### PL Functions and Reeb Graphs

Lecture 16 - CMSE 890

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Tues, Nov 4, 2025

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#### Check-in

#### Goals for today:

- 3.1 Filtrations on spaces, PL Functions
- 7.1 Reeb Graphs



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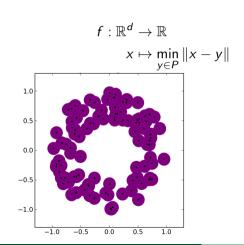
#### Section 1

Persistence on functions

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### A different viewpoint for point cloud persistence

Given point cloud  $P \subset \mathbb{R}^d$ .



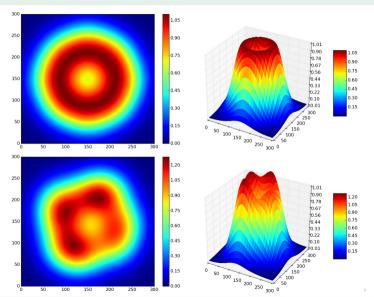
$$f^{-1}(-\infty,r]=\bigcup_{y\in P}B_r(y)$$

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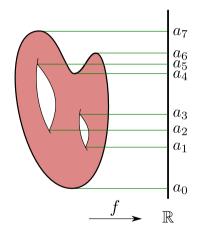
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#### Different functions



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### Another example: "Height functions"



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#### Persistence for functions

Let 
$$\mathbb{X}$$
 be a topological space with function  $f: \mathbb{X} \to \mathbb{R}$ .

Let 
$$X_a = f^{-1}(-\infty, a]$$
.

Then for  $a_0 \le a_1 \le a_2 \le \cdots \le a_k$ 

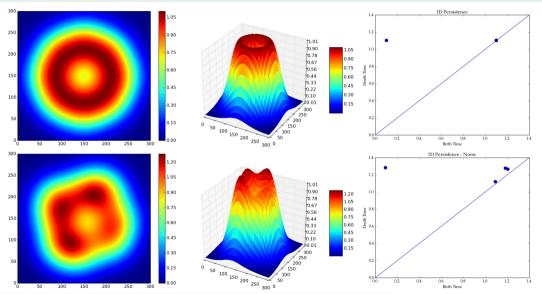
$$\mathbb{X}_{a_0} \subseteq \mathbb{X}_{a_1} \subseteq \cdots \subseteq \mathbb{X}_{a_k}$$

gives

$$H_p(\mathbb{X}_{a_0}) \to H_p(\mathbb{X}_{a_1}) \to \cdots \to H_p(\mathbb{X}_{a_k}).$$

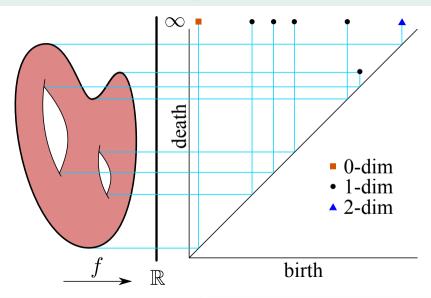
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#### Example with matrix function



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### Example with torus height function



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#### Section 2

Piecewise Linear functions

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#### PL Functions

Given simplicial complex K. A function

$$f:V(K) o\mathbb{R}$$

gives a piecewise linear (PL) function

$$f: |K| \to \mathbb{R}$$

$$x \mapsto \sum (b_i(x)f(v)).$$

 $v \in V(K)$ 

The function is generic if

$$f(u) \neq f(v) \ \forall u \neq v \in V(K).$$

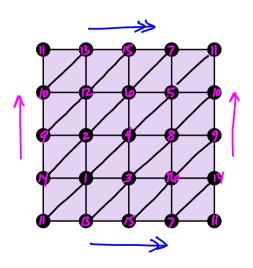
Sort the vertices so that

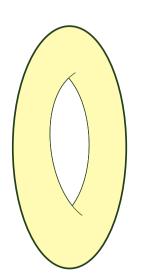
$$f(u_1) < f(u_2) < \cdots < f(u_n).$$



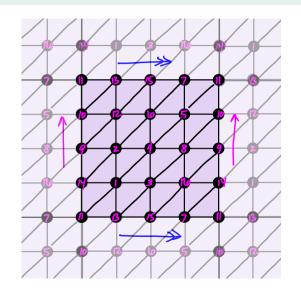
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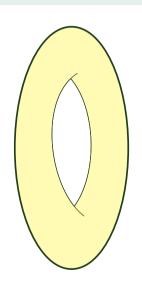
# Square representation of a torus





# Square representation of a torus





#### Level set

Given (PL)  $f: |K| \to \mathbb{R}$ . A sublevel set:

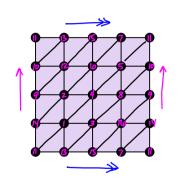
$$f^{-1}(-\infty,a]$$

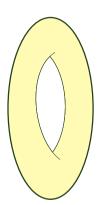
A superlevel set:

$$f^{-1}[a,\infty)$$

A level set:

$$f^{-1}(a)$$



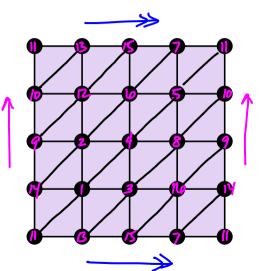


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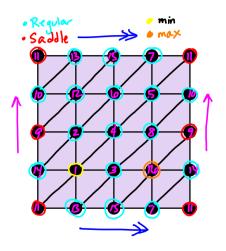
# Try it:

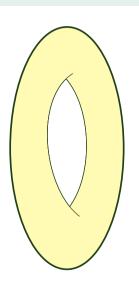
Draw the following levelsets:

- $f^{-1}(4.5)$
- $f^{-1}(10.5)$
- $f^{-1}(9)$



### Matching this example with the height function





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#### Section 3

Reeb graphs

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#### Recall: Connected Components

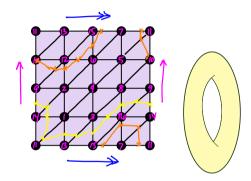
A space X is disconnected if there are disjoint open sets U and V with  $X = U \cup V$ . A space is connected otherwise.

A connected component is a maximal subset that is connected.

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#### Contours vs level sets

A contour is a connected component of a level set.

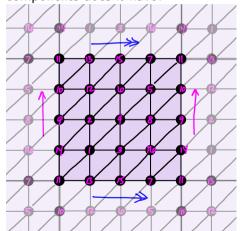


How do the number of contours change as the level set function value changes?

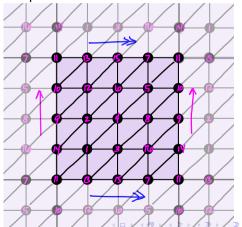
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### Try it

Sketch the level set  $f^{-1}(8)$ . What shape is it? How many connected components does it have?



Sketch the level set  $f^{-1}(9)$ . What shape is it? How many connected components does it have?



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#### Equivalence relation

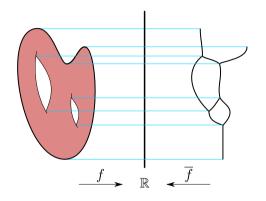
A binary relation  $\sim$  on a set  $\mathbb{T}$  is an equivalence relation if for every  $a,b,c\in\mathbb{T}$ :

- $a \sim a$  (reflexivity)
- $a \sim b$  iff  $b \sim a$  (symmetry)
- If  $a \sim b$  and  $b \sim c$  then  $a \sim c$

The equivalence class of a under  $\sim$  is  $[a] = \{x \in \mathbb{T} \mid x \sim a\}$ .

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### Reeb graph equivalence relation

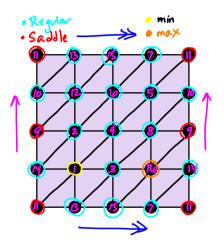


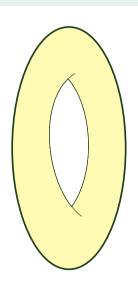
Given a function  $f:X\to\mathbb{R}$ . Define an equivalence relation  $\sim$  by  $s\sim y$  iff

- $f(x) = f(y) = \alpha$
- x and y are in the same connected component of the level set  $f^{-1}(\alpha)$ .

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# Equivalence relation example





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### Quotient space

Given a topological space  $(\mathbb{T}, T)$  and an equivalence relation  $\sim$  defined on the set  $\mathbb{T}$ , the quotient space  $(\mathbb{S}, S)$  consists of

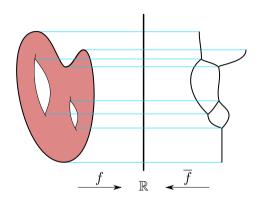
- points  $\mathbb{S} = \mathbb{T}/\sim = \{[a] \mid a \in \mathbb{T}\}$
- open sets  $S = \{U \subseteq \mathbb{S} \mid \{a \mid [a] \in U\} \in T\}$

#### V.2:

- Get a map  $q: \mathbb{T} \to \mathbb{S}$ ,  $a \mapsto [a]$
- $U \subseteq \mathbb{S}$  open iff  $q^{-1}(U)$  is open

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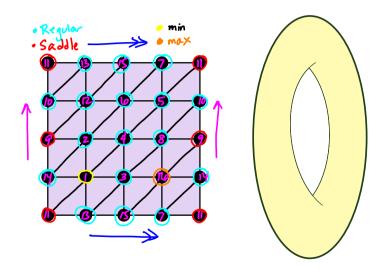
#### Reeb graph



- Let [x] denote the equivalence class of x ∈ X.
- The Reeb graph  $R_f$  of  $f:X\to\mathbb{R}$  is the quotient space  $X/\sim$ .
- Let  $\Phi: X \to R_f$ ,  $x \to [x]$  be the quotient map.

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# Computing the Reeb graph



### Nice enough assumptions

If the input is nice enough, then  $R_f$  is a graph.....

- Morse function on a compact manifold.
- PL function on a compact polyhedron
- Others.....

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### Their assumptions

Require that  $f: X \to \mathbb{R}$  is levelset tame:

- each level set  $f^{-1}(a)$  has a finite number of components
- each component is path connected
- f is of Morse type (Defn 4.14: each levelset has finitely generated homology groups, finitely many critical vluaes, each interval between critical values is regular)

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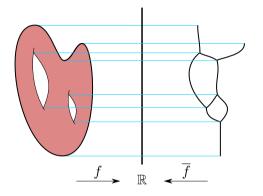
# Reeb graph as a topological summary

With a bit of a lie



Figure: Pascucci et al

# Induced map $ilde{f}:R_f o\mathbb{R}$



Lazy notation: Just write  $f: R_f \to \mathbb{R}$ 

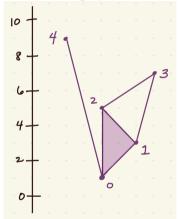
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### Another example

Compute the Reeb graph of the following example:



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