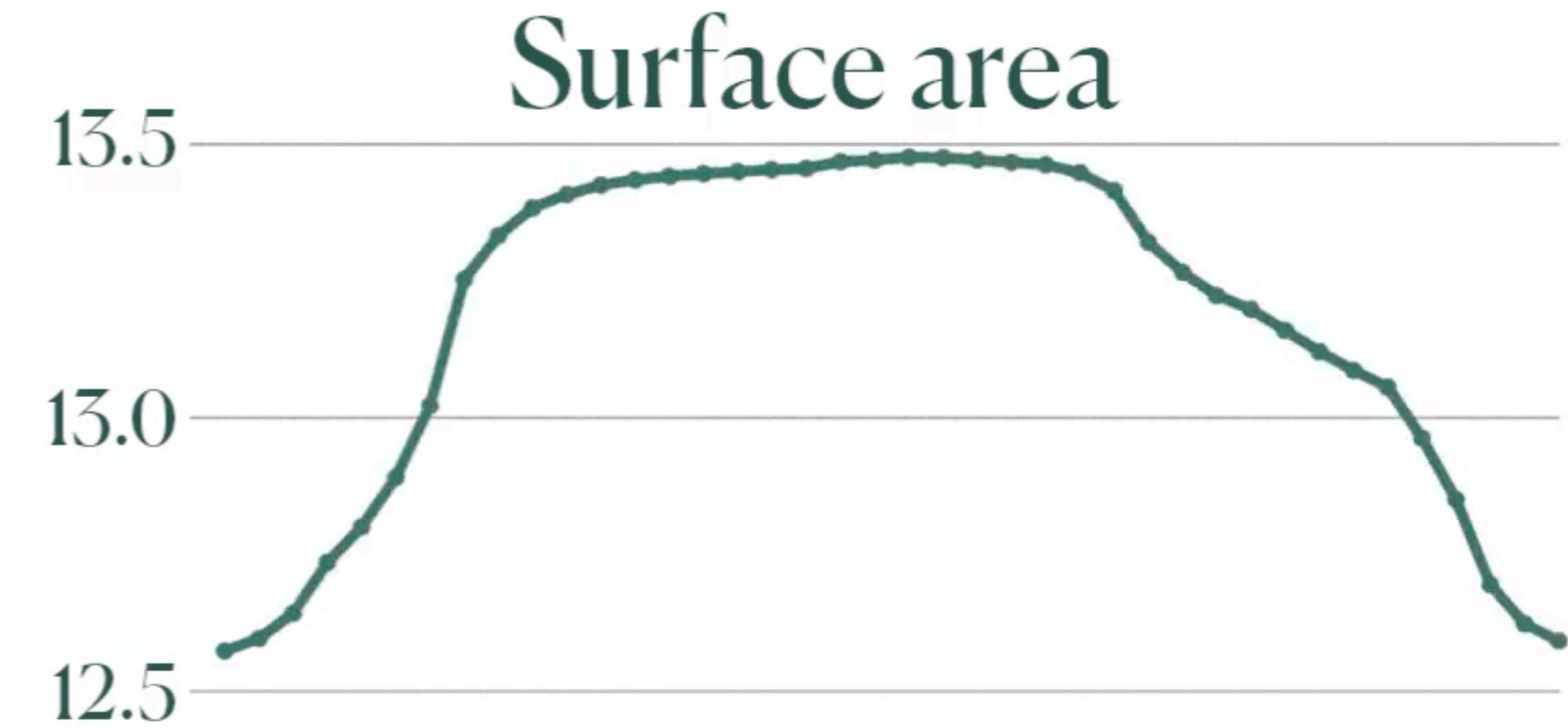
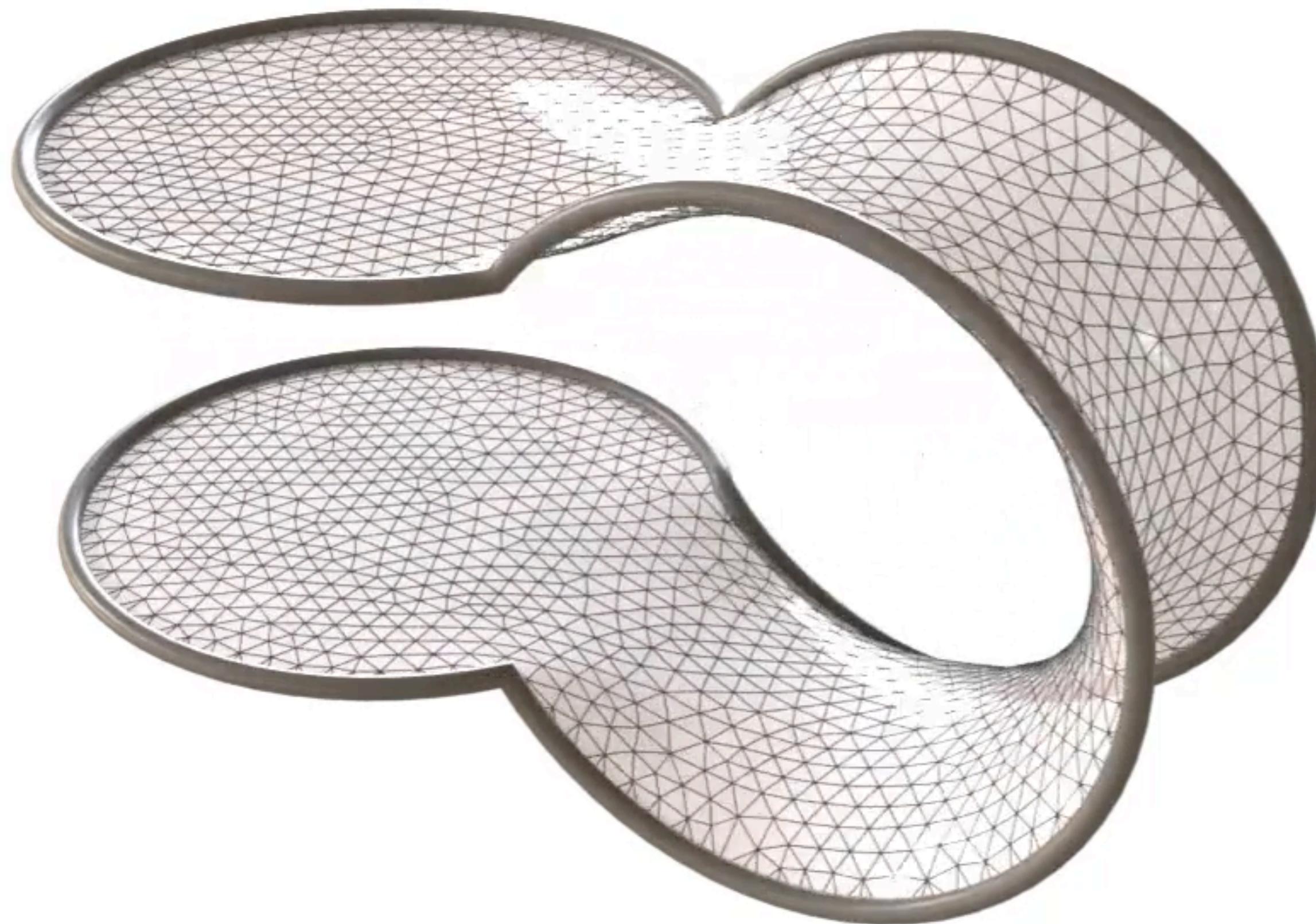
Constraint $d\eta = \delta_\Gamma$

Objective $\|\eta\|_{\text{mass}}$

a convex problem

“Area functional is nonconvex.”

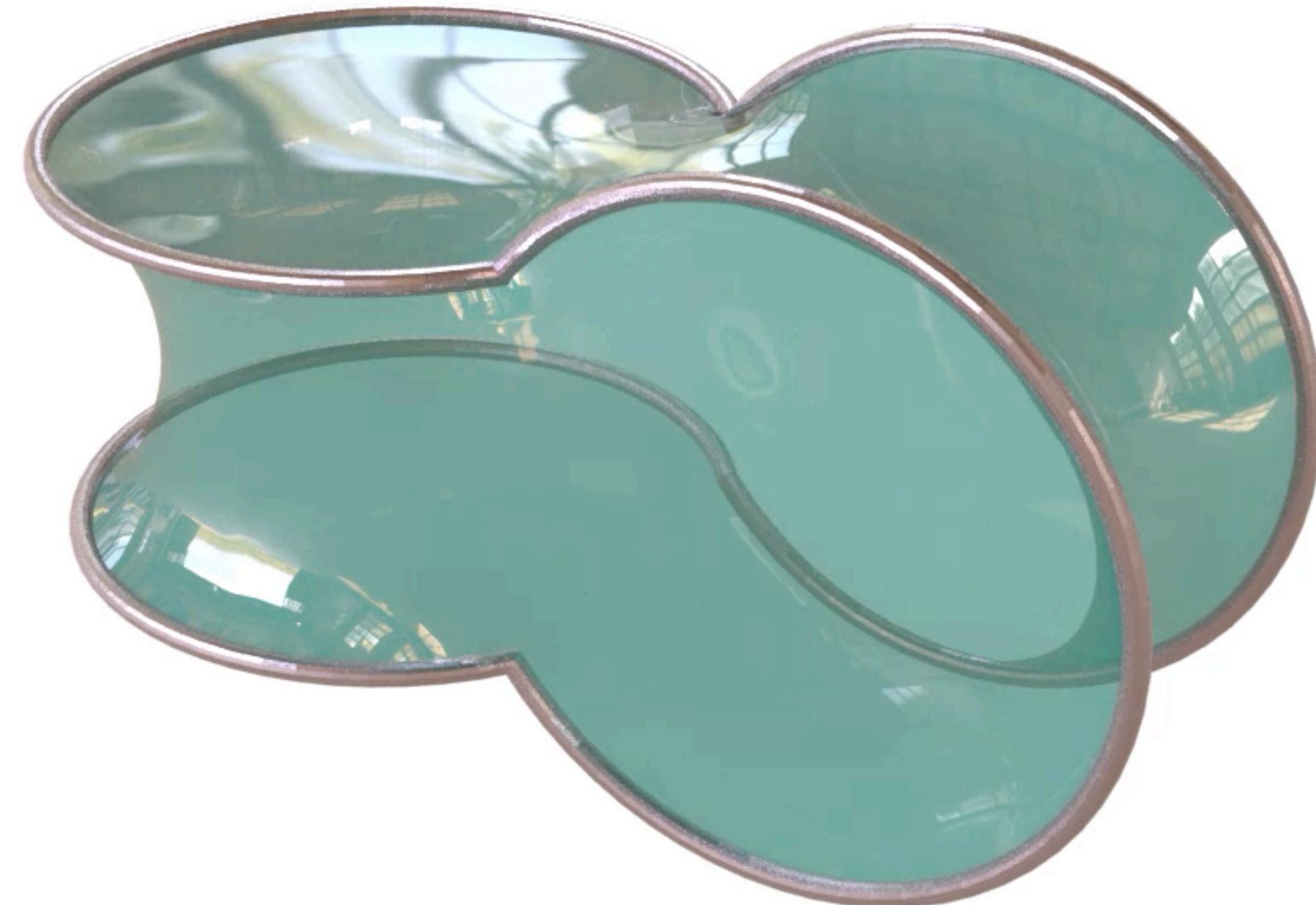
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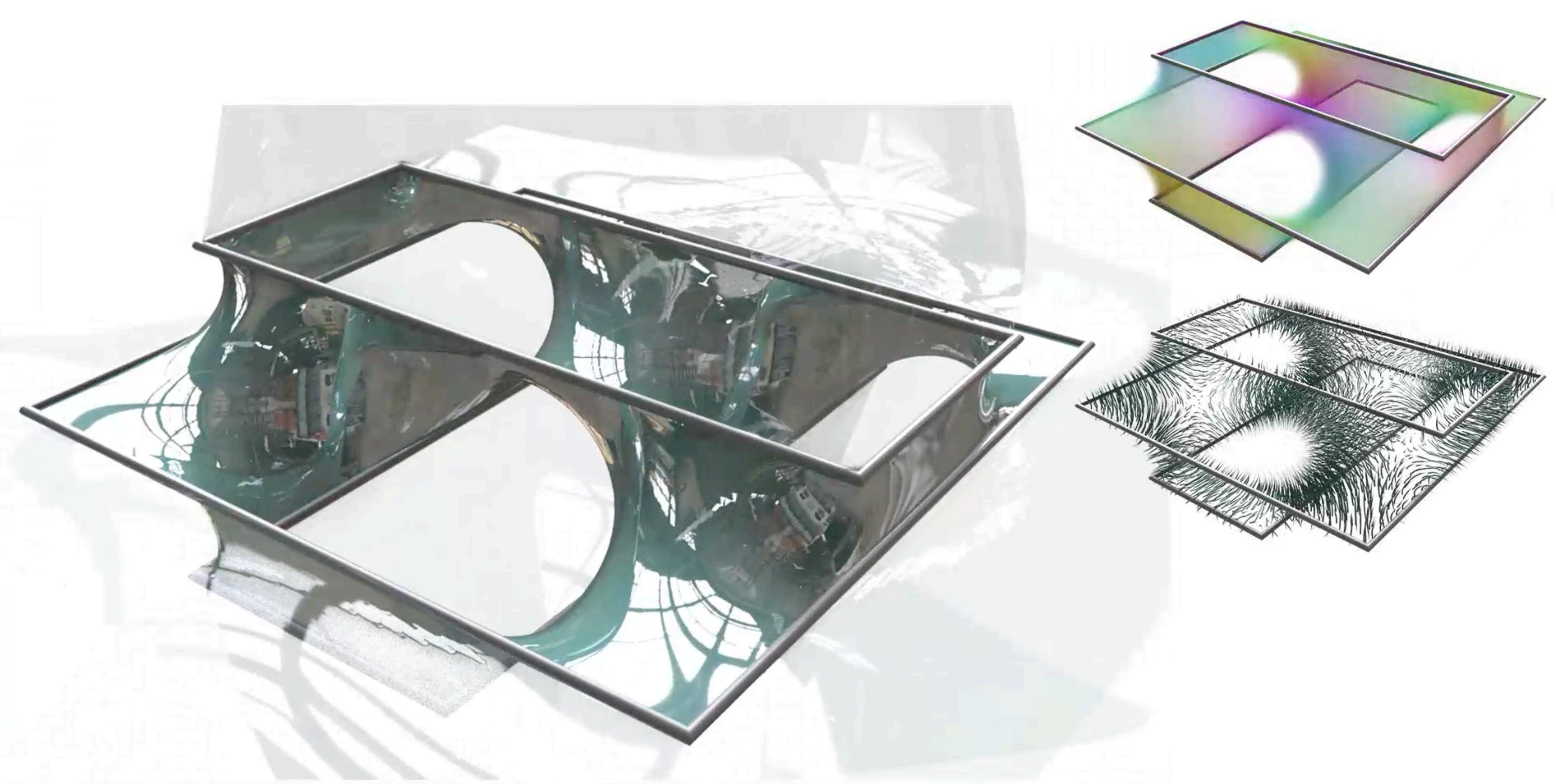


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“Area functional is no longer nonconvex.”

—with surface represented with differential forms.





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Relaxed Plateau problem

Variable η any 1-form

Constraint $d\eta = \delta_\Gamma$
a given space curve

Objective $\|\eta\|_{\text{mass}}$

if $H^1(M) = 0$

Feasible set $\mathcal{A} = \{\eta : d\eta = \delta_\Gamma\} = \eta_0 + \ker(d^1) = \eta_0 + \text{im}(d^0)$
an arbitrary feasible solution

$= \{\eta_0 + d\varphi : \varphi \in \Omega^0(M)\}$

$$\eta = \eta_0 + d\varphi$$

Fast ADMM algorithm

$$\underset{\varphi}{\text{minimize}} \langle \lambda d\varphi \rangle_{L^2(M)} + \frac{\tau}{2} \|d\varphi - \hat{\eta} + \eta_0\|_{L^2(M)}^2$$

complete squares
↔

$$\underset{\varphi}{\text{minimize}} \|d\varphi - \text{something}\|_{L^2(M)}^2$$

↔

$$\Delta\varphi = \text{some source term}$$

$$\underset{\eta}{\text{minimize}} \sum_p |\eta_p| - \langle \lambda_p, \eta_p \rangle + \frac{\tau}{2} |d\hat{\varphi}_p - \eta_p + \eta_{0,p}|^2$$

optimality formula
↔

$$\eta_p = \text{Shrink}_{\frac{1}{\tau}}(\text{some pointwise attribute})$$

$\underset{\mathbf{x}}{\text{minimize}} \|\mathbf{x}\| + \frac{\tau}{2} \|\mathbf{x} - \text{something}\|^2$
 $\mathbf{x} = \text{Shrink}_{\frac{1}{\tau}}(\text{something})$

Relaxed Plateau problem

Variable η any 1-form

Constraint $d\eta = \delta_\Gamma$
a given space curve

Objective $\|\eta\|_{\text{mass}}$

Feasible set $\mathcal{A} = \{\eta : d\eta = \delta_\Gamma\} = \eta_0 + \ker(d^1)$
an arbitrary feasible solution

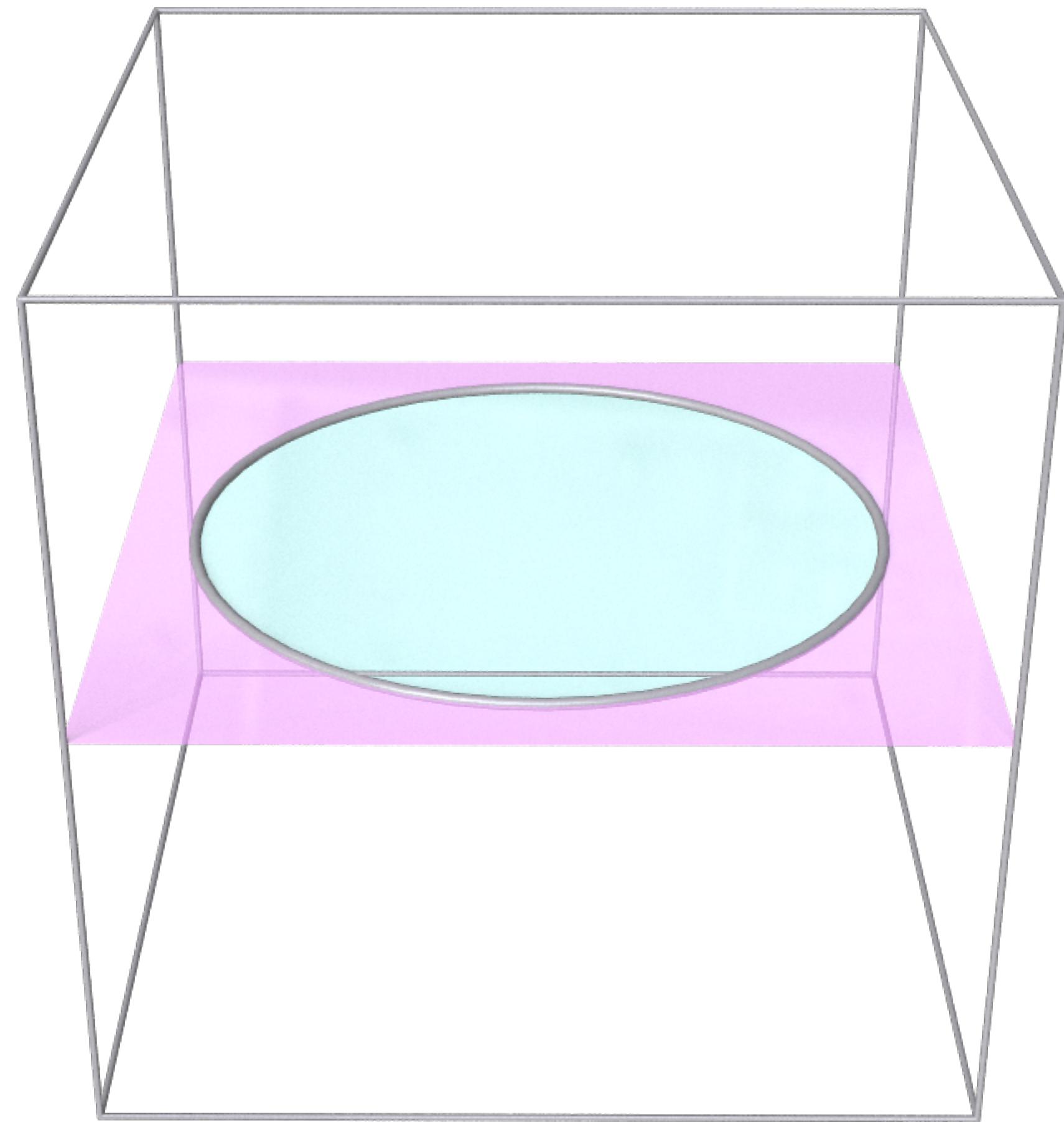
if $H^1(M) = 0$

$= \eta_0 + \text{im}(d^0)$
 $= \{\eta_0 + d\varphi : \varphi \in \Omega^0(M)\}$

$$\eta = \eta_0 + d\varphi$$

Plateau problem on 3-torus

periodic boundary artifact

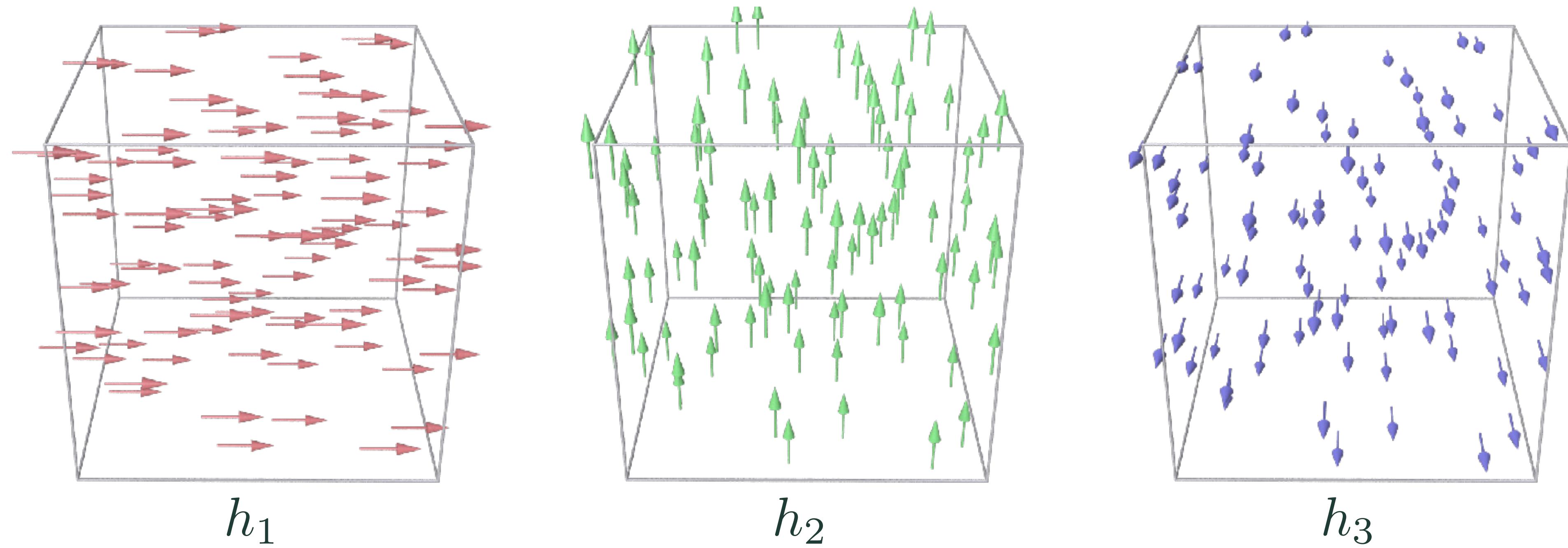


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What happened on the 3-torus?

Cohomology matters

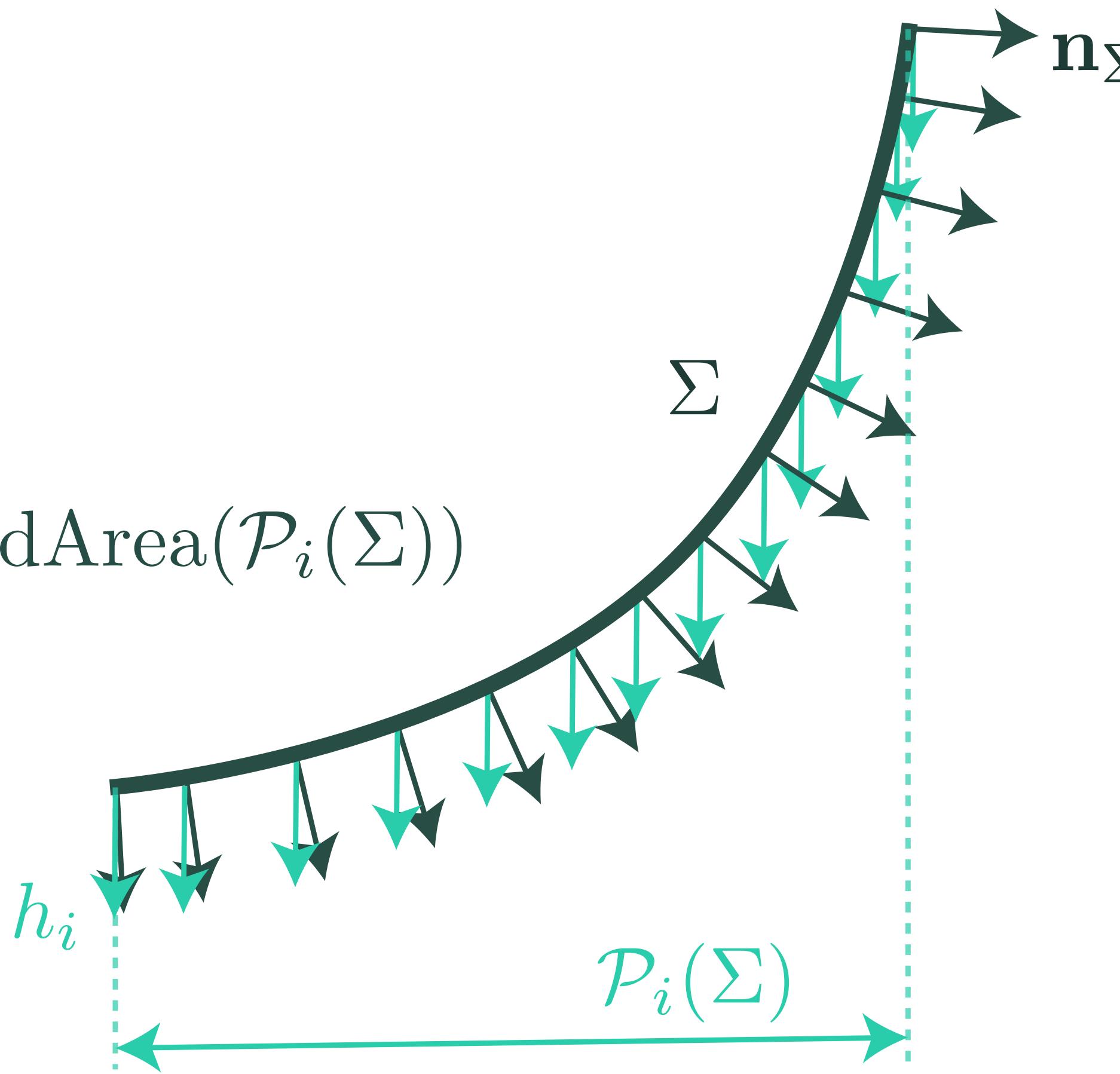
- Nontrivial cohomology $H^1(\mathbb{T}^3) = \ker(d^1)/\text{im}(d^0) \neq 0$
- Nontrivial harmonic forms (closed but not exact)



What happened on the 3-torus?

Cohomology matters

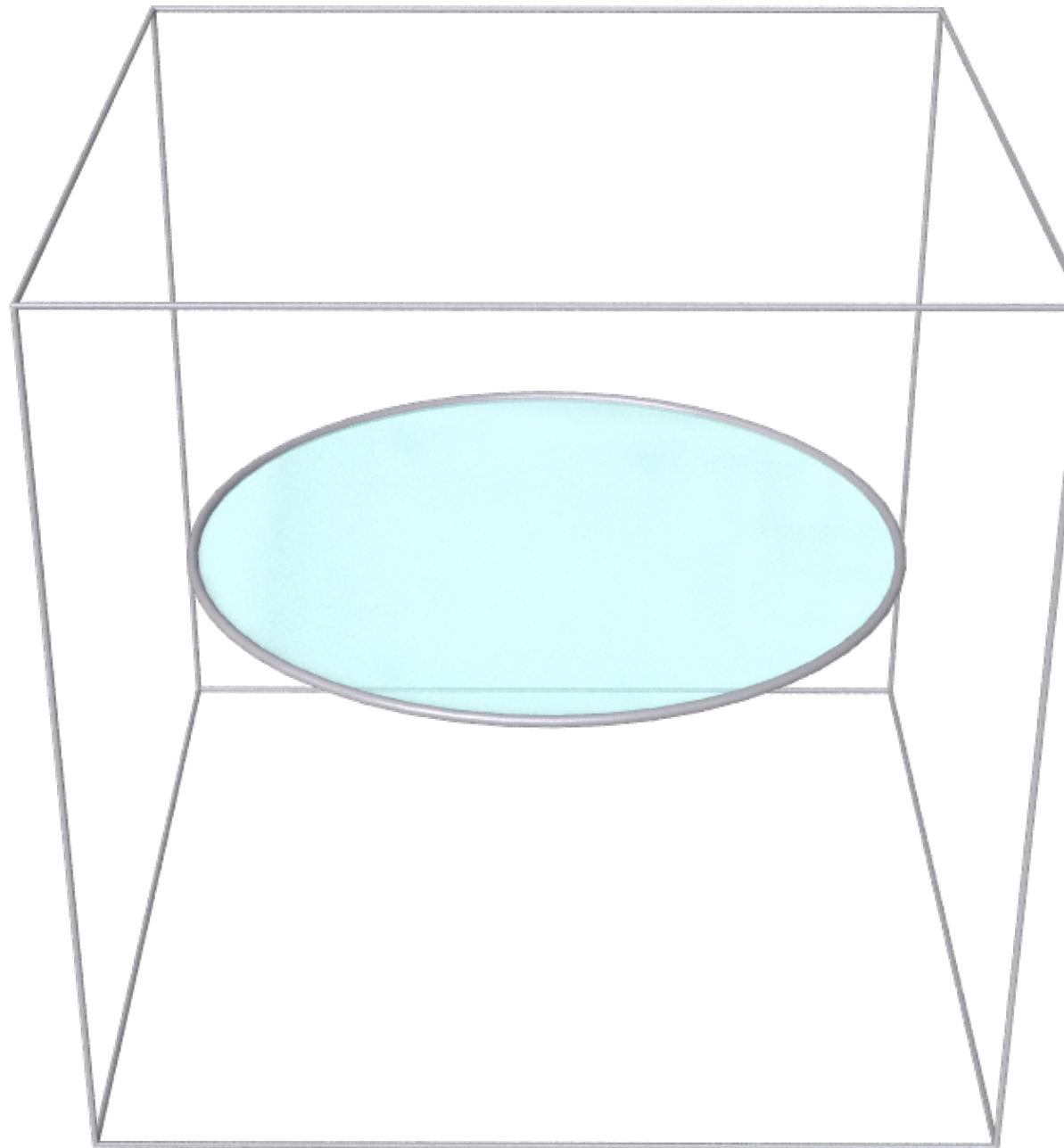
$$\begin{aligned}\int h_i \wedge \delta_\Sigma &= \int_\Sigma \mathbf{e}_i \cdot \mathbf{n}_\Sigma dS \\ &= \int_{\mathcal{P}_i(\Sigma)} 1 dS = \text{SignedArea}(\mathcal{P}_i(\Sigma))\end{aligned}$$



$$\int h_i \wedge \delta_\Sigma = \int_\Sigma \mathbf{e}_i \cdot \mathbf{n}_\Sigma dS \\ = \int_{\mathcal{P}_i(\Sigma)} 1 dS = \text{SignedArea}(\mathcal{P}_i(\Sigma))$$

Cohomology constraint

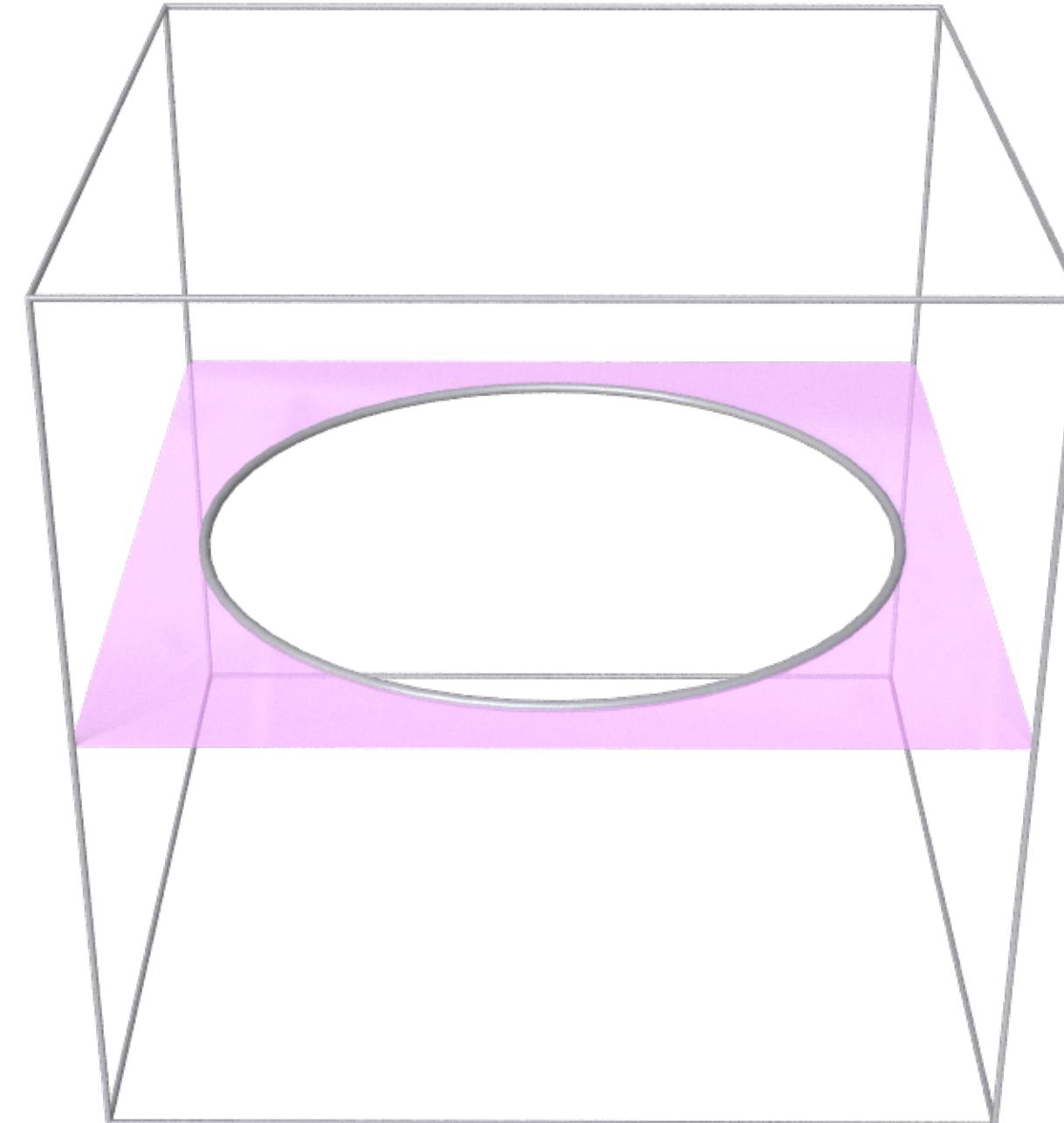
examples



$$\int h_1 \wedge \eta = 0$$

$$\int h_2 \wedge \eta = \text{Area}(\mathbb{D})$$

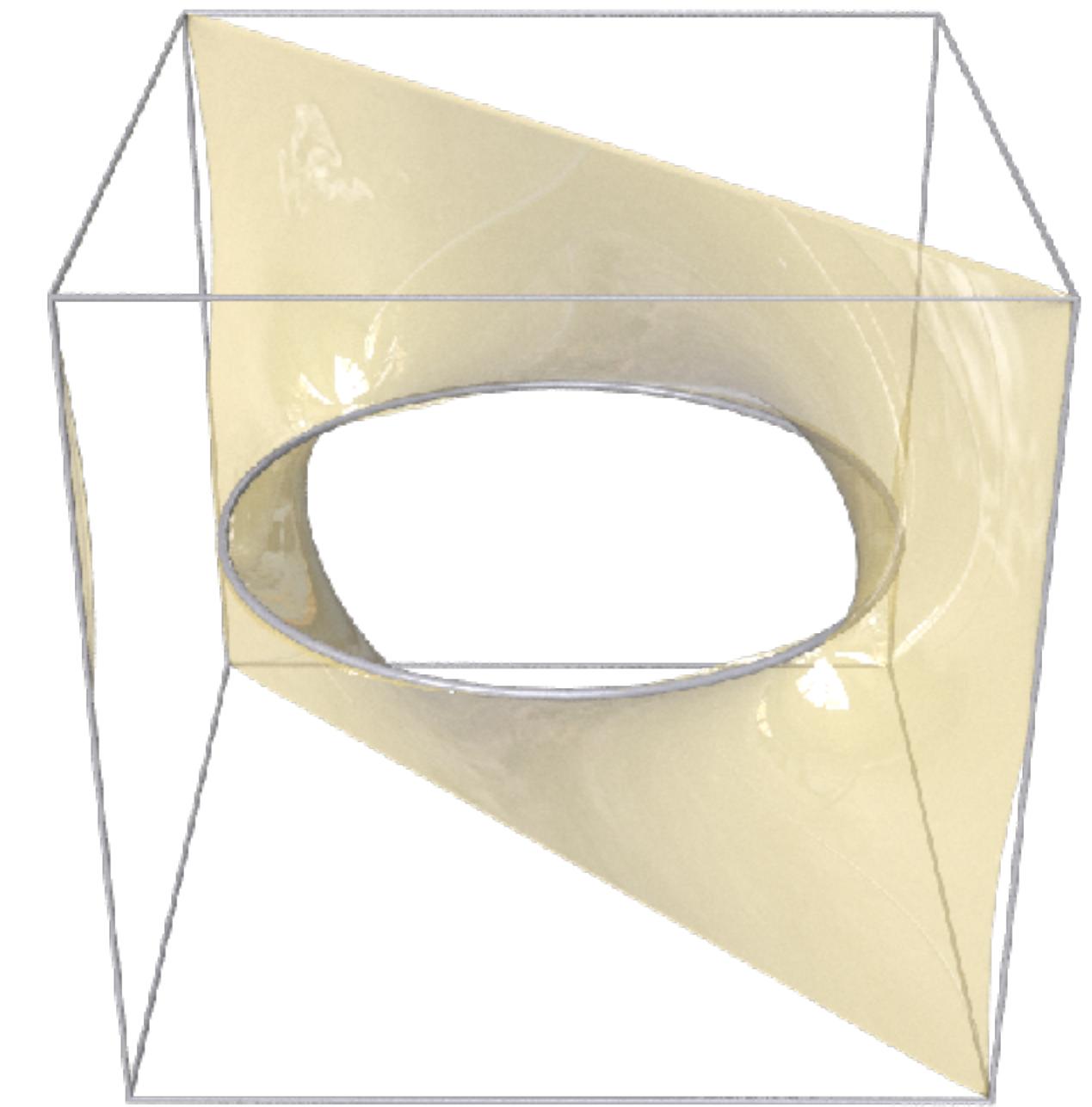
$$\int h_3 \wedge \eta = 0$$



$$\int h_1 \wedge \eta = 0$$

$$\int h_2 \wedge \eta = 1 - \text{Area}(\mathbb{D})$$

$$\int h_3 \wedge \eta = 0$$



$$\int h_1 \wedge \eta = -1$$

$$\int h_2 \wedge \eta = 1 - \text{Area}(\mathbb{D})$$

$$\int h_3 \wedge \eta = 1$$

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Admissible set

Cohomology constraint

- Adding Cohomology constraint

$$\int h_i \wedge \eta = \psi_i, i = 1, 2, 3$$

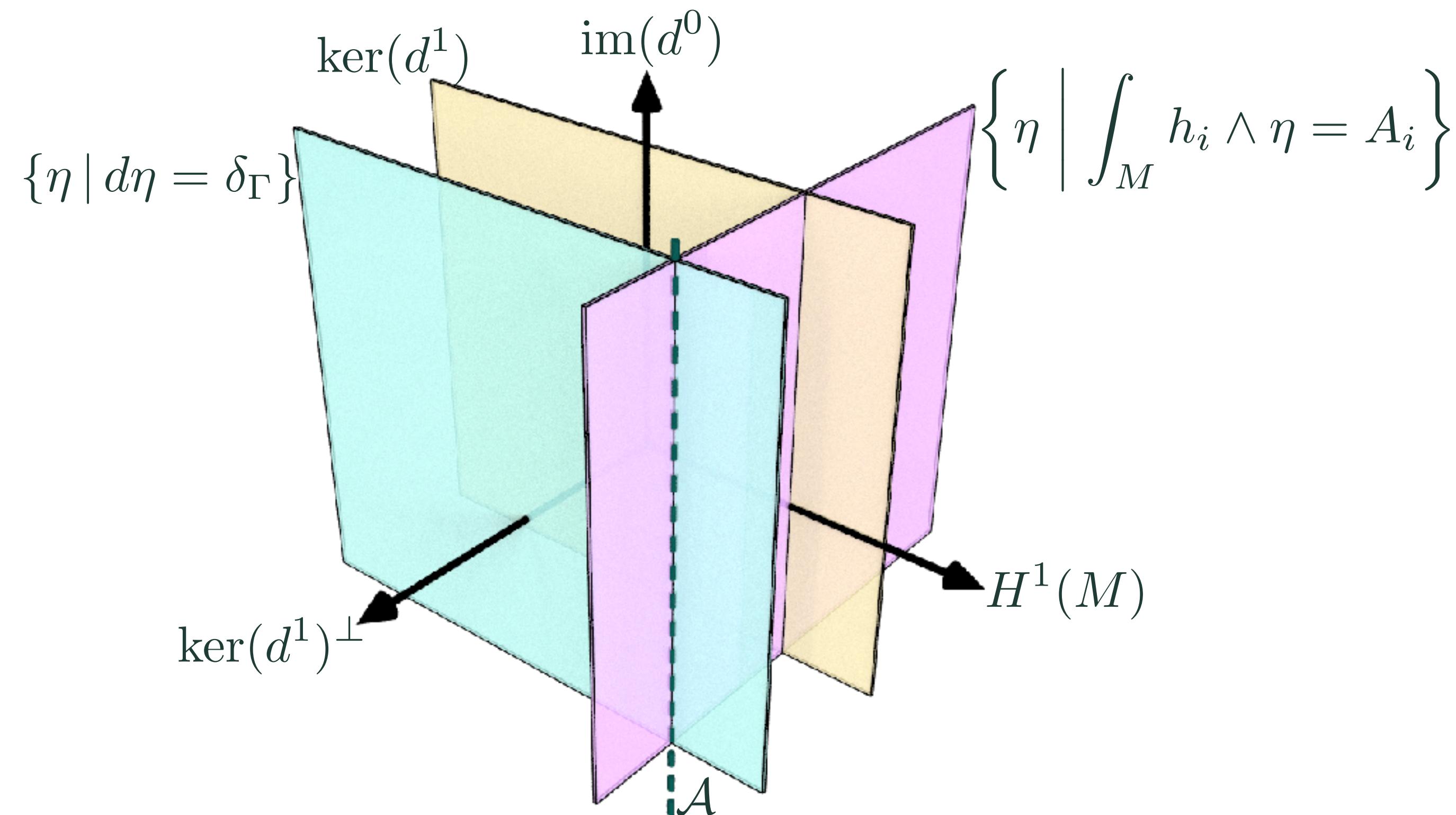
- Admissible set

$$\mathcal{A} = \left\{ \eta \in \mathcal{D}\Omega^1(M) \middle| d\eta = \delta_\Gamma, \int h_i \wedge \eta = \psi_i, i = 1, 2, 3 \right\}$$

Admissible set

Cohomology constraint

$$\mathcal{A} = \left\{ \eta \in \mathcal{D}\Omega^1(M) \mid d\eta = \delta_\Gamma, \int h_i \wedge \eta = \psi_i, i = 1, 2, 3 \right\}$$

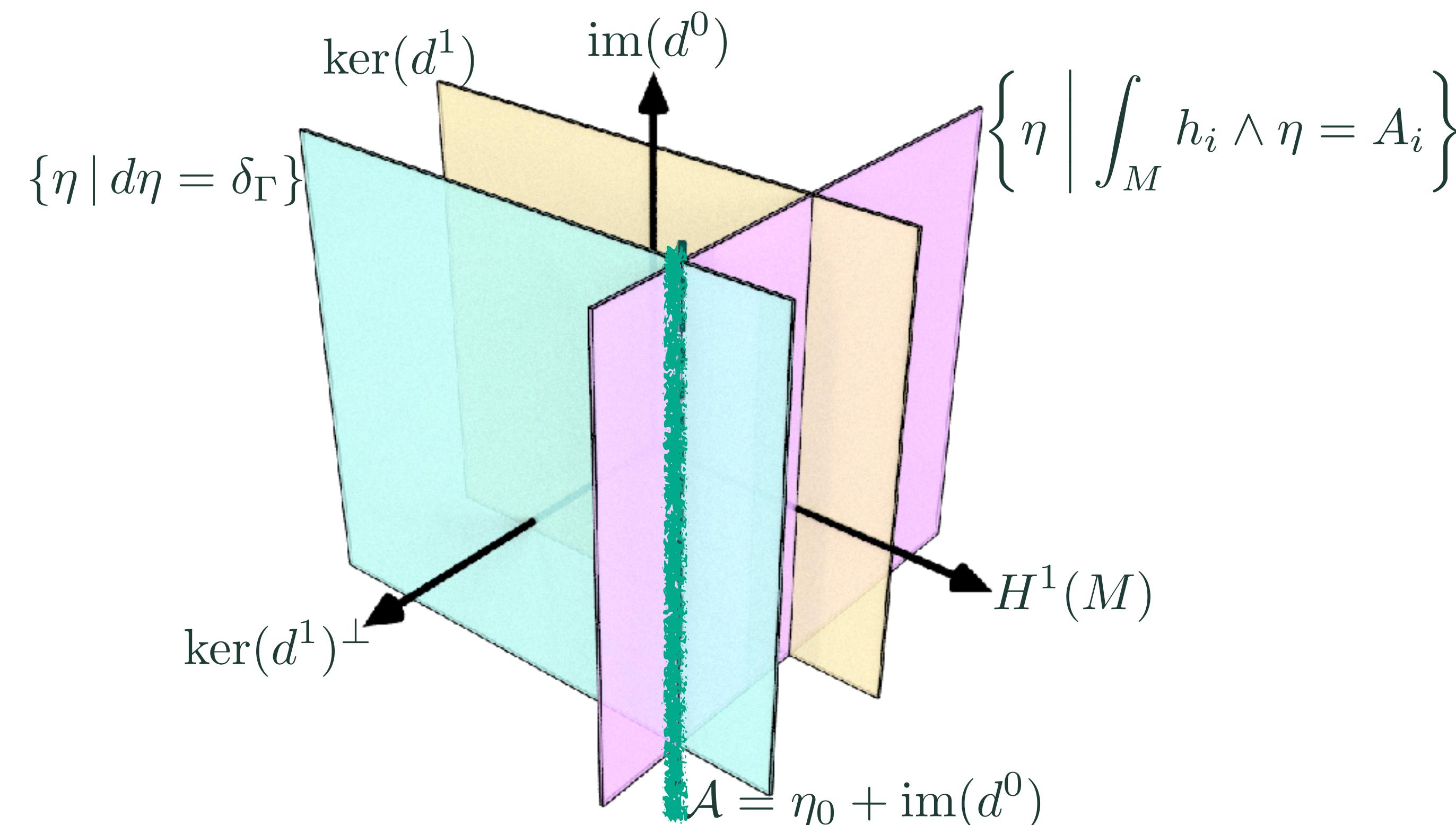


Admissible set

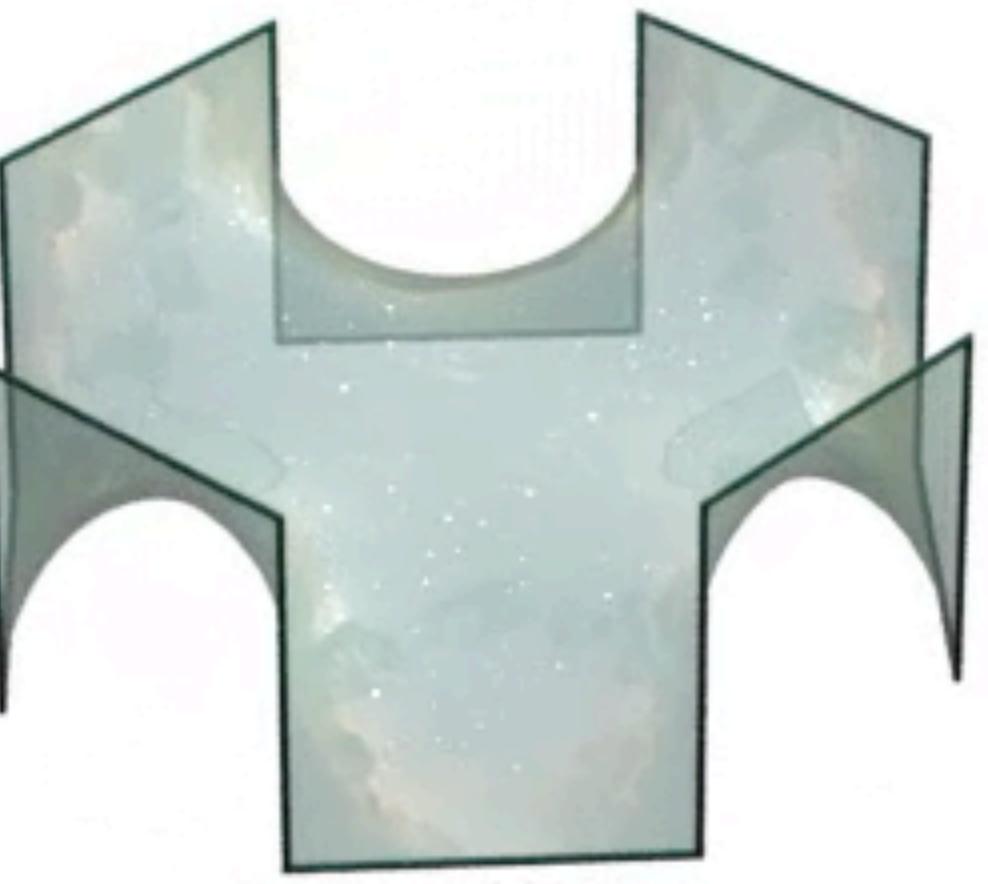
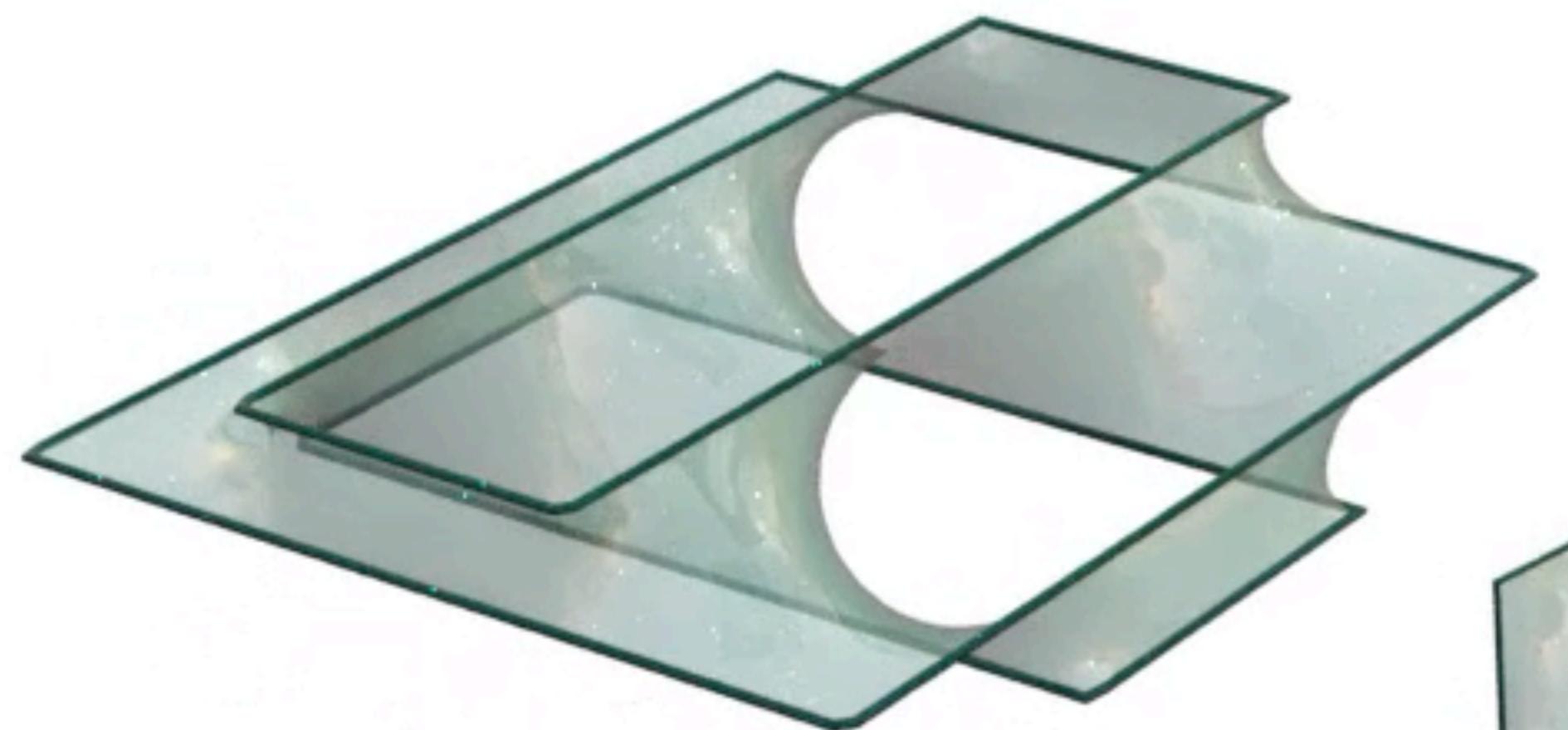
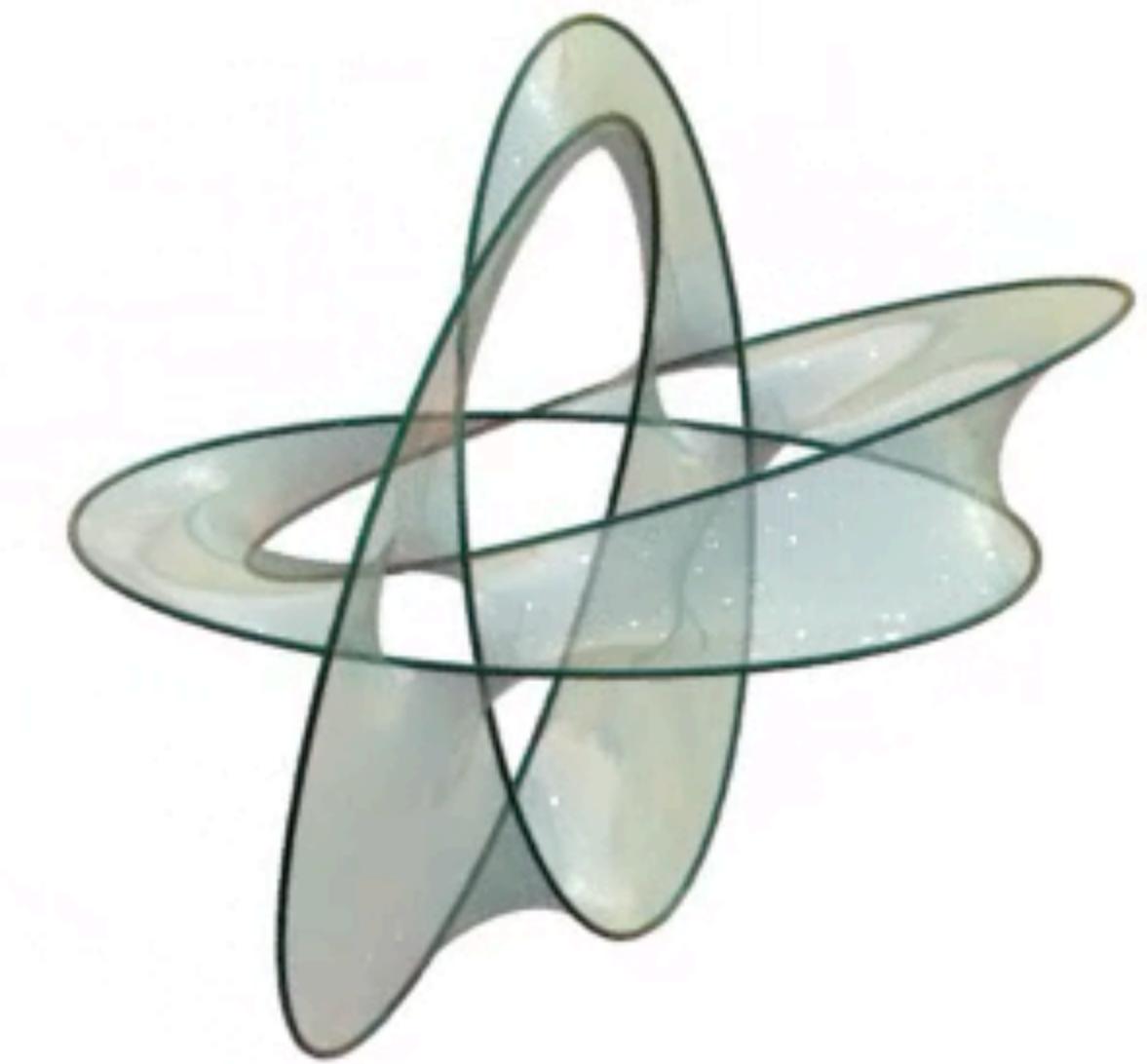
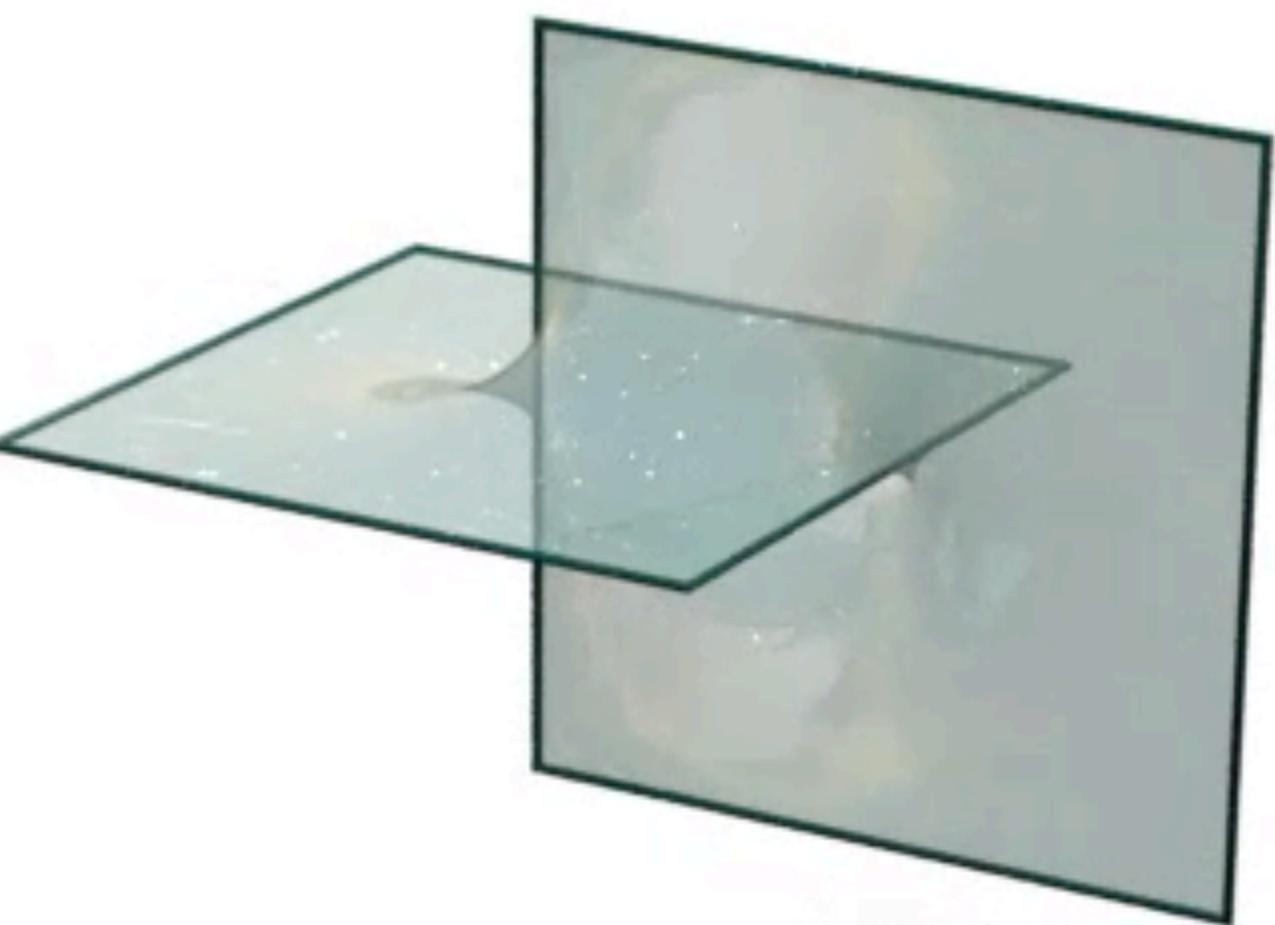
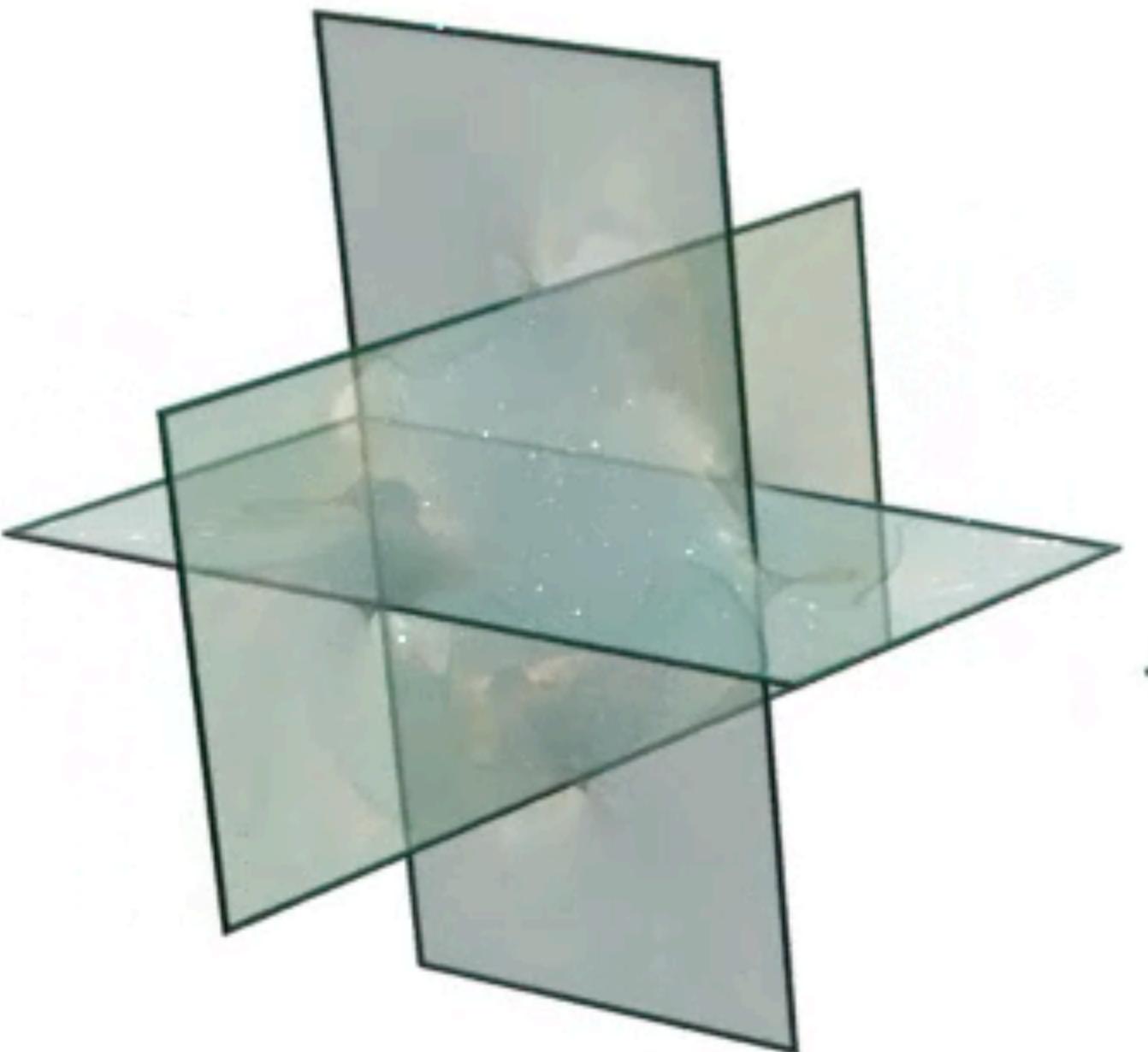
Cohomology constraint

same as simply connected ambient space!

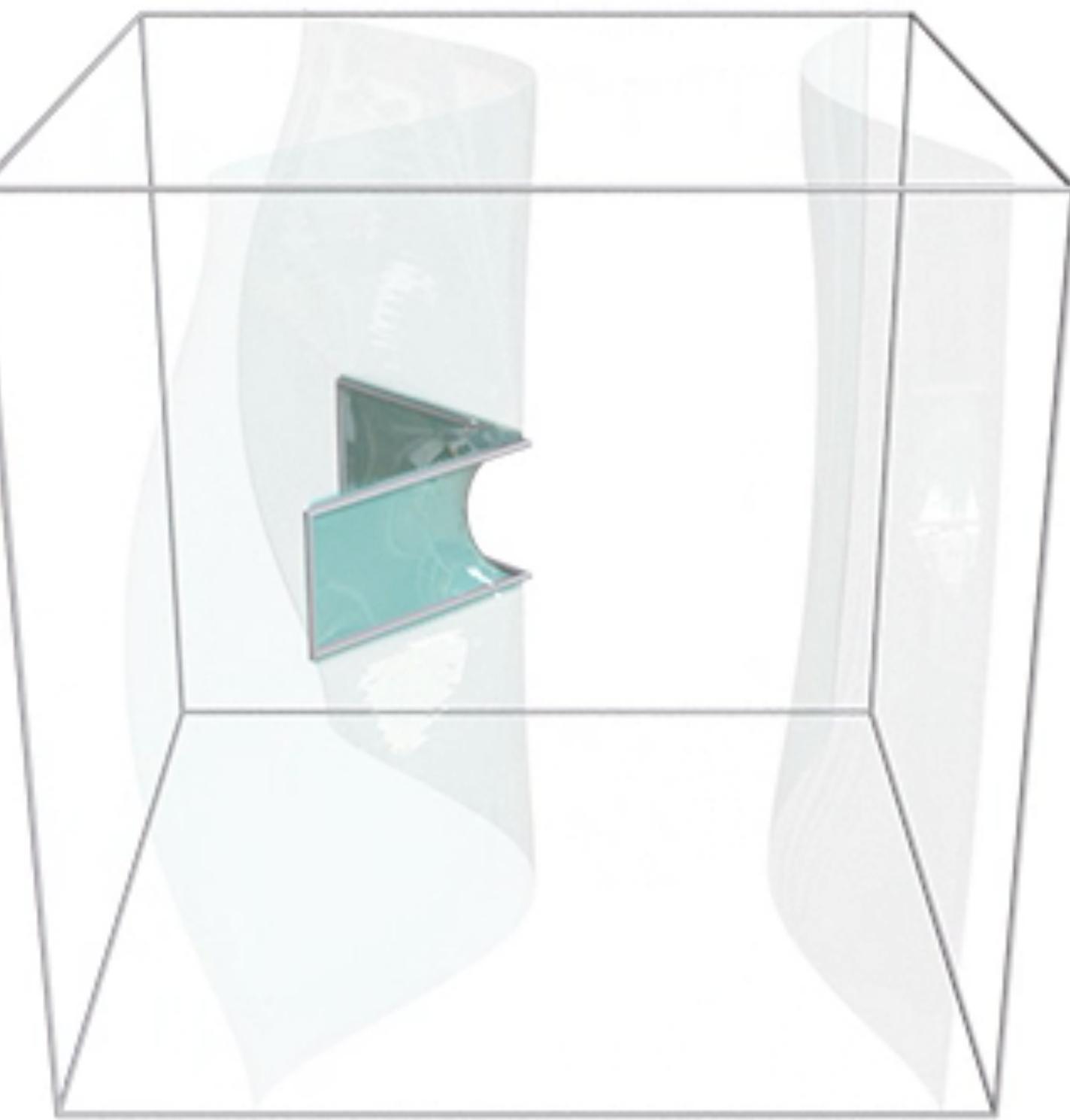
$$\mathcal{A} = \left\{ \eta \in \mathcal{D}\Omega^1(M) \mid d\eta = \delta_\Gamma, \int h_i \wedge \eta = \psi_i, i = 1, 2, 3 \right\} = \eta_0 + \text{im} (d^0)$$



Results

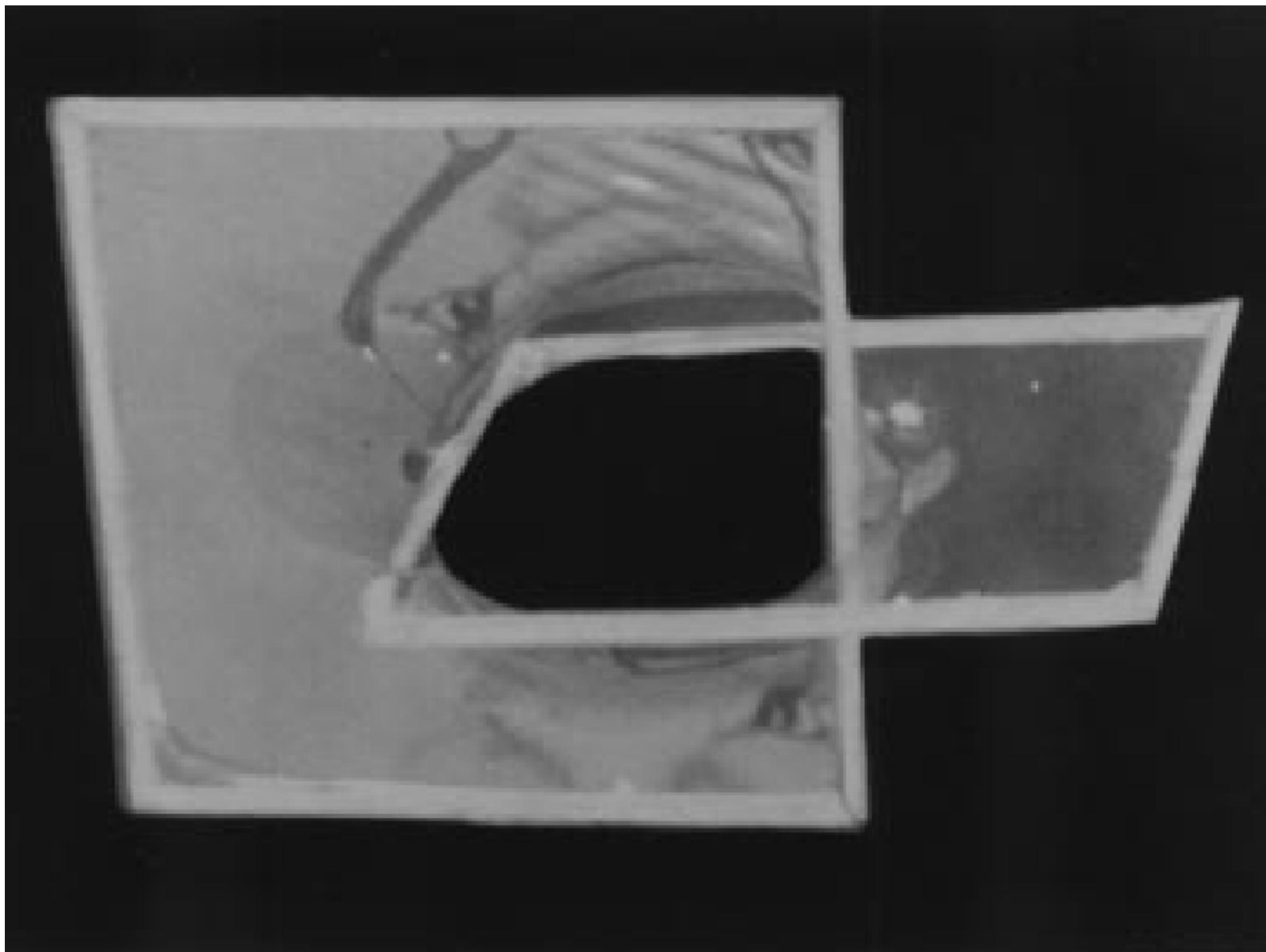


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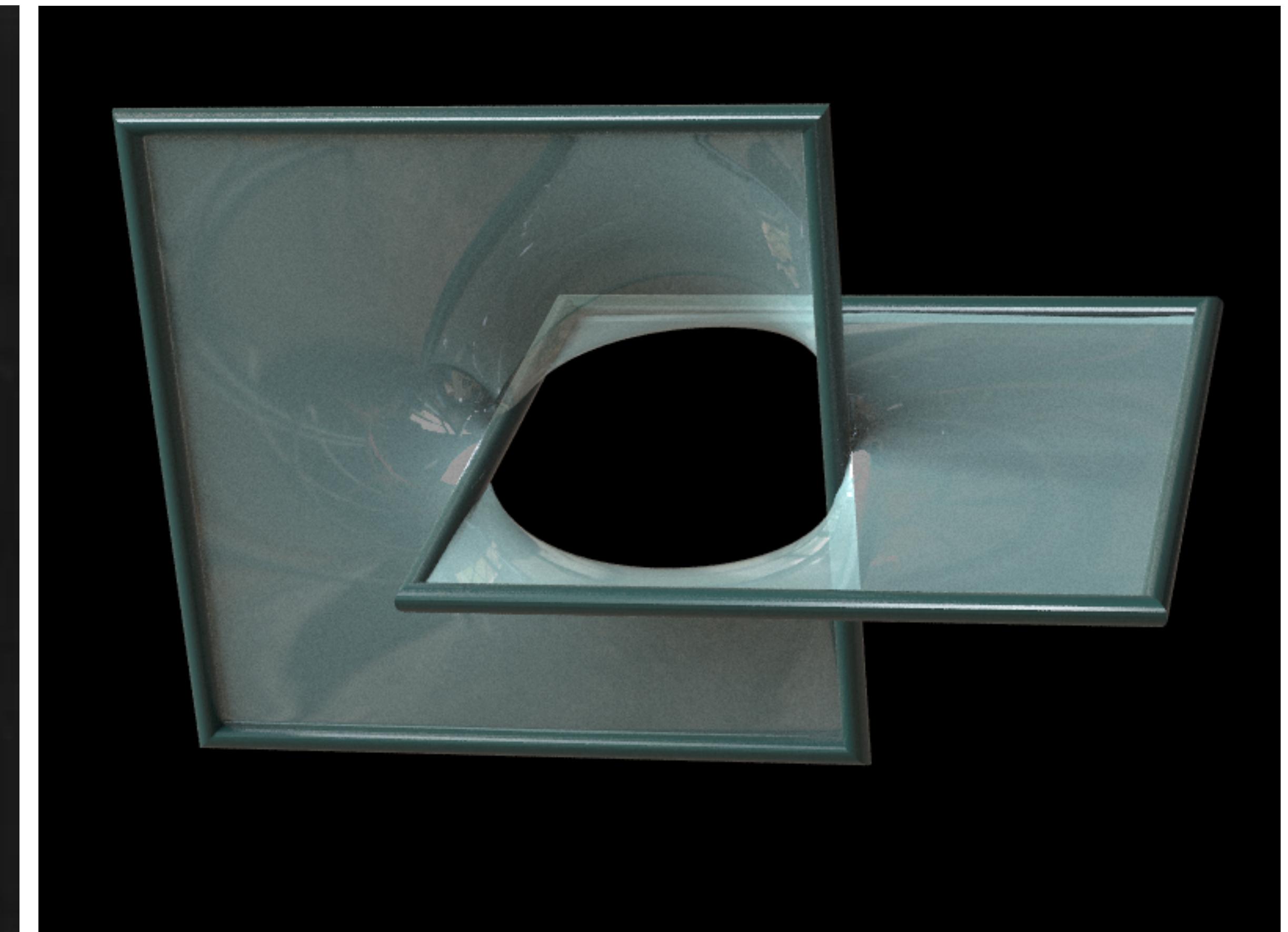


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Comparison



PC: H. Parks and J. Pitts 1997



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Minimal surface

$$\underset{\eta: d\eta = \delta_\Gamma}{\text{minimize}} \|\eta\|_{\text{mass}}$$

Γ : input boundary curve

Geometric least-square problem

$$\underset{\eta: d\eta = \omega}{\text{minimize}} \|\eta\|_{L^2}$$

ω : some input differential form

Poisson surface reconstruction

$$\underset{\varphi}{\text{minimize}} \|\delta_\Sigma - d\varphi\|_{L^2}$$

Σ : input incomplete surface

Electricity field

$$\underset{\omega: d\omega = \rho}{\text{minimize}} \|\omega\|_{L^2}$$

ρ : distribution of charged particles

General mass norm minimization

- Poisson surface reconstruction [Kazhdan et al. 2006]

$$\underset{\varphi}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\delta_{\Sigma} - d\varphi\|_{L^2}$$

- Replacing L2 norm with mass norm...



General mass norm minimization

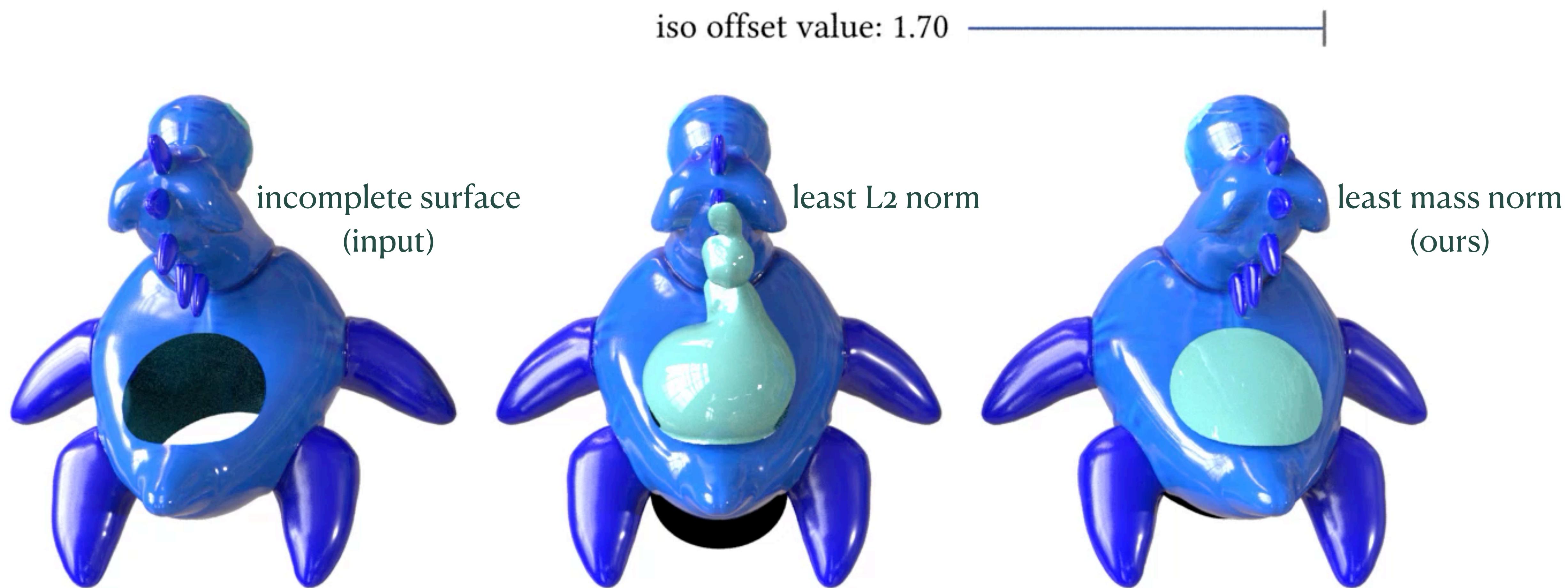
- Poisson surface reconstruction [Kazhdan et al. 2006]

$$\underset{\varphi}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\delta_{\Sigma} - d\varphi\|_{L^2}$$

- Replacing L2 norm with mass norm...

$$\underset{\varphi}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\delta_{\Sigma} - d\varphi\|_{\text{mass}}$$





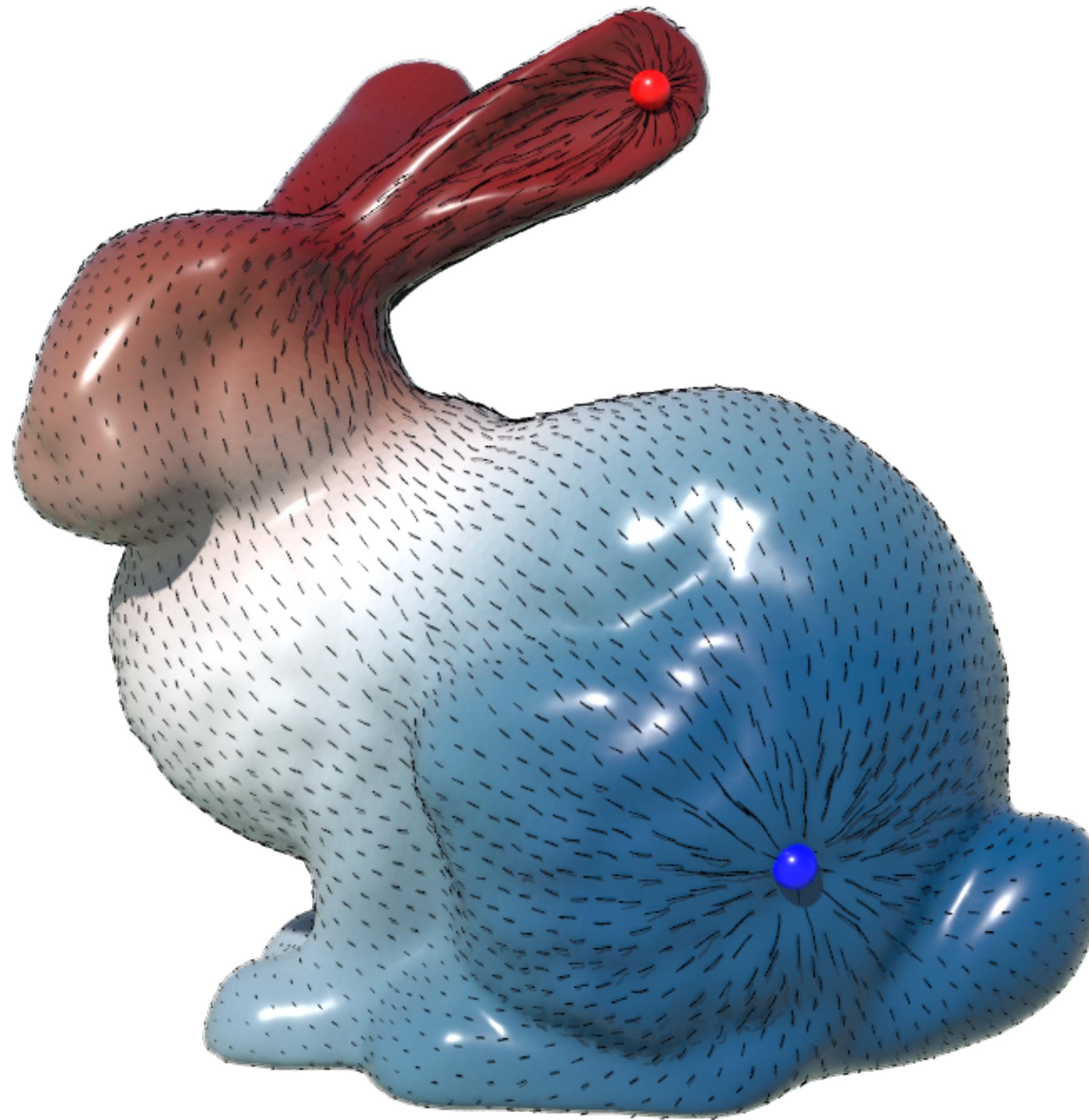
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General mass norm minimization

- Electric field around charged particles

$$\underset{\omega: d\omega = \rho}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\omega\|_{L^2}$$

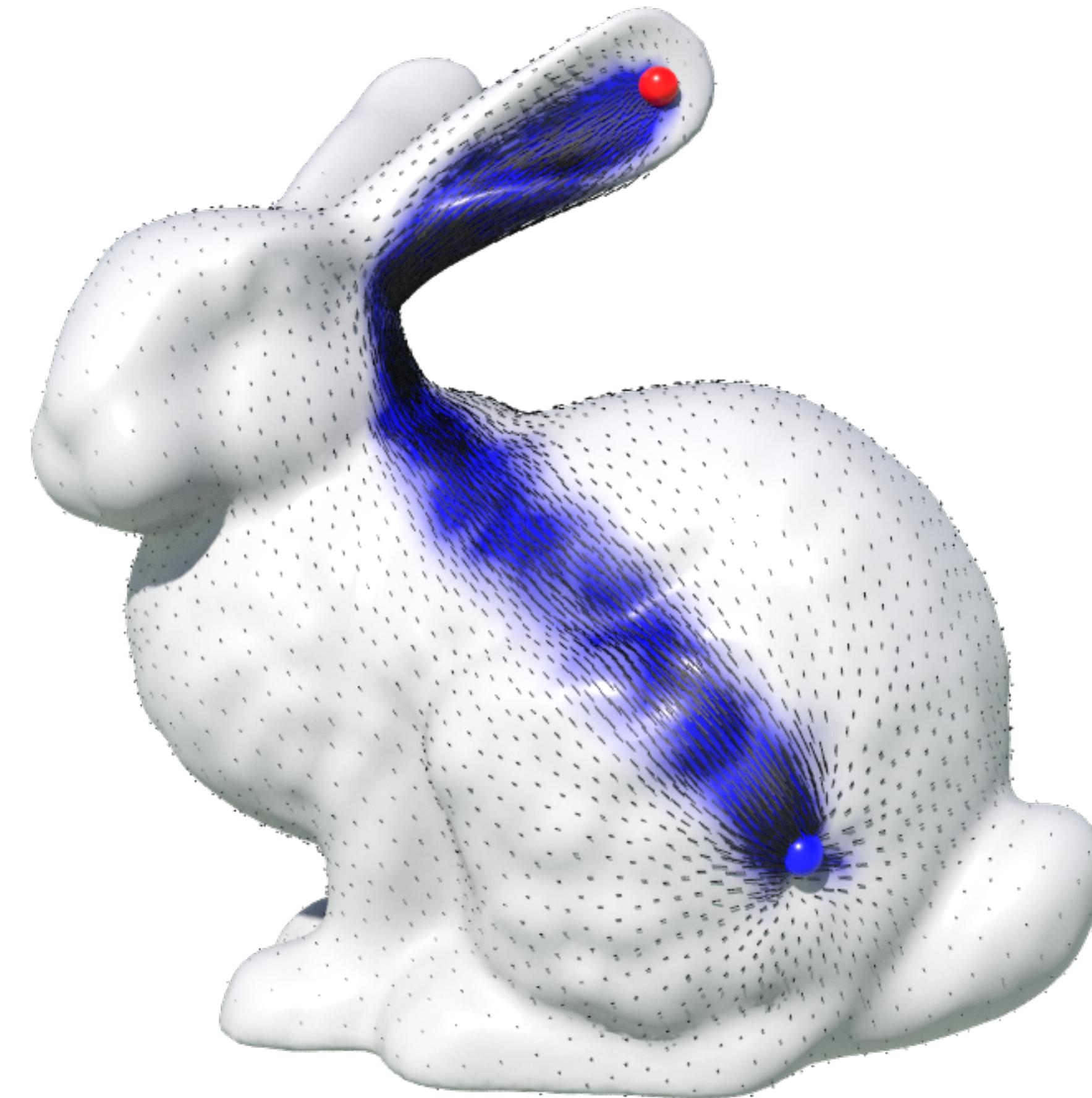
- Replacing L2 norm with mass norm...



General mass norm minimization

- Electric field around charged particles

$$\underset{\omega: d\omega = \rho}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\omega\|_{L^2}$$



- Replacing L2 norm with mass norm...

$$\underset{\omega: d\omega = \rho}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\omega\|_{\text{mass}}$$

General mass norm minimization

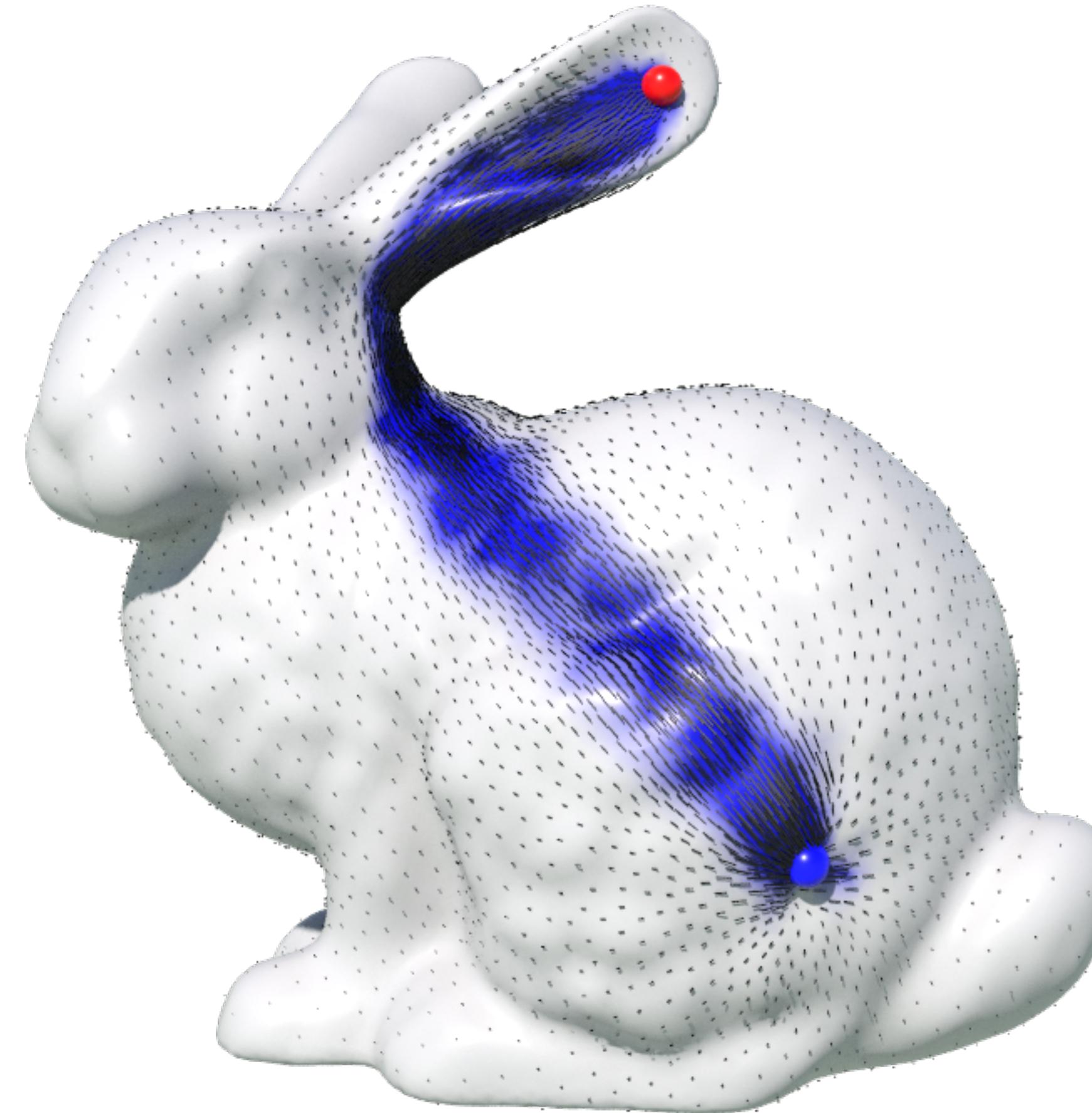
- Electric field around charged particles

$$\underset{\omega: d\omega = \rho}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\omega\|_{L^2}$$

- Replacing L2 norm with mass norm...

$$\underset{\omega: d\omega = \rho}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\omega\|_{\text{mass}}$$

$$\underset{\omega: d\omega = \rho_1 - \rho_2}{\text{minimize}} \quad \|\omega\|_{L^1}$$



Keywords: Beckmann problem, earth mover distance [Solomon et al. 2014].

Summary

Eulerian geometry representation + general mass norm minimization

- **Differentiable** geometry representation for inverse rendering and 3D deep learning
- **Convex** representation via manifold superposition
- **Sparsity** provided by mass norm minimization
- Limitations: non-manifold surfaces, non-oriented surfaces

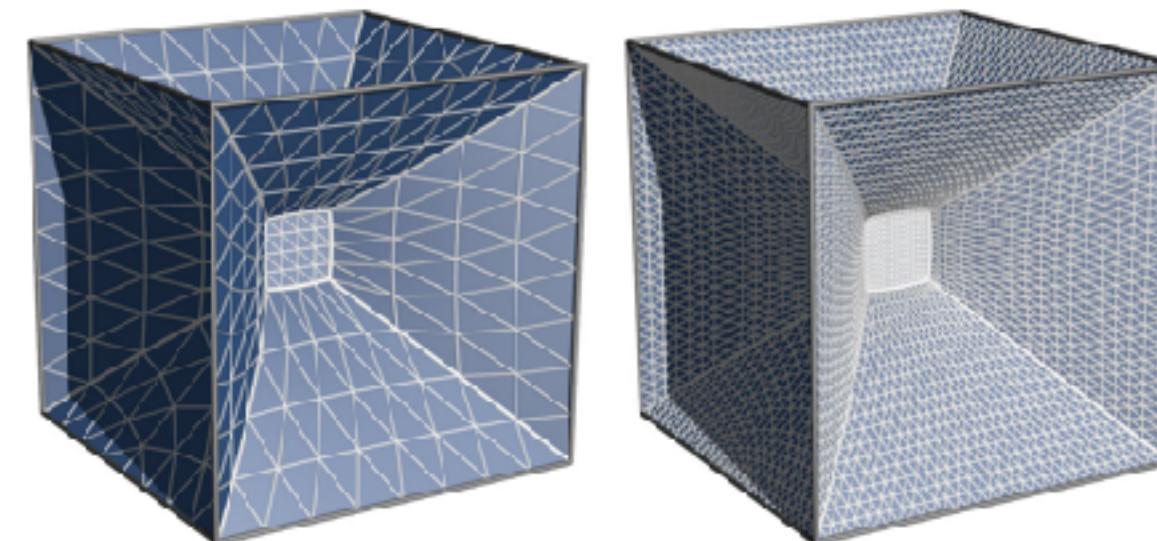
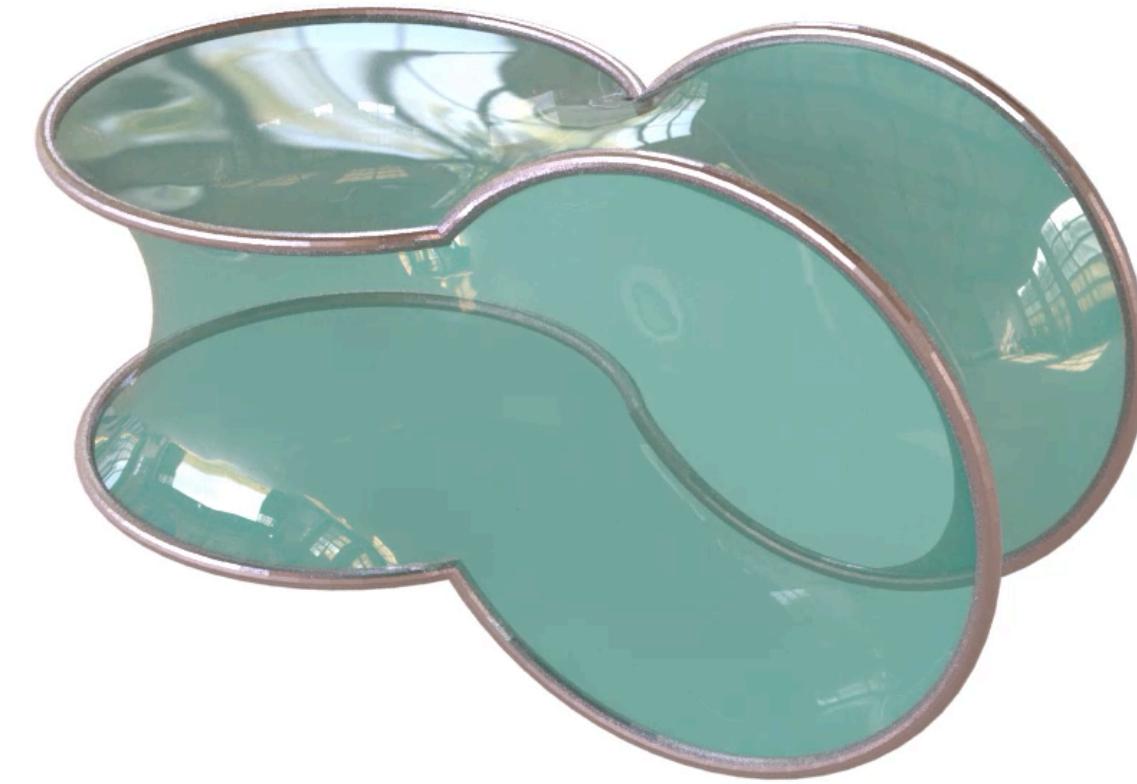


Figure courtesy: H. Schumacher and M. Wardetzky 2019

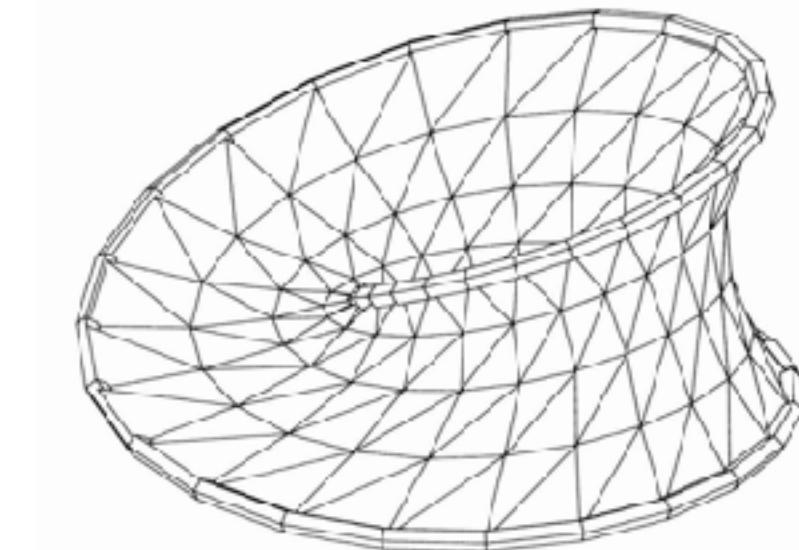
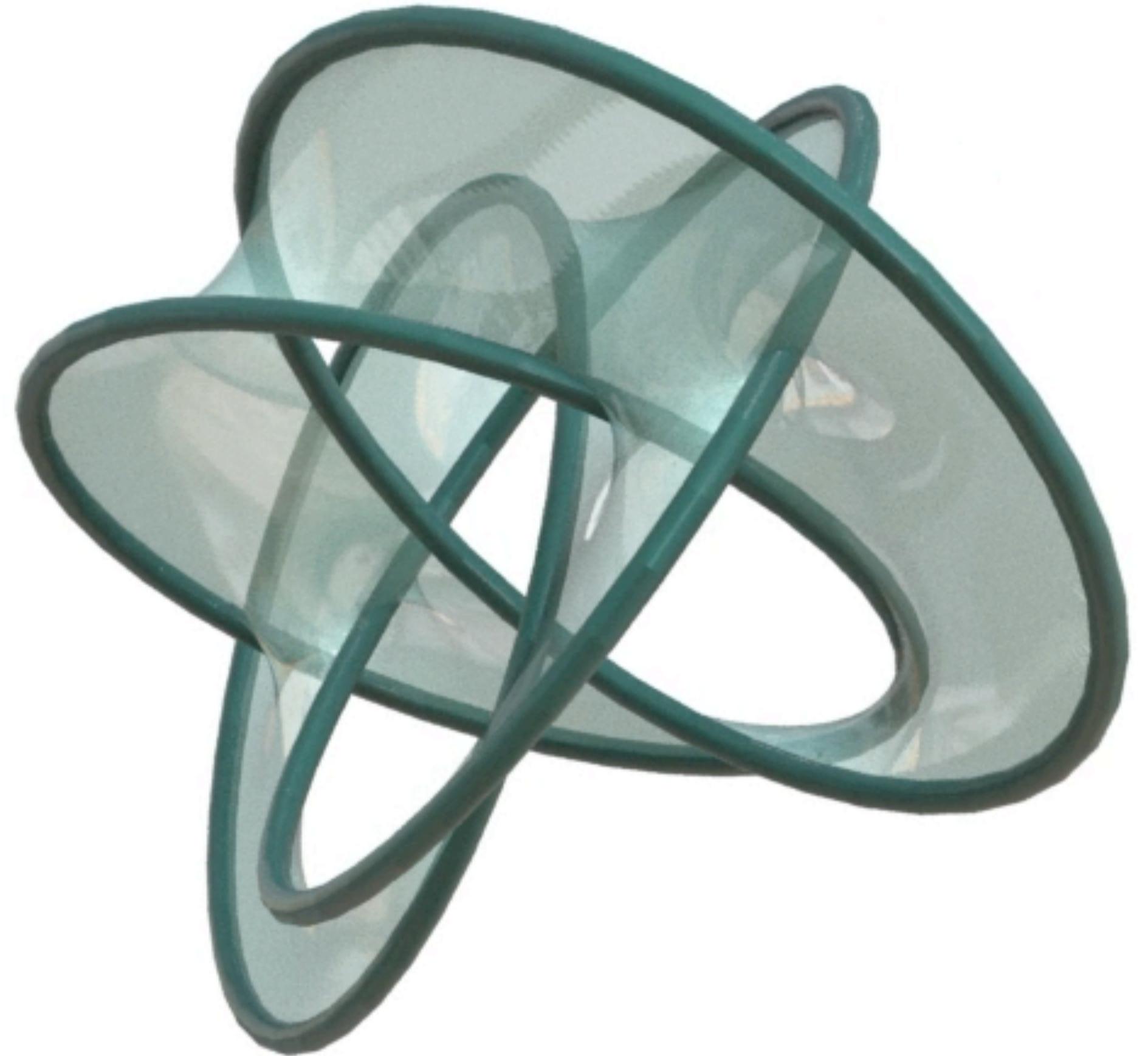


Figure courtesy: U. Pinkall and K. Polthier 1993

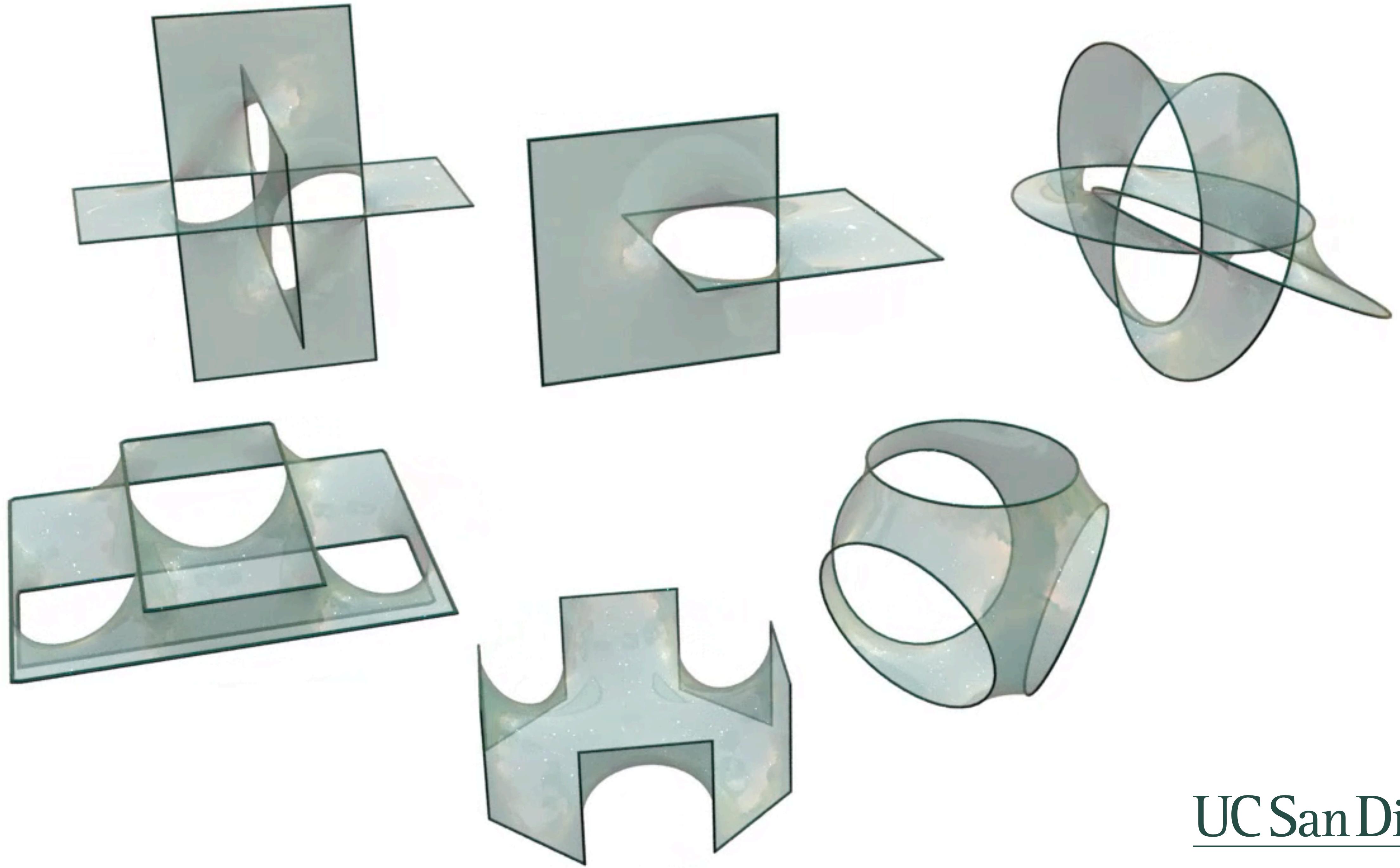


Thank you for your attention!

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Project page: **<https://cseweb.ucsd.edu/~alchern/projects/MinimalCurrent/>**

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