

Morse Theory: Put Geometry Back to Topology.

• Topology can be useful even when the surface is a touch!

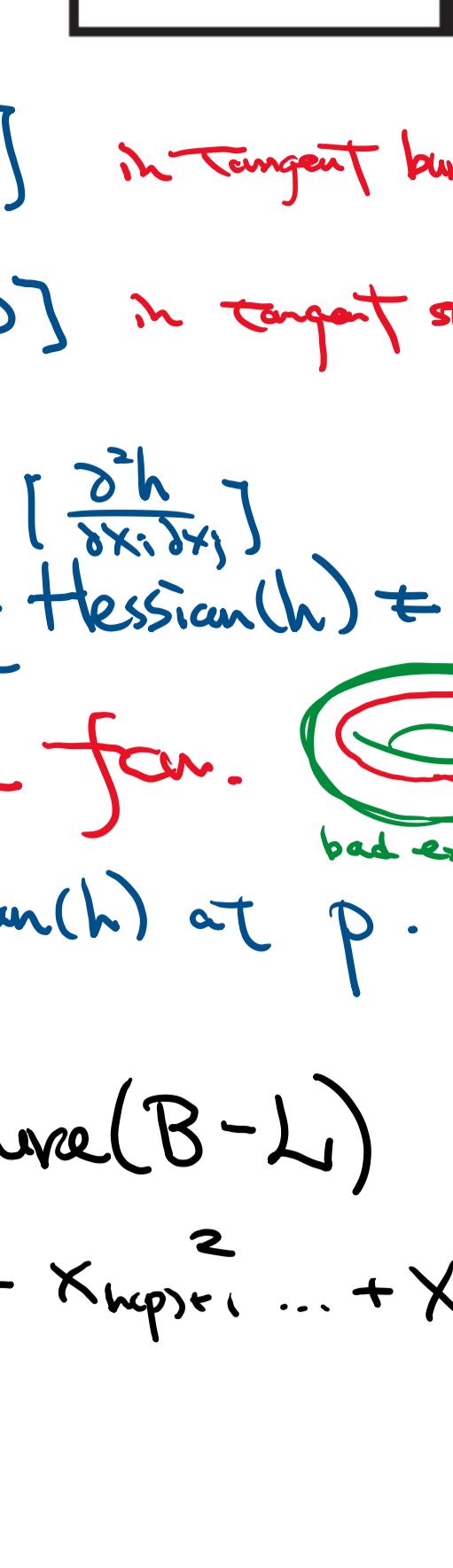
Critical pts. Let M be a manifold, $h: M \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ smooth. ^{height fn.}

Consider sublevel set $M_{\leq a} := h^{-1}(-\infty, a] = \{x \in M : h(x) \leq a\}$

"Rising water"

As the water rises, there are critical events where the topology changes.

Critical pts.



Geometric pt of view: ^{i geometry, linear algebra!}

Consider derivative $\nabla h = [\frac{\partial h}{\partial x_1}, \frac{\partial h}{\partial x_2}, \dots, \frac{\partial h}{\partial x_n}]$ in tangent bundle $T_x M$

Pt x is critical if $\nabla h(x) = [0, 0, \dots, 0]$ in tangent space $T_x M$

$h(x)$ is a critical value.

Assume ¹ all critical pts are non-degenerate ($\det \text{Hessian}(h) \neq 0$)

and ², having different critical values. Morse fn.

Morse index $\mu(p) := \# \text{negative eigenvalues of Hessian}(h) \text{ at } p$. ^{at crit. pt p}

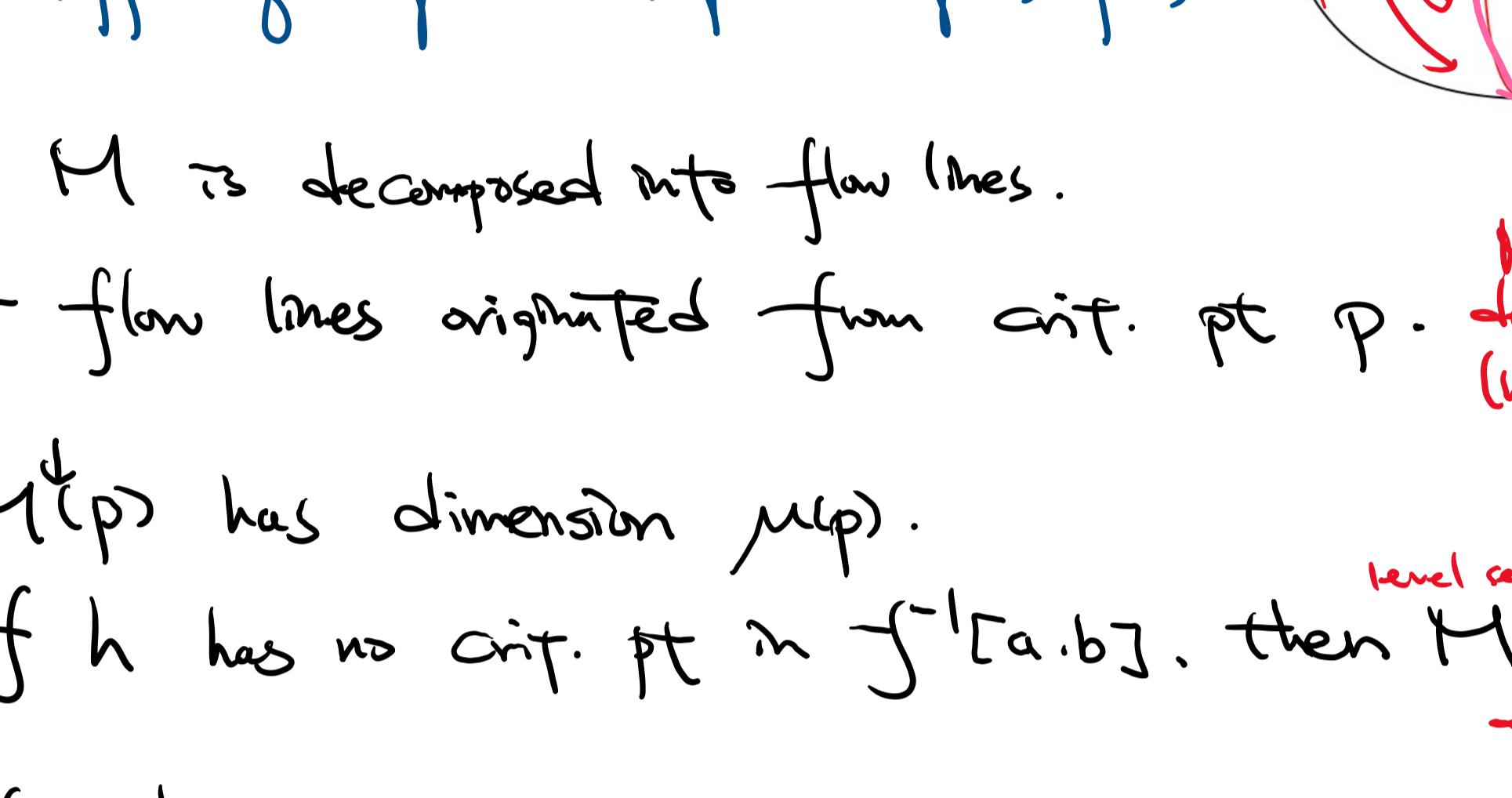
Morse lemma. Let $U_p = B \cap M_{\leq h(p)-\epsilon}$. ^{lower ball} ^{upper} $U_p = \text{closure}(B-L)$

Then, \exists $f(x)$ locally looks like $-x_1^2 - \dots - x_{\mu(p)}^2 + x_{\mu(p)+1}^2 + \dots + x_n^2$

1. $U \cong D^n$ for $n = \dim M$.

2. $L = D^{n-\mu(p)} \times S^{\mu(p)-1}$

3. $L \cap U \cong D^{n-\mu(p)} \times S^{\mu(p)-1}$



example: M surface. Say $p = (\phi, \dots, \phi)$. $\circlearrowleft \rightarrow \circlearrowright$

$$f(x) = f(\phi) - x_1^2 - \dots - x_{\mu}^2 + x_{\mu+1}^2 - \dots + x_n^2$$

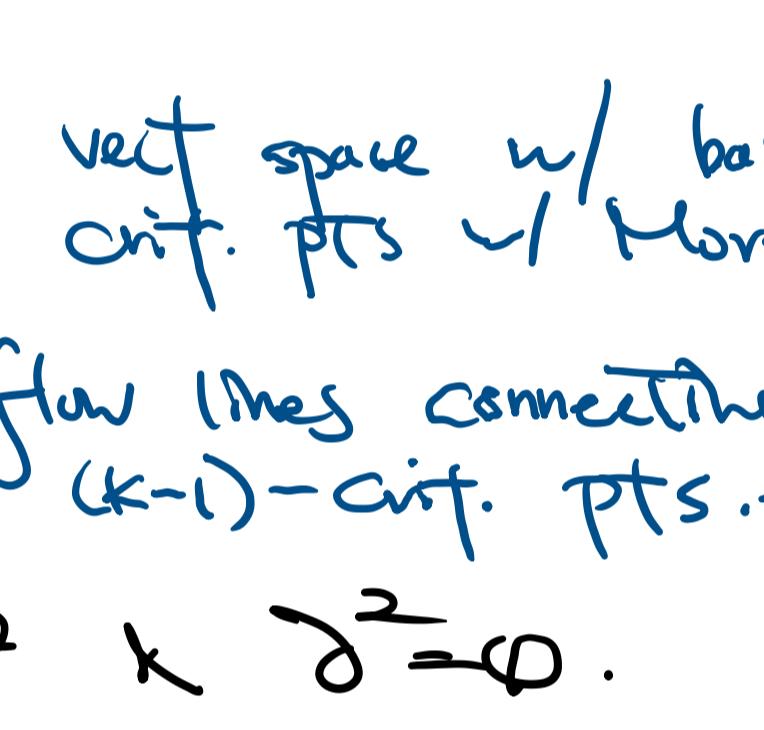
$\bullet \mu=0$: $f(x) = f(\phi) + x_1^2 + x_2^2$. $L = \emptyset$. local min

$\bullet \mu=1$: $f(x) = f(\phi) - x_1^2 + x_2^2$. $L = D^2 \times S^0$ saddle

$\bullet \mu=2$: $f(x) = f(\phi) - x_1^2 - x_2^2$. $L = D^2 \times S^1$ local max

example: rotation number redux.

\curvearrowleft : $M = \emptyset$
 \curvearrowright : $\mu = 1$



Two main routes to take (for the rest of the course):

1. Build Morse homology (MC_*, δ) on crit. pts $(Cr(h), \mu)$.

2. Build efficient representation (Reeb graph) to summarize M .

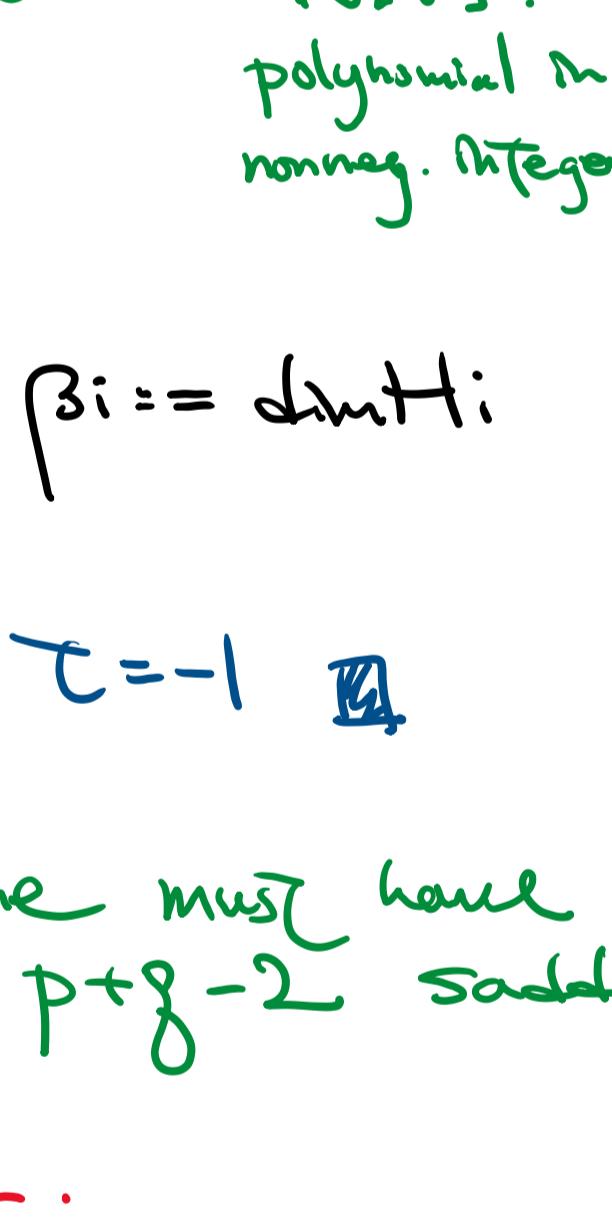


Morse Homology.

Flow lines.

Gradient field ∇h defines flow lines from crit. pts to crit. pts.

(solve diff. eq. $\dot{y} = \nabla h(y)$ w/ $y(\phi) = p$)



Manifold M is decomposed into flow lines.

Consider flow lines originated from crit. pt p . ^{descending manifold} (unstable).

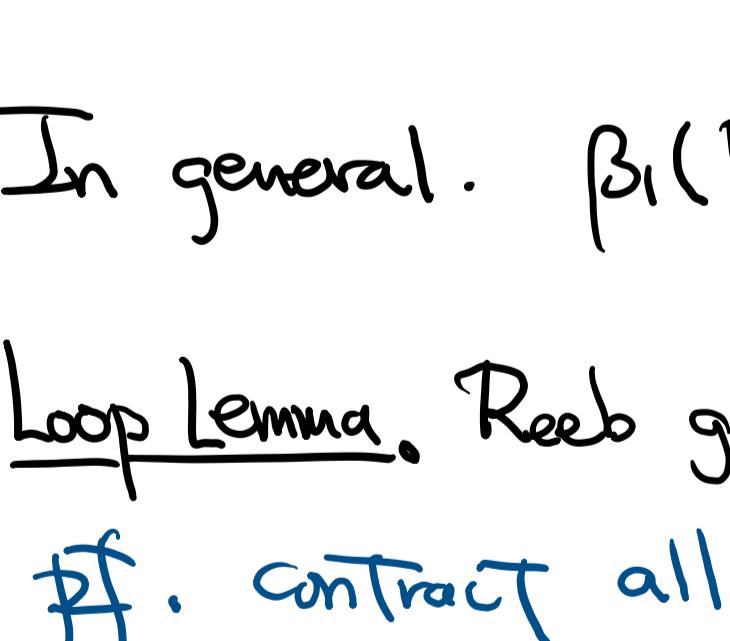
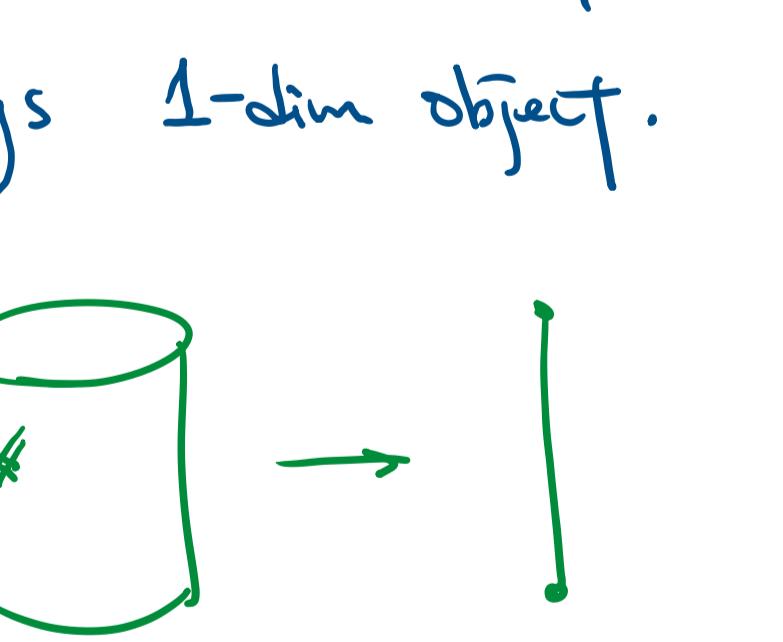
Prop. $M^k(p)$ has dimension $\mu(p)$.

Prop. If h has no crit. pt in $f^{-1}[a, b]$, then $M_a \cong M_b$. ^{level set} ^{isomorphic}

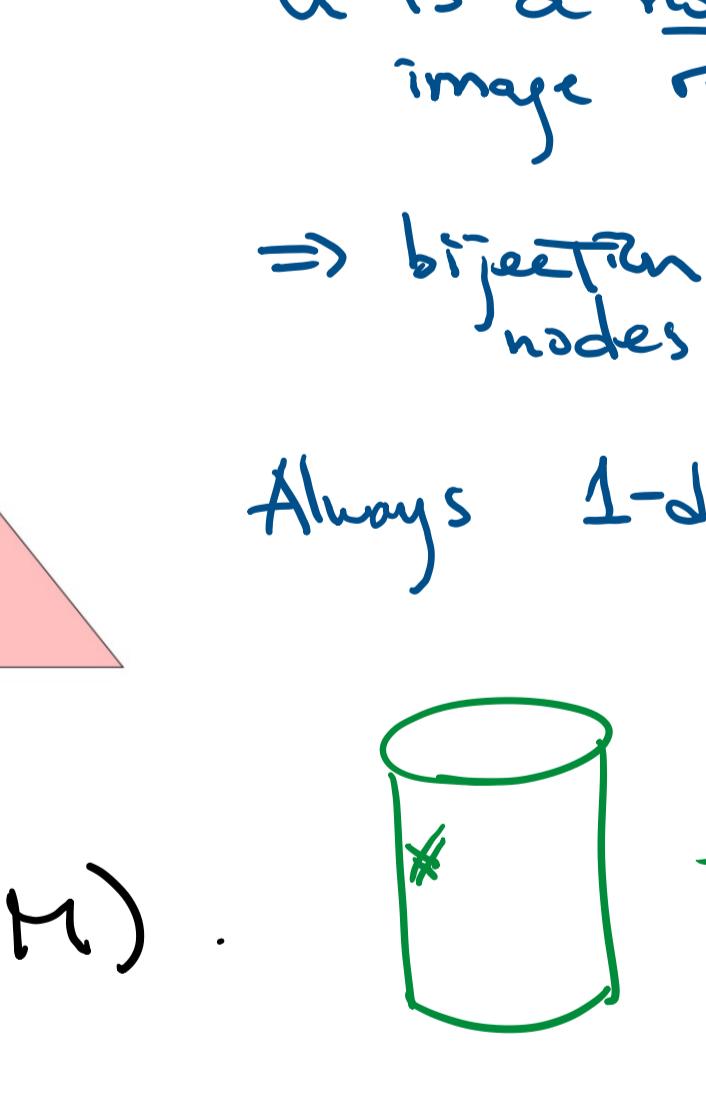
Prop. If $f[a, b]$ contains exactly one crit. pt. α of index K .

Then $M_b \cong M_{\leq a} \cup M^k(\alpha)$

"attaching one k-handle"



flow lines from 1-cut pt to 1-cut pt.
Not good!



Morse-Smale fn.
to make sure
flow line goes
from k to $k-1$
dimension.
($M^k(x) \pitchfork M^l(y)$).

Intuition Test: We have flow lines sending objects from $d_m \rightarrow d_{m-1}$. What are we trying to do?

Morse Complex. k -skeleton MC_k : vect space w/ basis on crit. pts w/ Morse index k .

boundary ∂ : # flow lines connecting k -crit. pt to $(k-1)$ -crit. pts.

With assumptions, ∂ is well-def $\& \partial^2 = 0$.

Now, build Morse homology $MH_*(h)$. (because (MC_*, δ) is a chain complex)

Morse Homology Thm. M compact, h Morse, then

$$MH_*(h) \cong H_*(M) \quad (\text{indep. of } h).$$

"pf": build cell structure based on descending manifolds.

Benefit of using Morse homology: Only crit. pts matter.

example: tilted torus.

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