HARDY SPACE OF EXACT FORMS ON $\mathbb{R}^N$

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Abstract

Applying the atomic decomposition of the divergence-free Hardy space we characterize its dual as a variant of BMO. Using the duality result we prove a "div-curl" type theorem: For b in $L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$, $\sup \int b \wedge du \wedge dv$ is equivalent to the BMO-type norm of b, where the supremum is taken over all $u, v \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ with $\|du\|_{L^2},\ \|dv\|_{L^2} \le 1$. This theorem can be used to get some coercivity results for polyconvex quadratic forms which come from the linearization of polyconvex variational integrals studied in nonlinear elasticity in $\mathbb{R}^3$. In addition, we introduce Hardy spaces of exact forms on $\mathbb{R}^N$, study their atomic decompositions and dual spaces, and establish a "div-curl" type theorem on $\mathbb{R}^N$.

2000 Mathematics Subject Classification(Amer. Math. Soc.): Primary 42B30; Secondary 58A10.

Keywords and phrases: divergence-free Hardy space, Hardy space of exact forms, atomic decomposition, BMO, div-curl, coercivity

CONTENTS

The authors are supported by Australian Government through the Australian Research Council. This paper was finished when the first author pursued his PhD in the Centre for Mathematics and its Applications of Mathematical Sciences Institute at the Australian National University.

1. STATEMENT OF THE MAIN THEOREM

In this paper, we consider the divergence-free Hardy space on $\mathbb{R}^3$, give its divergence-free atomic decomposition and use this to characterize its dual space. Applying the duality relationship between the Hardy space and the BMO-type space we prove our main result of the paper, the following "div-curl" type theorem concerning an estimate of quadratic forms on $\mathbb{R}^3$.

Theorem 4.1. *Let $b \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$. Then*

$$\sup_{u,v \in W} \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} b \wedge du \wedge dv \sim \|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}, \tag{1.1}$$

where $W = \{w \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3) : \|dw\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} \leq 1\}$ and

$$\|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} := \sup_B \inf_g \left(\frac{1}{|B|} \int_B |b-g|^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2}, \tag{1.2}$$

the supremum in (1.2) being taken over all balls B in $\mathbb{R}^3$, the infimum being taken over all $g \in BMO(B, \wedge^1)$ with $dg = 0$ in B. The implicit constants in (1.1) are absolute constants.

Theorem 4.1 holds for N-dimensions and any form b. We are especially interested in the three-dimensional case, because, as shown in Section 5, Theorem 4.1 can be used to give some coercivity results of polyconvex quadratic forms which come from the linearization of polyconvex variational integrals studied in nonlinear elasticity by Ball [B]. These results answer questions of Kewei Zhang, who previously obtained analogous 2-dimensional results in [Z].

Extensions of these results to the case of Lipschitz domains in $\mathbb{R}^N$ is contained in the sequels [LM1] and [LM2] to this paper.

The paper is organized as following. Section 2 provides the definition of the divergence-free Hardy space on $\mathbb{R}^3$ and the proof of its divergence-free atomic decomposition. Using the atomic decomposition we characterize its dual in Section 3. The proof of the main theorem is in Section 4. Section 5 is devoted to applications of the main theorem to coercivity properties and Gårding's inequality of certain polyconvex quadratic forms. In Section 6, we introduce Hardy spaces of exact forms on $\mathbb{R}^N$, give their atomic decompositions, characterize their dual spaces and establish a "div-curl" theorem on $\mathbb{R}^N$. In addition, we give a decomposition theorem of these Hardy spaces into "$du \wedge dv$" quantities which is a generalization of a similar decomposition theorem by Coifman, Lions, Meyer and Semmes [CLMS].

In this paper, unless otherwise specified, C denotes a constant independent of functions and domains related to the inequalities. Such C may differ at different occurrences.

2. DIVERGENCE-FREE ATOMIC DECOMPOSITION

In this section we introduce the divergence-free Hardy space and prove its divergence-free atomic decomposition. A similar decomposition was obtained by Gilbert, Hogan and Lakey in [GHL] by using a result of divergence-free wavelet decomposition of $L^2(\mathbb{R}^3, \mathbb{R}^3)$

due to Lemarié-Rieusset [Le]. Our proof is different from that in [GHL] and is valid for forms of all degrees as is shown in Section 6.

We first recall briefly some definitions and results of Hardy spaces and tent spaces which are used in this paper.

The *Hardy space* $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ is the space of locally integrable functions f for which

$$M(f)(x) = \sup_{t>0} |\varphi_t * f(x)|$$

belongs to $L^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$, where $\varphi \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^3)$, $\varphi_t(x) = \frac{1}{t^3}\varphi(\frac{x}{t})$, $t > 0$, $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} \varphi(x)\, dx = 1$, supp $\varphi \subset B(0,1)$, a ball centered at the origin with radius 1. The norm of $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ is defined by

$$\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)} = \|M(f)\|_{L^1(\mathbb{R}^3)},$$

where M is the maximal function. Among many characterizations of Hardy spaces, the atomic decomposition is an important one. An $L^2(\mathbb{R}^3)$ function a is an $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$-*atom* if there is a cube or a ball $B = B_a$ in $\mathbb{R}^N$ satisfying:

1) supp $a \subset B$;
2) $\|a\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\mathbb{R}^3)} \le |B|^{-1/2}$;
3) $\int_B a(x)\, dx = 0$.

It is obvious that any $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$-atom a is in $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$. The basic result about atoms is the following atomic decomposition theorem ([CW], [La]): A function f on $\mathbb{R}^3$ belongs to $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ if and only if f has a decomposition

$$f = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k a_k,$$

where the a_k's are $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$-atoms and $\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k| < \infty$. Furthermore,

$$\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)} \sim \inf \left(\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k| \right),$$

where the infimum is taken over all such decompositions, the constants of the proportionality are absolute constants. Here "$A \sim B$" means that there are constants C_1 and C_2 such that $C_1 A \le B \le C_2 A$.

Define the *tent space* $\mathcal{N}^p(\mathbb{R}^4_+)$ $(1 \le p < \infty)$ to consist of all measurable functions F on $\mathbb{R}^4_+$ for which $S(F) \in L^p(\mathbb{R}^3)$, where $S(F)$ is the square function defined by

$$S(F)(x) = \left(\int_{\Gamma(x)} |F(y,t)|^2 \frac{dydt}{t^4} \right)^{1/2},$$

$\Gamma(x) = \{(y,t) \in \mathbb{R}^4_+ : |y - x| < t\}$, $\|F\|_{\mathcal{N}^p(\mathbb{R}^4_+)} = \|S(F)\|_{L^p(\mathbb{R}^3)}$.

An $\mathcal{N}^p(\mathbb{R}^4_+)$-*atom* is a function α supported in a tent $T(B) = \{(x,t) : |x - x_0| \le r - t\}$ of a ball $B = B(x_0, r)$ in $\mathbb{R}^3$, for which

$$\int_{T(B)} |\alpha(x,t)|^2 \, \frac{dxdt}{t} \le |B|^{1-2/p}.$$

When $1 \le p < \infty$, Coifman, Meyer and Stein proved the following atomic decomposition theorem [CMS]: any $F \in \mathcal{N}^p(\mathbb{R}^4_+)$ can be written as

$$F = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k \alpha_k,$$

where the α_k are $\mathcal{N}^p(\mathbb{R}^4_+)$-atoms and $\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k| \le C\|F\|_{\mathcal{N}^p(\mathbb{R}^4_+)}$.

In the proof of Theorem 2.3, we use the following two facts: one is that the operator defined by

$$g \quad \mapsto \quad S_\psi(g) := \left(\int_{\Gamma(x)} |g * \psi_t(y)|^2 \, \frac{dydt}{t^4} \right)^{1/2}$$

is bounded from $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ to $L^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ for $\psi \in \mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R}^3)$ (the space of test functions) with $\int \psi \, dx = 0$, and

$$\|S_\psi(g)\|_{L^1(\mathbb{R}^3)} \le C\|g\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)} \tag{2.1}$$

(see Theorems 3 and 4 in Chapter III of [St2]). The other is that the operator

$$\pi_\psi(a) = \int_0^\infty a(\cdot, t) * \psi_t \, \frac{dt}{t}$$

is bounded from $\mathcal{N}^2(\mathbb{R}^4_+)$ to $L^2(\mathbb{R}^3)$ and

$$\|\pi_\psi(a)\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3)} \le C\|a\|_{\mathcal{N}^2(\mathbb{R}^4_+)} \tag{2.2}$$

([CMS, Theorem 6]).

Now we define the divergence-free Hardy space. Let $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \mathbb{R}^3)$ denote the space of vector-valued functions with each component in $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$.

Definition 2.1. The *divergence-free Hardy space on* $\mathbb{R}^3$ is defined as

$$\mathcal{H}^1_{div}(\mathbb{R}^3, \mathbb{R}^3) = \{f \in \mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \mathbb{R}^3) : \operatorname{div} f = 0 \;\text{ in }\; \mathbb{R}^3\}$$

with norm

$$\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_{div}(\mathbb{R}^3,\mathbb{R}^3)} = \|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3,\mathbb{R}^3)},$$

where div f is defined in the sense of distributions.

Definition 2.2. A function $a \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^3, \mathbb{R}^3)$ is said to be an $\mathcal{H}^1_{div}(\mathbb{R}^3, \mathbb{R}^3)$-*atom* if there is a cube or ball $B = B_a$ in $\mathbb{R}^3$ satisfying

(i) supp $a \subset B$;
(ii) $\|a\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\mathbb{R}^3)} \le |B|^{-1/2}$;
(iii) $\int_B a(x) \, dx = 0$;
(iv) div $a = 0$ in $\mathbb{R}^3$.

The properties of tent spaces can be used to clarify various points in the theory of Hardy spaces, for example, atomic decompositions. Combining this with an idea of Auscher we prove a divergence-free atomic decomposition of the divergence-free Hardy space.

For simplicity, we prove the result by using the language of forms. Let us interpret vector fields as two-forms. Then $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \mathbb{R}^3)$ and $\mathcal{H}^1_{div}(\mathbb{R}^3, \mathbb{R}^3)$ become $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ and $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ respectively. Similarly we can define tent spaces and their atoms for forms. See Appendix B for definitions of exterior operator d and its formal adjoint δ and information on forms.

Theorem 2.3. *A function f on $\mathbb{R}^3$ is in $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ if and only if it has a decomposition*

$$f = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k a_k,$$

where the a_k's are $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$-atoms and $\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k| < \infty$. Furthermore,

$$\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)} \sim \inf \left(\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k| \right),$$

where the infimum is taken over all such decompositions. The constants of the proportionality are absolute constants.

Proof. The easy part is the "if" part, that is, assuming f has such a decomposition in $\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ (the space of distributions). For then, if the sum is finite,

$$\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)} \leq \sum_k |\lambda_k| \|a_k\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)} \leq C \sum_k |\lambda_k|, \tag{2.3}$$

where we used the fact that $\|a\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)} \leq C$ when a is an $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$-atom.

We now prove the "only if" part. Suppose $f = \sum_{1\leq i<j\leq 3} f_{ij}\ e^i \wedge e^j \in \mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$. Choose a function $\varphi \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^3)$ with support in the unit ball, which satisfies

$$\int_0^\infty t|\xi|^2 \hat{\varphi}(t\xi)^2\ dt = 1. \tag{2.4}$$

Define

$$F(x,t) = t\delta\Big(f * \varphi_t(x)\Big), \quad x \in \mathbb{R}^3, \quad t > 0$$

(see Appendix B for the definition of δ). Then $F(x,t)$ can be written as

$$\begin{aligned} F(x,t) &= \sum_{1\leq i<j\leq 3} \sum_{l=1}^{3} t \frac{\partial}{\partial x_l} \Big(f_{ij} * \varphi_t\Big)(x)\ \mu_l^*(e^i \wedge e^j) \\ &= \sum_{1\leq i<j\leq 3} \sum_{l=1}^{3} f_{ij} * (\partial_l \varphi)_t(x)(\delta_{li} e^j - \delta_{lj} e^i). \end{aligned} \tag{2.5}$$

Since $f_{ij} * (\partial_l\varphi)_t \in \mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^4_+)$ by (2.1), then $F \in \mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^4_+, \wedge^1)$ with

$$\|F\|_{\mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^4_+,\wedge^1)} \leq C\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)}.$$

By the atomic decomposition theorem for tent spaces, F has a decomposition

$$F = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k \alpha_k \tag{2.6}$$

with

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k| \le C\|F\|_{\mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^4_+,\wedge^1)},$$

where the α_k's are $\mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^4_+,\wedge^1)$-atoms, i.e. there exist balls B_k such that supp $\alpha_k \subset T(B_k)$ and

$$\int_{T(B_k)} |\alpha_k(y,t)|^2 \ \frac{dydt}{t} \le \frac{1}{|B_k|}. \tag{2.7}$$

Define

$$\pi F = -\int_0^\infty td\Big(F(\cdot,t) * \varphi_t\Big) \ \frac{dt}{t}.$$

Then (2.6) gives $\pi F = \sum_{k=0}^\infty \lambda_k a_k$, where $a_k = \pi\alpha_k$. Let $\alpha_k = \sum_{i=1}^3 \alpha_k^i \ e^i$, $a_k^{i,l} = -\pi_{\partial_l\varphi}(\alpha_k^i)$, where the α_k^i's are $\mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^4_+)$-atoms, then

$$a_k = \sum_{i,l=1}^{3} a_k^{i,l} \ \mu_l(e^i).$$

It is easy to check that the function a_k satisfies the following conditions: 1) supp $a_k \subset 2B_k$, since $\partial_l\varphi$ is supported in the unit ball and supp $\alpha_k \subset T(B_k)$; 2) $\int a_k \ dx = 0$, since $\partial_l\varphi \in \mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R}^3)$ and $\int \partial_l\varphi \ dx = 0$; 3) $da_k = 0$ in $\mathbb{R}^3$. We now prove that a_k also satisfies the size condition: 4) $\int_{2B_k} |a_k|^2 \ dx \le C|2B_k|^{-1}$, where C is independent of a_k and B_k. Since α_k^i are $\mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^4_+)$-atoms, then $\alpha_k^i \in \mathcal{N}^2(\mathbb{R}^4_+)$. The boundedness of π_ψ in (2.2) and (2.7) imply that $a_k^{i,l} \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^3)$ and

$$\begin{aligned}\|a_k^{i,l}\|^2_{L^2(2B_k)} &\le C\|\alpha_k^i\|^2_{\mathcal{N}^2(\mathbb{R}^4_+)} \\ &= C\int_{\mathbb{R}^3}\int_{\mathbb{R}^4_+} \Big|\alpha_k^i(y,t)\Big|^2 \chi(x-y/t) \ \frac{dydt}{t^4} \ dx \\ &\le C\int_{T(B_k)} \Big|\alpha_k^i(y,t)\Big|^2 \ \frac{dydt}{t} \\ &\le C|2B_k|^{-1},\end{aligned}$$

where χ denotes the characteristic function in the unit ball. We proved that a_k are $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)$-atoms. Moreover we next show that

$$f = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k a_k$$

is an atomic decomposition of f, where the λ_k's are the same as those in (2.6). To see this we only need to prove that

$$f = \pi F.$$

Applying the Fourier transform to $\Delta f = (d\delta + \delta d)f$ and the following two facts

$$\widehat{df}(\xi) = i\xi \wedge \hat{f}(\xi), \quad \widehat{\delta f}(\xi) = -i\xi \vee \hat{f}(\xi),$$

we obtain

$$\begin{aligned}\widehat{\Delta f}(\xi) &= i\xi \wedge \widehat{\delta f}(\xi)\\ &= -i\xi \wedge \big(i\xi \vee \hat{f}(\xi)\big)\\ &= \xi \wedge \big(\xi \vee \hat{f}(\xi)\big),\end{aligned}$$

where we used the fact that $df = 0$. In addition $\widehat{\Delta f}(\xi) = -|\xi|^2 \hat{f}(\xi)$, so

$$\xi \wedge \big(\xi \vee \hat{f}(\xi)\big) = -|\xi|^2 \hat{f}(\xi). \tag{2.8}$$

The assumption (2.4) on φ and (2.8) give

$$\begin{aligned}\widehat{\pi F}(\xi) &= -\int_0^\infty it\xi \wedge \Big(t\widehat{\delta(f * \varphi_t)}(\xi)\hat{\varphi}(t\xi)\Big)\, dt\\ &= \int_0^\infty it\xi \wedge \Big(it\xi \vee \hat{f}(\xi)\hat{\varphi}(t\xi)^2\Big)\, \frac{dt}{t}\\ &= -\int_0^\infty t^2\xi \wedge \Big(\xi \vee \hat{f}(\xi)\Big)\, \hat{\varphi}(t\xi)^2\, \frac{dt}{t}\\ &= \int_0^\infty t|\xi|^2 \hat{\varphi}(t\xi)^2 \hat{f}(\xi)\, dt = \hat{f}(\xi).\end{aligned}$$

The desired result follows. The proof of Theorem 2.3 is completed $\square$

3. THE DUAL SPACE

We now characterize the dual space of $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$. Recall that under the duality

$$(f, g) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} f(x)g(x)\, dx,$$

when suitably defined, the dual of $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ is the real-valued $BMO(\mathbb{R}^3)$ space of functions f of bounded mean oscillation, i.e.

$$\|f\|_{BMO(\mathbb{R}^3)} = \sup_B \inf_{c\in\mathbb{R}} \left(\frac{1}{|B|}\int_B |f - c|^2\, dx\right)^{1/2} < \infty,$$

the supremum being taken over all balls B in $\mathbb{R}^3$. So we have $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)^* = BMO(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$ under the pairing

$$(f, g) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} f \wedge g,$$

when suitably defined [St2].

Definition 3.1. Let $BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$ be the space of measurable functions G for which

$$\|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} = \sup_B \inf_{g_B} \left(\frac{1}{|B|} \int_B |G - g_B|^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2} < \infty,$$

where the supremum is taken over all balls B in $\mathbb{R}^3$, the infimum is taken over all functions $g_B \in L^2(B, \wedge^1)$ with $dg_B = 0$ in B.

Consider the Banach space $BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)/X_0$ with the norm

$$\|G + X_0\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)/X_0} = \|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)},$$

where $X_0 = \{G \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1) : \|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} = 0\}$. We show that it is the dual of $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$. To prove this we first prove a lemma. Let $D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ denote the vector space finitely generated by $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$-atoms. By Theorem 2.3, one has that $D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ is dense in $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$.

Lemma 3.2. *For $g \in BMO(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$,*

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} g \wedge h = 0 \quad \text{for all} \quad h \in D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$$

if and only if

$$dg = 0 \quad \text{in} \quad \mathbb{R}^3.$$

Proof. Note that $d\varphi$ is an $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$-atom if $\varphi \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$. Then $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} g \wedge d\varphi = 0$ if $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} g \wedge h = 0$ for all $h \in D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$. Hence $dg = 0$ in $\mathbb{R}^3$.

Suppose $h \in D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ and

$$h = \sum_k \lambda_k a_k,$$

where the a_k's are $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$-atoms, i.e. $a_k \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ supported in balls B_k and $da_k = 0$ in B_k. By Proposition A.1 in Appendix A, there exist functions $\varphi_k \in H^1_0(B_k, \wedge^1)$ such that $a_k = d\varphi_k$, where $H^1_0(B_k, \wedge^1)$ denotes the Sobolev space $H^1(B_k, \wedge^1)$ with zero boundary values. From Green's formula, for $g \in BMO(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$ with $dg = 0$ in $\mathbb{R}^3$, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} g \wedge h &= \sum_k \lambda_k \int_{B_k} g \wedge a_k \\
&= \sum_k \lambda_k \int_{B_k} g \wedge d\varphi_k \\
&= \sum_k \lambda_k \int_{B_k} dg \wedge \varphi_k = 0
\end{aligned}$$

for all $h \in D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$. $\square$

Now we are ready to prove our main result of this section.

Theorem 3.3. *If $G + X_0 \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)/X_0$, then the linear functional L defined by*

$$L(h) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} G \wedge h, \tag{3.1}$$

initially defined on $D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$, has a unique bounded extension to $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$. Conversely, if L is in $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)^*$, then there exists a unique $G + X_0 \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)/X_0$ such that (3.1) holds. The map $G + X_0 \mapsto L$ given by (3.1) is a Banach isomorphism between $BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)/X_0$ and $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)^*$.

Proof. Let $G \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$. Define

$$L(h) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} G \wedge h, \qquad h \in D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2).$$

If $\|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} = 0$ then for any ball B,

$$\inf_{g \in L^2(B,\wedge^1), dg=0} \int_B |G - g|^2 \, dx = 0. \tag{3.2}$$

Since $\{g \in L^2(B, \wedge^1) : \ dg = 0 \text{ in } B\}$ is a closed subspace of $L^2(B, \wedge^1)$ (see, for example, [ISS, Corollary 5.2]), (3.2) implies that $G \in L^2(B, \wedge^1)$ with $dG = 0$ in B for all $B \subset \mathbb{R}^3$. Hence $dG = 0$ in $\mathbb{R}^3$. By Lemma 3.2 we have

$$L(h) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} G \wedge h = 0 \quad \text{ for all } \quad h \in D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2).$$

Therefore we can define $\rho_1 : BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)/X_0 \to D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)^*$ by

$$\rho_1(G + X_0)(h) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} G \wedge h, \quad h \in D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2).$$

The proof that, for every $G \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$, the linear functional (3.1) is defined and bounded on $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ depends on the inequality

$$\Big| \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} G \wedge h \Big| \le C \|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} \|h\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)} \tag{3.3}$$

for $G \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$ and h in the dense subspace $D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2) \subset \mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$.

Similar to the proof of Lemma 3.2, write $h \in D(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ as a finite sum of atoms a_k supported in balls B_k. For all $g_k \in L^2(B_k, \wedge^1)$ with $dg_k = 0$ in B_k, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
\Big| \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} G \wedge h \Big| &\le \sum_k |\lambda_k| \Big| \int_{B_k} (G - g_k) \wedge a_k \Big| \\
&\le \sum_k |\lambda_k| \left(\int_{B_k} |G - g_k|^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2} \|a_k\|_{L^2(B_k,\wedge^2)} \\
&\le \sum_k |\lambda_k| \left(\frac{1}{|B_k|} \int_{B_k} |G - g_k|^2 \, dx \right)^{1/2},
\end{aligned}$$

where we used the size condition of a_k. This gives

$$\Big|\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} G\wedge h\Big| \le \sum_k |\lambda_k| \inf_{g_k} \left(\frac{1}{|B_k|}\int_{B_k} |G-g_k|^2\, dx\right)^{1/2}$$
$$\le C\|h\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)}\|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}.$$

Then (3.3) is proved. Therefore each $G\in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)$ gives a bounded linear functional on the dense subspace $D(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)$, and thus on $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)$.

Let

$$Y_0 := \{g\in BMO(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1) : dg=0 \text{ in } \mathbb{R}^3\}.$$

Note that $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)$ is a closed subspace of $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)$. Applying the Hahn-Banach Theorem and Lemma 3.2, one finds that Y_0 is a closed subspace of $BMO(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)$ and the map

$$\rho_2 :\quad L \;\mapsto\; G+Y_0$$

is a Banach isomorphism between $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)^*$ and $Y := BMO(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)/Y_0$, and

$$\|L\|_{op} \sim \|G+Y_0\|_Y,$$

where $L\in\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)^*$ is defined as in (3.1), $\|L\|_{op}$ is the operator norm of L.

Define

$$\rho_3 :\; G+Y_0 \;\mapsto\; G+X_0$$

from Y to $BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)/X_0$. We next show that ρ_3 is well-defined and bounded. For $G\in BMO(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)$, $g\in Y_0$ and a ball $B\subset\mathbb{R}^3$, we have

$$\inf_{g_B}\left(\frac{1}{|B|}\int_B |G-g_B|^2\, dx\right)^{1/2} \le \inf_{c\in\wedge^1}\left(\frac{1}{|B|}\int_B |G-g-c|^2\, dx\right)^{1/2},$$

where the infimum in the left-hand side is taken over all $g_B\in L^2(B,\wedge^1)$ with $dg_B=0$ in B and that in the right-hand side is taken over all constant forms $c\in\wedge^1$. Hence

$$\|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} \le \inf_{g\in Y_0}\|G-g\|_{BMO(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} = \|G+Y_0\|_Y.$$

It is straightforward to check that

$$\rho_3\circ\rho_2\circ\rho_1 = I,\quad \rho_1\circ\rho_3\circ\rho_2 = I,$$

where I denotes the identity map. Hence the theorem is proved. $\square$

4. PROOF OF THE MAIN THEOREM.

Using the duality result in the previous section we next prove our main theorem of this paper: the following "div-curl" type theorem on $\mathbb{R}^3$. The $N-$dimensional case is studied in Section 6.

Theorem 4.1. *Let $b \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$. Then*

$$\sup_{u,v\in W} \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} b \wedge du \wedge dv \sim \|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}, \tag{4.1}$$

where $W = \{w \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3) : \|dw\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} \le 1\}$. The implicit constants in (4.1) are absolute constants.

Proof. Suppose $b \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$. From Theorem II.1 in [CLMS] (see also Lemma 6.9 in Section 6), $du \wedge dv \in \mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$ for $u,\ v \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ and there exists an absolute constant C such that

$$\|du \wedge dv\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)} \le C\|du\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\|dv\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}. \tag{4.2}$$

Further, $du \wedge dv \in \mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^2)$. From (3.3), (4.2) and the assumption on u and v, we have

$$\begin{aligned}\Big|\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} b \wedge du \wedge dv\Big| &\le \|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\|du \wedge dv\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)}\\ &\le C\|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}.\end{aligned}$$

On the other hand, we need to prove that there exists an absolute constant C such that for all balls $B \subset \mathbb{R}^3$

$$\inf_{g_B} \left(\frac{1}{|B|}\int_B |b - g_B|^2 \, dx\right)^{1/2} \le C \sup_{u,v\in W} \Big|\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} b \wedge du \wedge dv\Big|, \tag{4.3}$$

where the infimum is taken over all $g_B \in L^2(B, \wedge^1)$ with $dg_B = 0$ in B. Since the left-hand side of (4.3) is invariant by scaling, to prove (4.3) we need only to show that for the unit ball B_0, there exist $u_0 \in H^1_0(B_0)$, $v_0 \in H^1_0(2B_0)$ with $\|du_0\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}$, $\|dv_0\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} \le 1$ such that

$$\inf_{g_0} \left(\int_{B_0} |b - g_0|^2 \, dx\right)^{1/2} \le C\Big|\int_{B_0} b \wedge du_0 \wedge dv_0\Big|, \tag{4.4}$$

where the infimum is taken over all $g_0 \in L^2(B_0, \wedge^1)$ with $dg_0 = 0$ in B_0.

We now prove (4.4). Let

$$H = \{h \in L^2(B_0, \wedge^1) : \delta h = 0 \ \text{ in } \ B_0,\ n \vee h|_{\partial B_0} = 0\}.$$

Since H is a closed subspace of $L^2(B_0, \wedge^1)$, we have the decomposition:

$$L^2(B_0, \wedge^1) = H \oplus H^\perp, \tag{4.5}$$

where $H^\perp$ denotes the orthogonal complement of H in $L^2(B_0, \wedge^1)$ and

$$H^\perp = \{dq : q \in H^1(B_0)\}$$

(ref. [GR, Theorem 2.7]). Let $b \in L^2(B_0, \wedge^1)$, (4.5) gives that $b = h + dq$, where $h \in H$, $q \in H^1(B_0)$. Then we have

$$\int_{B_0} b \wedge du_0 \wedge dv_0 = \int_{B_0} h \wedge du_0 \wedge dv_0$$

and

$$\inf_{g_0}\left(\int_{B_0}|b-g_0|^2\,dx\right)^{1/2}\le\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^1)}.$$

Therefore to prove (4.4) it is sufficient to prove that there exists an absolute constant C such that

$$\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^1)}\le C\Big|\int_{B_0}h\wedge du_0\wedge dv_0\Big| \tag{4.6}$$

for all $h\in H$.

Applying Proposition A.1 in Appendix A, for $h\in H$, there exists $\varphi\in H_0^1(B_0,\wedge^1)$ and an absolute constant C_0 such that

$$*h=d\varphi$$

and

$$\|D\varphi\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^1)}\le C_0\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^1)} \tag{4.7}$$

($*$ is the Hodge star operator). Thus we have

$$\begin{aligned}\|h\|^2_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^1)}&=\int_{B_0}h\wedge d\varphi\\&=\int_{B_0}h\wedge d(\varphi_1dx_1+\varphi_2dx_2+\varphi_3dx_3)\\&\le 3\max_{1\le i\le 3}\Big|\int_{B_0}h\wedge d\varphi_i\wedge dx_i\Big|\\&:=3\Big|\int_{B_0}h\wedge d\varphi_{i_0}\wedge dx_{i_0}\Big|\end{aligned} \tag{4.8}$$

for some choice of i_0 $(1\le i_0\le 3)$. Define

$$u_0=\frac{\varphi_{i_0}}{C_0\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^1)}}.$$

It is obvious that $u_0\in H_0^1(B_0)$ and $\|du_0\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\le 1$ by (4.7). We now construct v_0. Let $\psi_0\in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^3)$ such that

$$\psi_0=\begin{cases}1 & \text{in } B_0;\\ 0 & \text{outside } \overline{2B_0}.\end{cases}$$

Define

$$v_0=\gamma x_{i_0}\psi_0,\qquad 1\le i_0\le 3,$$

where $\gamma>0$ is a constant so that $\|dv_0\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\le 1$. It is easy to check that $v_0\in C_0^\infty(2B_0)$ and $dv_0=\gamma dx_{i_0}$ in B_0, So (4.8) and the construction of u_0 and v_0 give

$$\begin{aligned}\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^1)}&\le 3C_0\gamma^{-1}\Big|\int_{B_0}h\wedge\frac{d\varphi_{i_0}}{C_0\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^1)}}\wedge\gamma dx_{i_0}\Big|\\&=3C_0\gamma^{-1}\Big|\int_{B_0}h\wedge du_0\wedge dv_0\Big|.\end{aligned}$$

This proves (4.6). The proof of Theorem 4.1 is completed. □

Remarks. (1) It is easy to check that the following estimate of the quadratic form det Du can be derived from Theorems II.1 and III.2 in [CLMS]

$$\|b\|_{BMO(\mathbb{R}^2)} \sim \sup_u \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} b \det Du \, dx, \tag{4.9}$$

where the supremum is taken over all $u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^2, \wedge^1)$ with $\|du_i\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^2,\wedge^1)} \leq 1$, $i = 1, 2$. Theorem 4.1 is an extension of (4.9) to three-dimensions.

(2) We are especially interested in the three-dimensional case, because, as shown in the following section, Theorem 4.1 can be used to give coercivity properties and Gårding's inequality of some polyconvex quadratic forms.

5. APPLICATIONS

In the study of homogenization of linearized elasticity, Geymonat, Müller and Triantafyllidis [GMT] considered the following system

$$\left.\begin{aligned} &\operatorname{div}_\alpha A^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta}(\frac{x}{\varepsilon})\partial_\beta u_j = f \text{ in } \Omega \\ &u|_{\partial\Omega} = 0, \end{aligned}\right\} \tag{5.1}$$

where $A^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta}(x)$ is a periodic measurable function, $1 \leq i,\ j,\ \alpha,\ \beta \leq N$. A quantity Λ is introduced which gives a criterion of whether an elliptic system satisfying the Legendre-Hadamard condition can be homogenized, namely

$$\Lambda = \inf \left\{ \frac{\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} A^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta}(x)\partial_\alpha u_i \partial_\beta u_j dx}{\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |Du|^2 dx} : u \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^1) \right\}.$$

It was proved in [GMT] that if $\Lambda > 0$ some homogenization results can be obtained for the system (5.1). If $\Lambda < 0$, the system cannot be homogenized. Zhang asked the following question: what conditions on the coefficient $A^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta}$ of the system imply that $\Lambda \geq 0$?

For $N = 2$, this question was answered by Zhang in [Z]. Motivated by [Z] we answer the question for $N = 3$. Suppose that $A^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta}(x)\partial_\alpha u_i \partial_\beta u_j$ can be written in the form

$$A^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta}(x)\partial_\alpha u_i \partial_\beta u_j = B^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta}(x)\partial_\alpha u_i \partial_\beta u_j + b_{ij}(x)(\text{adj } Du)_{i,j}, \tag{5.2}$$

where $A^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta}$, $B^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta} \in L^\infty(\mathbb{R}^3)$, $B^{i,j}_{\alpha,\beta}\partial_\alpha u_i \partial_\beta u_j \geq C|Du|^2$, adj Du denotes the adjoint matrix of Du for $u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$ (the summation convention is understood). We are interested in forms of this type in three dimensions, because they arrive naturally from the linearization of polyconvex variational integrals studied in nonlinear elasticity by Ball in [B].

When $i = 1$, the last term in (5.2) becomes

$$\begin{aligned} &\sum_{j=1}^3 b_{1j}(x)(\text{adj } Du)_{1,j} \\ &\qquad = b_{11}(x)(\text{adj } Du)_{1,1} + b_{12}(x)(\text{adj } Du)_{1,2} + b_{13}(x)(\text{adj } Du)_{1,3} \\ &\qquad = \det \begin{pmatrix} b_{11} & b_{12} & b_{13} \\ \partial_1 u_2 & \partial_2 u_2 & \partial_3 u_2 \\ \partial_1 u_3 & \partial_2 u_3 & \partial_3 u_3 \end{pmatrix} \\ &\qquad := b_1 \wedge du_2 \wedge du_3. \end{aligned}$$

For $i = 2,\ 3$, we have similarly

$$\sum_{j=1}^{3} b_{2j}(x)(\text{adj } Du)_{2,j} = b_2 \wedge du_1 \wedge du_3$$

and

$$\sum_{j=1}^{3} b_{3j}(x)(\text{adj } Du)_{3,j} = b_3 \wedge du_1 \wedge du_2,$$

where $b_i = (b_{i1}, b_{i2}, b_{i3})$. Let $a(u)$ denote the following polyconvex quadratic form

$$a(u) = |Du|^2 + b_1 \wedge du_2 \wedge du_3 + b_2 \wedge du_1 \wedge du_3 + b_3 \wedge du_1 \wedge du_2, \tag{5.3}$$

where $b_1,\ b_2$ and b_3 are one-forms. So the question when $\Lambda \geq 0$ becomes: find necessary conditions of b_i such that $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} a(u)\ dx \geq 0$ for all $u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$. In fact the conditions are that $\|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}$ cannot be too large. We prove this by using Theorem 4.1. Another application of Theorem 4.1 is to prove the weak coercivity property - Gårding's inequality.

5.1 Coercivity

For coercivity we give an "almost" necessary and sufficient condition on b_i such that $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} a(u)\ dx \geq 0$ for all $u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$.

Proposition 5.1. *Let $a(u)$ be the expression shown in (5.3).*

(1) There exists an absolute constant C_1 such that $\max_{1\leq i\leq 3} \|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} \leq C_1$ implies that

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} a(u)\ dx \geq \frac{1}{2}\|Du\|^2_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}$$

for all $u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$.

(2) If $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} a(u)\ dx \geq 0$ for all $u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$, then there exists an absolute constant C_2 such that

$$\max_{1\leq i\leq 3} \|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} \leq C_2. \tag{5.4}$$

Proof. (1) Let $b_i \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$ and $u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$. From (3.3) and (4.2), we have

$$\begin{aligned}
&\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} a(u)\ dx \\
&\quad \geq \|Du\|^2_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} - \Big(\|b_1\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\|du_2 \wedge du_3\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)} \\
&\qquad\qquad + \|b_2\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\|du_1 \wedge du_3\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)} \\
&\qquad\qquad\qquad + \|b_3\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\|du_1 \wedge du_2\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^2)}\Big) \\
&\quad \geq \|Du\|^2_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} - C \max_{1\leq i\leq 3} \|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\Big(\|du_2\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\|du_3\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} \\
&\qquad\qquad + \|du_1\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\|du_3\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)} \\
&\qquad\qquad\qquad + \|du_1\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\|du_2\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\Big) \\
&\quad \geq \Big(1 - C \max_{1\leq i\leq 3} \|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\Big)\|Du\|^2_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}.
\end{aligned}$$

So

$$\max_{1\le i\le 3}\|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\le C_1=\frac{1}{2C}$$

implies that

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} a(u)\ dx\ge\frac{1}{2}\|Du\|^2_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}$$

for all $u\in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)$.

(2) From Theorem 4.1, there exist absolute constants C and C' such that

$$C\|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\le\sup_{u,v\in W}\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} b\wedge du\wedge dv\le C'\|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}.$$

For any $\varepsilon>0$, there exist $u^\varepsilon,\ v^\varepsilon\in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3)$ with $\|du^\varepsilon\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)},\ \|dv^\varepsilon\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\le 1$ such that

$$C\|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}-\varepsilon\le\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} b\wedge du^\varepsilon\wedge dv^\varepsilon. \tag{5.5}$$

For b_i and $\varepsilon=1$, (5.5) gives

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} b_i\wedge d(-u^1)\wedge dv^1\le -\ C\|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}+1. \tag{5.6}$$

Let $w^1=(0,-u^1,v^1)$. Since $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3}a(u)\ dx\ge 0$ for all $u\in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)$, in particular $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3}a(w^1)\ dx\ge 0$. Combining this with (5.6) we get

$$\begin{aligned}0&\le\int_{\mathbb{R}^3}|Dw^1|^2\ dx+\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} b_i\wedge d(-u^1)\wedge dv^1\\&\le\|Dw^1\|^2_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}-C\|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}+1\\&\le 3-C\|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}.\end{aligned}$$

Hence

$$\max_{1\le i\le 3}\|b_i\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^3,\wedge^1)}\le C_2=\frac{3}{C}.$$

Proposition 5.1 is proved. $\square$

5.2 Gårding's Inequality

The proof of Theorem 4.1 implies the following result

Lemma 5.2. *Let $\Omega\subset\mathbb{R}^3$ be an open domain and $b\in L^2_{loc}(\Omega,\wedge^1)$. Then there exists an absolute constant C_3 such that*

$$\sup_B\inf_g\left(\frac{1}{|B|}\int_B|b-g|^2\ dx\right)^{1/2}\le C_3\sup_{u,v\in W}\int_\Omega b\wedge du\wedge dv, \tag{5.7}$$

where the supremum in the left-hand side is taken over all balls B with $2B\subset\Omega$, the infimum is taken over all $g\in L^2(B,\wedge^1)$ with $dg=0$ in B, and $W=\{w\in H^1_0(\Omega):\|dw\|_{L^2(\Omega,\wedge^1)}\le 1\}$.

Remark. The two sides of (5.7) are actually equivalent when Ω is a special Lipschitz domain or a bounded strongly Lipschitz domain. See Theorem 6.1 of [LM1].

Let us denote the left-hand side of (5.7) by $\|b\|_{BMO^H_d(\Omega,\wedge^1)}$.

Lemma 5.3. *Let $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^3$ be an open domain, $a(u)$ be the expression shown in (5.3) and $\int_\Omega a(u)\, dx \geq 0$ for all $u \in H_0^1(\Omega, \wedge^1)$. Then there exists an absolute constant C_4 such that*

$$\max_{1\leq i\leq 3} \|b_i\|_{BMO_d^H(\Omega,\wedge^1)} \leq C_4.$$

Proof. Using Lemma 5.2, similar to the proof of Proposition 5.1 (2), we can prove the proposition. The details are omitted. □

For $b \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$, define

$$\|b\|_* = \lim_{l\to 0} \sup_B \inf_g \left(\frac{1}{|B|} \int_B |b-g|^2\, dx \right)^{1/2}, \tag{5.8}$$

where the supremum is taken over all balls $B \subset \mathbb{R}^3$ with radius less than $l > 0$, the infimum is taken over all $g \in L^2(B, \wedge^1)$ with $dg = 0$ in B.

Proposition 5.4. *Assuming Gårding's inequality holds for $\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} a(u)\, dx$, that is, there exist constants $\lambda_0 > 0$, $\lambda_1 \geq 0$ such that*

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^3} a(u)\, dx \geq \lambda_0 \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} |Du|^2\, dx - \lambda_1 \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} |u|^2\, dx \tag{5.9}$$

for all $u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$. Then

$$\max_{1\leq i\leq 3} \|b_i\|_* \leq C_4,$$

where C_4 is the same constant in Lemma 5.3.

Proof. From (5.8), there exists a sequence of balls $B_{r_k} = B(x_k, r_k) \subset \mathbb{R}^3$ with $r_k \to 0$ such that

$$\inf_g \left(\frac{1}{|B_{r_k}|} \int_{B_{r_k}} |b_i - g|^2\, dx \right)^{1/2} \to \|b_i\|_*. \tag{5.10}$$

Suppose that $v := v_1 dx_1 + v_2 dx_2 + v_3 dx_3 \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^3, \wedge^1)$ is supported in $2B_{r_k}$. By (5.9),

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{2B_{r_k}} |Dv(x)|^2\, dx + \int_{2B_{r_k}} & b_1(x) \wedge dv_2(x) \wedge dv_3(x) \\ & + b_2(x) \wedge dv_1(x) \wedge dv_3(x) + b_3(x) \wedge dv_1(x) \wedge dv_2(x) \\ & \geq \lambda_0 \int_{2B_{r_k}} |Dv(x)|^2\, dx - \lambda_1 \int_{2B_{r_k}} |v(x)|^2\, dx. \end{aligned} \tag{5.11}$$

Set $x = x_k + 2r_k y$ and let $v^k(y) = v(x_k + 2r_k y)$, $b_i^k(y) = b_i(x_k + 2r_k y)$ in (5.11) we have

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{B(0,1)} |Dv^k(y)|^2\, dy + \int_{B(0,1)} & b_1^k(y) \wedge dv_2^k(y) \wedge dv_3^k(y) \\ & + b_2^k(y) \wedge dv_1^k(y) \wedge dv_3^k(y) + b_3^k(y) \wedge dv_1^k(y) \wedge dv_2^k(y) \\ & \geq \lambda_0 \int_{B(0,1)} |Dv^k(y)|^2\, dy - \lambda_1 \int_{B(0,1)} (2r_k)^2 |v^k(y)|^2\, dy \end{aligned} \tag{5.12}$$

for all $v^k \in H_0^1\big(B(0,1),\wedge^1\big)$. For r_k sufficiently small, by Poincaré's inequality the right-hand side of (5.12) is non-negative, i.e.

$$\int_{B(0,1)} a(v^k)\ dy \geq 0$$

for all $v^k \in H_0^1\big(B(0,1),\wedge^1\big)$. This yields

$$\max_{1\leq i\leq 3}\inf_{g}\left(\frac{1}{|B(0,1/2)|}\int_{B(0,1/2)}|b_i^k(y)-g(y)|^2\ dy\right)^{1/2}\leq C_4 \tag{5.13}$$

by Lemma 5.3, where the infimum is taken over all $g \in L^2\big(B(0,1/2),\wedge^1\big)$ with $dg=0$ in $B(0,1/2)$. Let $y=\frac{x-x_k}{2r_k}$, (5.13) gives

$$\max_{1\leq i\leq 3}\inf_{\tilde g}\left(\frac{1}{|B_{r_k}|}\int_{B_{r_k}}|b_i(x)-\tilde g(x)|^2\ dx\right)^{1/2}\leq C_4, \tag{5.14}$$

where $\tilde g(x)\in L^2(B_{r_k},\wedge^1)$ with $d\tilde g=0$. Combining (5.12) with (5.14) we have

$$\max_{1\leq i\leq 3}\|b_i\|_*\leq C_4.$$

The proof of Proposition 5.4 is finished. □

6. HARDY SPACES OF EXACT FORMS ON $\mathbb{R}^N$

In this section we introduce Hardy spaces of exact forms on $\mathbb{R}^N$ and study their atomic decompositions and dual spaces. Using duality results we prove that Theorem 4.1 holds on $\mathbb{R}^N$ when $b,\ u,\ v$ are respectively $k,\ m,\ l$-forms with $k+m+l+2=N$.

6.1 Definitions

Definition 6.1. For $0\leq l\leq N$, the *Hardy space of l-forms* is defined as

$$\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)=\{f:\mathbb{R}^N\to\wedge^l : \text{each component of } \ f \text{ is in } \ \mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N)\}$$

with the norm

$$\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}=\sum_I\|f_I\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N)}$$

for $f=\sum_I f_I dx_I$.

Definition 6.2. Let $1\leq l\leq N$. The *Hardy space of exact l-forms* is defined as

$$\mathcal{H}_d^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)=\{f\in\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l): f=dg \ \text{ for some } \ g\in\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{l-1})\}$$

with the norm

$$\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}_d^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}=\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}.$$

Remark. When $l=N,\ \mathcal{H}_d^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)$ is isomorphic to the usual Hardy space $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N)$. When $l=N-1$, $\mathcal{H}_d^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)$ is isomorphic to the divergence-free Hardy space $\mathcal{H}_{div}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\mathbb{R}^N):=\{f\in\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\mathbb{R}^N):\text{div } f=0 \text{ in } \ \mathbb{R}^N\}$.

Definition 6.3. We say that a is an $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$-*atom* if

(i) there exists $b \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{l-1})$ supported in a cube Q in $\mathbb{R}^N$ such that $a = db$;

(ii) a and b satisfy size conditions: $\|a\|_{L^2(Q,\wedge^l)} \le |Q|^{-1/2}$, $\|b\|_{L^2(Q,\wedge^{l-1})} \le l(Q)|Q|^{-1/2}$, where $l(Q)$ denotes the side-length of Q.

6.2 Atomic Decompositions and Dual Spaces

The main result of this section is the following atomic decomposition theorem for $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$. We also characterize its dual by using this decomposition.

Theorem 6.4. *Let $1 \le l \le N$. An $l-$form f on $\mathbb{R}^N$ is in $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$ if and only if it has a decomposition*

$$f = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k a_k, \tag{6.1}$$

where the a_k's are $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$-atoms and $\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k| < \infty$. Furthermore,

$$\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)} \sim \inf\left(\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k|\right),$$

where the infimum is taken over all such decompositions. The constants of the proportionality depend only on the dimension N.

Proof. We first prove the "if" part. Suppose that f can be written as (6.1) with

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k| < \infty, \tag{6.2}$$

where the a_k's are $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$-atoms, i.e. there exist $b_k \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{l-1})$ supported in cubes Q_k such that $a_k = db_k$ and $\|b_k\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{l-1})} \le l(Q_k)|Q_k|^{-1/2}$. We need to show that

$$g := \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k b_k$$

exists in $\mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{l-1})$, for then $f = dg \in \mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$.

To prove $g \in \mathcal{D}'(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{l-1})$, it is sufficient to show that the sum $\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k b_k$ is convergent in the sense of distributions. From (6.2),

$$\sum_{k=m}^{n} |\lambda_k| \to 0 \qquad \text{as} \qquad m,\ n \to \infty.$$

Combining this with the size condition of b_k, for any $\varphi \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{N-l+1})$ with compact support Ω,

$$\begin{aligned}\Big|\int_{\mathbb{R}^N}\Big(\sum_{k=m}^{n}\lambda_k b_k\Big)\wedge\varphi\Big| &\le \sum_{k=m}^{n}|\lambda_k|\Big|\int_{Q_k\cap\Omega} b_k\wedge\varphi\Big| \\ &\le C\sum_{k=m}^{n}|\lambda_k|\|b_k\|_{L^2(Q_k\cap\Omega,\wedge^{l-1})}|Q_k\cap\Omega|^{1/2} \\ &\le C\sum_{k=m}^{n}|\lambda_k|l(Q_k)|Q_k|^{-1/2}|Q_k\cap\Omega|^{1/2} \\ &\le C\sum_{k=m}^{n}|\lambda_k|\to 0 \qquad \text{as} \ \ m,\ n\to\infty,\end{aligned}$$

where the constant C depends only on φ. The convergence of $\sum_{k=0}^{\infty}\lambda_k b_k$ is proved.

The proof of the "only if" part is similar to that of Theorem 2.3 in Section 2, so we only give an outline of the proof. From the proof of Theorem 2.3, we know that any $f\in\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)$ can be written as

$$f=-\int_0^\infty td\Big(t\delta(f*\varphi_t)*\varphi_t\Big)\frac{dt}{t}, \tag{6.3}$$

where $\varphi\in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N)$ with support in the unit ball and $\int_0^\infty t|\xi|^2\hat{\varphi}(t\xi)^2\ dt=1$. For $y\in\mathbb{R}^N,\ t>0$, define

$$F(y,t)=t\delta(f*\varphi_t)(y).$$

Let $f=\sum_I f_I e_I\in\wedge^l$, then

$$F(y,t)=\sum_{i,I}t\partial_i(f_I*\varphi_t)(y)\mu_i^*(e_I)=\sum_{i,I}f_I*(\partial_i\varphi)_t(y)\mu_i^*(e_I).$$

Applying (2.1), we get $F\in\mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^{N+1}_+,\wedge^{l-1})$ and

$$\|F\|_{\mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^{N+1}_+,\wedge^{l-1})}\le C\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}.$$

From atomic decompositions for tent spaces,

$$F=\sum_{k=0}^{\infty}\lambda_k\alpha_k \tag{6.4}$$

with

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty}|\lambda_k|\le C\|F\|_{\mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^{N+1}_+,\wedge^{l-1})},$$

where the α_k's are $\mathcal{N}^1(\mathbb{R}^{N+1}_+,\wedge^{l-1})$-atoms. Define

$$a_k=-\int_0^\infty td\Big(\alpha_k(\cdot,t)*\varphi_t\Big)\frac{dt}{t}.$$

From (6.3) and (6.4), we have

$$f = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k a_k,$$

where a_k is supported in a ball $2B_k$ and satisfies the size condition: $\|a_k\|_{L^2(2B_k,\wedge^l)} \leq C|2B_k|^{-1/2}$ for a constant C independent of k. Applying Lemma 6.7 (1) in Section 6 to a_k, there exists $b_k \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{l-1})$ supported in $2B_k$ such that $a_k = db_k$ and

$$\|b_k\|_{L^2(2B_k,\wedge^{l-1})} \leq C\ r(2B_k)|2B_k|^{-1/2},$$

where $r(2B_k)$ denotes the radius of the ball $2B_k$ and C is independent of k. Let Q_k be a smallest cube containing $2B_k$. Then

$$\|a_k\|_{L^2(Q_k,\wedge^l)} \leq C|Q_k|^{-1/2}$$

and

$$\|b_k\|_{L^2(Q_k,\wedge^{l-1})} \leq C\ l(Q_k)|Q_k|^{-1/2}$$

for some constants C independent of k. We have proved that a_k is an $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$-atom. The proof of Theorem 6.4 is finished. □

Now we consider dual spaces of $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$. Let $BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^k)$ $(0 \leq k \leq N)$ be the space of all locally integrable functions $G : \mathbb{R}^N \to \wedge^k$ with

$$\|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^k)} = \sup_B \inf_{g_B} \left(\frac{1}{|B|} \int_B |G - g_B|^2\ dx \right)^{1/2} < \infty,$$

where the supremum is taken over all balls B in $\mathbb{R}^N$ and the infimum is taken over all $g_B \in L^2(B, \wedge^k)$ with $dg_B = 0$ in B. Consider $BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^k)/X_0$ with the norm

$$\|G + X_0\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^k)/X_0} = \|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^k)},$$

where $X_0 = \{G \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^k) : \|G\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^k)} = 0\}$. We see that when $k = 0$, $BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^0)/X_0$ reduces to the usual BMO-space on $\mathbb{R}^N$. The following theorem is an analogue of Theorem 3.3, which reveals that the dual of $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$ is the space $BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{N-l})/X_0$. Its proof is similar to that of Theorem 3.3, so we skip the details. Let $D(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$ denote the vector space finitely generated by $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$-atoms. Theorem 6.4 implies that $D(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$ is dense in $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$.

Theorem 6.5. *Let $1 \leq l \leq N$. If $G + X_0 \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{N-l})/X_0$, then the linear functional L defined by*

$$L(h) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} G \wedge h, \tag{6.5}$$

initially defined in $D(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$, has a unique bounded extension to $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$. Conversely, if $L \in \mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)^*$, then there exists a unique $G + X_0 \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{N-l})/X_0$ such that (6.5) holds. The map $G + X_0 \mapsto L$ given by (6.5) is a Banach isomorphism between $BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{N-l})/X_0$ and $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)^*$.

6.3 The "Div-Curl" Type Theorem on $\mathbb{R}^N$

We now prove the "div-curl" type theorem on $\mathbb{R}^N$, which is a generalization of Theorem 4.1 to N-dimensions and to forms of all degrees.

Theorem 6.6. *Let $b \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$, $l,\ m,\ n \geq 0$ and $l+m+n+2 = N$. Then*

$$\sup_{u,v} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} b \wedge du \wedge dv \sim \|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)}, \tag{6.6}$$

where the supremum is taken over all u and v with

$$\left.\begin{array}{l} u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^m), \quad \|du\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{m+1})} \leq 1; \\ v \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^n), \quad \|dv\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{n+1})} \leq 1. \end{array}\right\} \tag{6.7}$$

The implicit constants in (6.6) depend only on N.

To prove Theorem 6.6 we need the following lemmas.

Lemma 6.7. *Let B be a ball in $\mathbb{R}^N$.*

(1) If u satisfies either of the following conditions:

1) $u \in L^2(B, \wedge^l)$, $du = 0$ in B and $n \wedge u|_{\partial B} = 0$ when $0 < l < N$;

2) $u \in L^2(B, \wedge^l)$ with $\int u = 0$, where $l = N$,

then there exists $\varphi \in H^1_0(B, \wedge^{l-1})$ and a constant C independent of u and B such that

$$u = d\varphi,$$

$$\|D\varphi\|_{L^2(B, \wedge^{l-1})} \leq C\|u\|_{L^2(B, \wedge^l)} \tag{6.8}$$

and

$$\|\varphi\|_{L^2(B, \wedge^{l-1})} \leq C\ r(B)\|u\|_{L^2(B, \wedge^l)}. \tag{6.9}$$

(2) If u satisfies either of the following conditions:

1) $u \in L^2(B, \wedge^l)$, $\delta u = 0$ in B and $n \vee u|_{\partial B} = 0$ when $0 < l < N$;

2) $u \in L^2(B, \wedge^l)$ with $\int u = 0$, where $l = 0$,

then there exists $\psi \in H^1_0(B, \wedge^{l+1})$ and a constant C independent of u and B such that

$$u = \delta\psi$$

and

$$\|D\psi\|_{L^2(B, \wedge^{l+1})} \leq C\|u\|_{L^2(B, \wedge^l)}.$$

Proof. (1) When u satisfies the conditions of 2), Lemma 6.7 (1) is a special case of Nečas' result [N, Lemma 7.1, Chapter 3]. So we only prove 1). From Theorem 3.3.3 in Chapter 3 of [Sc], there exists $\varphi \in H^1(B, \wedge^{l-1})$ such that

$$u = d\varphi, \qquad \varphi|_{\partial B} = 0$$

and

$$\|\varphi\|_{H^1(B, \wedge^{l-1})} \leq C\|u\|_{L^2(B, \wedge^l)}$$

for some constants C independent of u. So the only thing we need to check is that the constants in (6.8) and (6.9) are independent of balls B. We only prove this for (6.9). Let $B = B(x_0, r)$, x_0 be the center of B, $r = r(B)$. It is easy to check that $u(x_0+ry)$, y is in the unit ball B_0, satisfies the conditions of 1) for B_0. So there exists $\frac{\varphi(x_0+ry)}{r} \in H_0^1(B_0, \wedge^{l-1})$ and a constant C independent of u and r such that

$$u(x_0+ry) = d\frac{\varphi(x_0+ry)}{r}$$

and

$$\frac{1}{r}\|\varphi(x_0+ry)\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^{l-1})} \le C\ \|u(x_0+ry)\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^l)}.$$

This is equivalent to (6.9) by a simple computation.

(2) can be derived from Corollary 3.3.4 of [Sc, Chapter 3], Nečas' lemma and a similar discussion to (1). $\square$

Remark. Lemma 6.7 holds when B is replaced by any smooth and contractible domain in $\mathbb{R}^N$, though with constants C which depend on the domain.

Lemma 6.8 [GR, Theorem 2.7]. *For a ball $B \subset \mathbb{R}^N$ and $0 \le l \le N$, let $H = \{u \in L^2(B, \wedge^l) : \ du = 0 \text{ in } B,\ n \wedge u|_{\partial B} = 0\}$ and $H' = \{u \in L^2(B, \wedge^l) : \ \delta u = 0 \text{ in } B,\ n \vee u|_{\partial B} = 0\}$. Then*

$$\begin{aligned} L^2(B, \wedge^l) &= H \oplus \{\delta w : w \in H^1(B, \wedge^{l+1})\} \\ &= H' \oplus \{dw : w \in H^1(B, \wedge^{l-1})\}. \end{aligned}$$

The following result is a generalized version of the "div-curl" lemma by Coifman, Lions, Meyer and Semmes in [CLMS, Theorem II.1]. When $m+l = N$, it can be found in [HLMZ, Proposition 4.1].

Lemma 6.9. *If $1 < p < \infty$, $\frac{1}{p} + \frac{1}{q} = 1$, $0 < m+l \le N$, $u \in L^p(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^m)$, $v \in L^q(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$, $du = 0$, $dv = 0$ in $\mathbb{R}^N$. Then $u \wedge v \in \mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{m+l})$ and there exists a constant C independent of u and v such that*

$$\|u \wedge v\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{m+l})} \le C\|u\|_{L^p(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^m)}\|v\|_{L^q(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}.$$

Proof. Suppose $m+l = N$. When $l = 1$, Lemma 6.9 becomes Theorem II.1 of [CLMS]. The proof of the case $l \ne 1$ is completely similar to the case of $l = 1$.

If $m+l < N$, we know that $u \wedge v \in \mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{m+l})$ if and only if $u \wedge v \wedge dx_{i_{m+l+1}} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{i_N} \in \mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^N)$. Set

$$V = v \wedge dx_{i_{m+l+1}} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{i_N}.$$

Then $v \in L^q(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$ and $dv = 0$. This implies that $V \in L^q(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{N-m})$ and $dV = 0$. For u and V, applying the result when $m+l = N$, we have $u \wedge V \in \mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^N)$ and

$$\begin{aligned} \|u \wedge V\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^N)} &\le C\|u\|_{L^p(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^m)}\|V\|_{L^q(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{N-m})} \\ &= C\|u\|_{L^p(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^m)}\|v\|_{L^q(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}. \end{aligned}$$

This proves the result. $\square$

We are now ready to prove Theorem 6.6. There are some similarities between its proof and that of Theorem 4.1.

Proof of Theorem 6.6. Suppose that u and v satisfy (6.7). Lemma 6.9 yields that $du\wedge dv \in \mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{m+n+2})$ and

$$\begin{aligned}\|du \wedge dv\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{N-l})} &= \|du \wedge dv\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{m+n+2})}\\ &\le C\|du\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{m+1})}\|dv\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{n+1})} \le C.\end{aligned}$$

Let $b \in BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$ and $h \in \mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{N-l})$. By using a similar argument as in Theorem 3.3, we have

$$\Big|\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} b \wedge h\Big| \le C\|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}\|h\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{N-l})}.$$

Therefore

$$\begin{aligned}\Big|\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} b \wedge du \wedge dv\Big| &\le \|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}\|du \wedge dv\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{N-l})}\\ &\le C\|b\|_{BMO_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}.\end{aligned}$$

We now prove the reversed inequality in (6.6). By scaling we need only to show that for the unit ball B_0, there exist u_0 and v_0 with

$$\left.\begin{aligned} &u_0 \in H^1_0(B_0, \wedge^m), \qquad \|du_0\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{m+1})} \le 1,\\ &v_0 \in H^1_0(2B_0, \wedge^n), \qquad \|dv_0\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{n+1})} \le 1\end{aligned}\right\} \tag{6.10}$$

such that

$$\inf_{g_0}\left(\int_{B_0} |b - g_0|^2\, dx\right)^{1/2} \le C\Big|\int_{B_0} b \wedge du_0 \wedge dv_0\Big|, \tag{6.11}$$

where the infimum is taken over all $g_0 \in L^2(B_0, \wedge^l)$ with $dg_0 = 0$ in B_0 and C is a constant independent of b, u_0 and v_0.

Let $b \in L^2(B_0, \wedge^l)$, Lemma 6.8 gives $b = h + dq$ for $h \in H' = \{h \in L^2(B_0, \wedge^l) : \delta h = 0,\ n \vee h|_{\partial B_0} = 0\}$ and $q \in H^1(B_0, \wedge^{l-1})$. We have

$$\int_{B_0} b \wedge du_0 \wedge dv_0 = \int_{B_0} h \wedge du_0 \wedge dv_0$$

and

$$\inf_{g_0}\left(\int_{B_0} |b - g_0|^2\, dx\right)^{1/2} \le \|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^l)}.$$

Thus to prove (6.11) it is sufficient to show that there exist u_0 and v_0 satisfying (6.10) such that

$$\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^l)} \le C\Big|\int_{B_0} h \wedge du_0 \wedge dv_0\Big| \tag{6.12}$$

for all $h \in H'$, where C does not depend on h, u_0 and v_0.

Applying Lemma 6.7 (2) to $h \in H'$, there exists $\varphi \in H^1_0(B_0, \wedge^{l+1})$ and a constant C_0 independent of h such that

$$h = \delta\varphi$$

and

$$\|D\varphi\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^{l+1})} \le C_0\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^l)}. \tag{6.13}$$

Let $\varphi = \sum_I \varphi_I dx_I$, where $I = (i_1, \cdots, i_{l+1})$, $1 \le i_1 < \cdots < i_{l+1} \le N$. Then

$$*h = *\delta\varphi = \pm d * \varphi = \pm \sum_I d\varphi_I \wedge (*dx_I).$$

Denote $*dx_I$ by dx_J, where $J = \{j_1, \cdots, j_{m+n+1}\}$, $1 \le j_1 < \cdots < j_{m+n+1} \le N$. Thus

$$\begin{aligned}\|h\|^2_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^l)} &\le \sum_I \Big| \int_{B_0} h \wedge d\varphi_I \wedge dx_J \Big| \\ &\le C \max_I \Big| \int_{B_0} h \wedge d\varphi_I \wedge dx_J \Big| \\ &:= C \Big| \int_{B_0} h \wedge d\varphi_{I_0} \wedge dx_{J_0} \Big| \end{aligned} \tag{6.14}$$

for some choice of I_0, where $dx_{J_0} = *dx_{I_0}$ and $C = \binom{N}{l+1}$. Let $J_0 = \{j_{0_1}, \cdots, j_{0_{m+n+1}}\}$. Define

$$u_0 = \frac{\varphi_{I_0} dx_{j_{0_1}} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{j_{0_m}}}{C_0\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^l)}}.$$

It is easy to check that $u_0 \in H^1_0(B_0, \wedge^m)$ and $\|du_0\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{m+1})} \le 1$ by (6.13).

Now we construct v_0. Let $\psi_0 \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N)$, ψ_0 equals 1 in B_0 and 0 outside $\overline{2B_0}$. Setting

$$v_0 = \gamma\psi_0 x_{j_{0_{m+1}}} dx_{j_{0_{m+2}}} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{j_{0_{m+n+1}}},$$

where $\gamma > 0$ is a constant so that $\|dv_0\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{n+1})} \le 1$. So $v_0 \in C_0^\infty(2B_0, \wedge^n)$ and

$$dv_0 = \gamma dx_{j_{0_{m+1}}} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{j_{0_{m+n+1}}} \text{ in } B_0.$$

Combining (6.14) with the construction of u_0 and v_0, we obtain

$$\|h\|_{L^2(B_0,\wedge^l)} \le C \Big| \int_{B_0} h \wedge du_0 \wedge dv_0 \Big|,$$

where $C = \gamma^{-1}\binom{N}{l+1}C_0$. This proves (6.12). The proof of Theorem 6.6 is completed. □

Remarks. (1) From the proof of Theorem 6.6, we see that the equivalence in (6.7) is also true if the supremum is taken over all $u \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^m)$, $v \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^n)$ with $\|Du\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{m+1})}$, $\|Dv\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{n+1})} \le 1$.

(2) The case $l = m = n = 0$ and $N = 2$ in Theorem 6.6 yields the Jacobian determinant estimate (4.9).

Let $l = m = 0$, $n = N - 2$. Theorem 6.6 becomes

Corollary 6.10. *For $b \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}^N)$,*

$$\|b\|_{BMO(\mathbb{R}^N)} \sim \sup_{\alpha,\beta} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} b \ \alpha \wedge \beta,$$

where the supremum is taken over all $\alpha \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^1)$, $\beta \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{N-1})$ with $d\alpha = d\beta = 0$ and $\|\alpha\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^1)}$, $\|\beta\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{N-1})} \leq 1$.

It is easy to see that Corollary 6.10 is equivalent to the following result by Coifman, Lions, Meyer and Semmes in [CLMS, page 262] ("Div-Curl" Lemma): for $b \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}^N)$

$$\|b\|_{BMO(\mathbb{R}^N)} \sim \sup_{E,F} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} b \ E \cdot F \ dx,$$

the supremum being taken over all E, $F \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \mathbb{R}^N)$ with div $E = 0$, curl $F = 0$ and $\|E\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\mathbb{R}^N)}$, $\|F\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\mathbb{R}^N)} \leq 1$.

6.4 A Decomposition Theorem

In [CLMS, Theorem III.2], Coifman, Lions, Meyer and Semmes proved a decomposition of $\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N)$ into "div-curl" quantities. We now give a similar decomposition for Hardy spaces $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$.

Theorem 6.11. *Let $1 \leq l \leq N$ and $0 \leq m \leq l-2$. Then any $f \in \mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$ can be written as*

$$f = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \lambda_k \ du_k \wedge dv_k$$

with

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} |\lambda_k| \leq C\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}$$

for some constants C depend only on N, where $u_k \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^m)$ and $v_k \in H^1(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{l-m-2})$ with $\|du_k\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{m+1})}$, $\|dv_k\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^{l-m-1})} \leq 1$.

Proof. By Theorem 6.4, any $f \in \mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$ has a decomposition

$$f = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} \mu_i a_i, \tag{6.15}$$

where the a_i's are $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$-atoms and

$$\sum_{i=0}^{\infty} |\mu_i| \leq C\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N,\wedge^l)}$$

for constants C depending only on N. For simplicity we drop the subscript i of a_i temporarily. Since $a := a_i$ is an $\mathcal{H}^1_d(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^l)$-atom, i.e. there exists $b \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \wedge^{l-1})$ supported in a ball B such that $a = db$ and $\|a\|_{L^2(B,\wedge^l)} \leq |B|^{-1/2}$. Applying Lemma 6.7 (1), there exists $\varphi \in H_0^1(B, \wedge^{l-1})$ and a constant C_0 independent of a and B such that

$$a = d\varphi \tag{6.16}$$

and

$$\|D\varphi\|_{L^2(B,\wedge^{l-1})} \leq C_0 \|a\|_{L^2(B,\wedge^l)}.$$

Let $\varphi = \sum_I \varphi_I dx_I$, $I = (i_1, \cdots, i_{l-1})$, $1 \leq i_1 < \cdots < i_{l-1} \leq N$. From (6.26) the atom a can be written as

$$\begin{aligned} a &= \sum_I d\varphi_I \wedge dx_{i_1} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{i_{l-1}} \\ &= \sum_I d(C_0^{-1}|B|^{1/2}\varphi_I) \wedge dx_{i_1} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{i_m} \wedge d(C_0|B|^{-1/2}x_{i_{m+1}}) \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{i_{l-1}}. \end{aligned}$$

For any I, define

$$u_{(I)} = C_0^{-1}|B|^{1/2}\varphi_I dx_{i_1} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{i_m}.$$

Then $u_{(I)} \in H_0^1(B, \wedge^m)$ and $\|du_{(I)}\|_{L^2(B,\wedge^{m+1})} \leq 1$. As in the proof of Theorem 6.6, define $\psi_0 \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N)$. Let

$$v_{(I)} = \gamma C_0 |B|^{-1/2} \psi_B(x_{i_{m+1}} - x^0_{i_{m+1}}) dx_{i_{m+2}} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{i_{l-1}},$$

where $\psi_B(x) = \psi_0\left(\frac{x-x^0}{r}\right)$, x^0 denotes the center of the ball B, $r = r(B)$, γ is a constant independent of x^0 and r such that $\|dv_{(I)}\|_{L^2(B,\wedge^{l-m-1})} \leq 1$. We see that $v_{(I)} \in C_0^\infty(2B, \wedge^{l-m-2})$ and

$$dv_{(I)} = \gamma C_0 |B|^{-1/2} dx_{i_{m+1}} \wedge \cdots \wedge dx_{i_{l-1}} \quad \text{in} \quad B.$$

Thus any atom a can be written as

$$a = \gamma^{-1} \sum_I du_{(I)} \wedge dv_{(I)}.$$

Combining this with the atomic decomposition of f in (6.15). We proved Theorem 6.11. □

Let $l = N$, $m = 0$ in Theorem 6.11 we get

Corollary 6.12 ([CLMS, Theorem III.2]). *Any $f \in \mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N)$ can be written as*

$$f = \sum_{k=0}^\infty \lambda_k \; E_k \cdot F_k$$

with

$$\sum_{k=0}^\infty |\lambda_k| \leq C\|f\|_{\mathcal{H}^1(\mathbb{R}^N)}$$

for a constant C depending only on N, where E_k, $F_k \in L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, \mathbb{R}^N)$ with div $E_k =$ curl $F_k = 0$ *and* $\|E_k\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\mathbb{R}^N)}$, $\|F_k\|_{L^2(\mathbb{R}^N,\mathbb{R}^N)} \leq 1$.

The proof of Corollary 6.12 in [CLMS] is based on two results from functional analysis ([CLMS, Lemmas III.1 and III.2]). The proof we have given is more natural in the context of the theory of Hardy spaces.

APPENDIX A. SURJECTIVITY OF THE curl OPERATOR

In this appendix we present an unpublished result of Costabel [C], that in three dimensions, the operator curl is surjective from $H_0^1(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^3)$ to a closed subspace of $L^2(\Omega)$ when Ω is a bounded contractible strongly Lipschitz domain in $\mathbb{R}^3$. For $\psi \in \mathcal{D}'(\Omega)$, we adopt the notation $D\psi = (\partial_1\psi, \partial_2\psi, \partial_3\psi)$, while for $v = (v_1, v_2, v_3) \in \mathcal{D}'(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^3)$, we define the divergence and curl operators by

$$\text{div } v = \sum_{i=1}^{3} \partial_i v_i$$

and

$$\text{curl } v = (\partial_2 v_3 - \partial_3 v_2,\ \partial_3 v_1 - \partial_1 v_3,\ \partial_1 v_2 - \partial_2 v_1)\,.$$

For a bounded Lipschitz domain $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^N$, the divergence operator is a continuous map from $H_0^1(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^N)$ onto $L_0^2(\Omega)$, where $H_0^1(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^N)$ denotes the Sobolev space $H^1(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^N)$ with zero boundary values, and $L_0^2(\Omega) = \{f \in L^2(\Omega) : \int_\Omega f\, dx = 0\}$. This is a result by Nečas in [N, Lemma 7.1, Chapter 3]. We now consider the operator curl : $H_0^1(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^3) \to L^2(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^3)$. The next proposition shows that the operator curl is surjective from $H_0^1(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^3)$ to a closed subspace of $L^2(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^3)$.

Proposition A.1. *Let Ω be a bounded contractible strongly Lipschitz domain in $\mathbb{R}^3$, $b \in L^2(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^3)$,* div $b = 0$ *in Ω and $n \cdot b|_{\partial\Omega} = 0$. Then there exists $u \in H_0^1(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^3)$ such that*

$$\text{curl } u = b$$

and

$$\|u\|_{H^1(\Omega,\mathbb{R}^3)} \leq C\|b\|_{L^2(\Omega,\mathbb{R}^3)},$$

where the constant C depends only on the domain Ω.

Proof. Let F denote the extension by zero of b to $\mathbb{R}^3$. Then div $F = 0$ on all of $\mathbb{R}^3$. Therefore there exists $V \in H^1_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}^3, \mathbb{R}^3)$ such that $F =$ curl V. On letting B be a large ball containing $\overline{\Omega}$, then $F \in H^1(B)$. In the simply connected domain $B\backslash\overline{\Omega}$, curl $V = 0$, so there exists $\psi \in H^2(B\backslash\overline{\Omega})$ such that $D\psi = V$.

Let $E : H^2(B\backslash\overline{\Omega}) \to H^2(B)$ be a bounded extension operator [St1]. The vector field $U = V - D(E\psi) \in H^1(B, \mathbb{R}^3)$ has support in $\overline{\Omega}$ and satisfies curl $U = F$. Thus the restriction $u = U|_\Omega \in H_0^1(\Omega, \mathbb{R}^3)$ solves the equation curl $u = b$ as required.

The mapping $b \mapsto u$ is a bounded linear mapping depending only on E. $\square$

Remark. In N dimensions, this result applies to solving $du = b$ for $u \in H_0^1(\Omega, \Lambda^1)$ when b is a 2–form satisfying $db = 0$ and $n \wedge b|_\Omega = 0$. The proof does not apply to general k–forms. However when the boundary of Ω is smooth, a slight adaptation of the above argument gives an alternative proof of Lemma 6.7.

APPENDIX B. REVIEW OF DIFFERENTIAL FORMS

The setting of this section is that of forms on open domain $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^N$. We give a brief outline of the basic formalism.

Let $\{e_1, \cdots, e_N\}$ denote the basis of Euclidean space $\mathbb{R}^N$ and $l = 1, \cdots, N$. The space of all $l-$linear, alternating functions $\xi : (\mathbb{R}^N)^l \to \mathbb{R}$ is denoted by $\wedge^l(\mathbb{R}^N)$, or just $\wedge^l$ where there is no possibility of confusion. In particular $\wedge^1(\mathbb{R}^N)$ is the dual of $\mathbb{R}^N$ and $\wedge^0(\mathbb{R}^N) = \mathbb{R}$. The dual base to $\{e_1, \cdots, e_N\}$ will be denoted by $e^1, \cdots, e^N$ and referred to as the standard base for $\wedge^1(\mathbb{R}^N)$. The vector space of all forms $\wedge(\mathbb{R}^N) = \oplus_{l=0}^N \wedge^l(\mathbb{R}^N)$ is equipped with the inner product

$$< \alpha, \beta >= \sum \alpha_{i_1 \cdots i_l} \beta_{i_1 \cdots i_l}$$

for $\alpha = \sum \alpha_{i_1 \cdots i_l} e^{i_1} \wedge \cdots \wedge e^{i_l}$ and $\beta = \sum \beta_{i_1 \cdots i_l} e^{i_1} \wedge \cdots \wedge e^{i_l}$. For $w \in \wedge(\mathbb{R}^N)$ the associated norm is denoted by $|w| =< w, w >^{1/2}$. The inner product induces a dual pairing between $\wedge^l(\mathbb{R}^N)$ and $\wedge^{N-l}(\mathbb{R}^N)$ which results from the action of the Hodge star operator $*$ defined by

$$*1 = e^1 \wedge \cdots \wedge e^N;$$

$$\alpha \wedge *\beta =< \alpha, \beta > e^1 \wedge \cdots \wedge e^N$$

for all $\alpha,\ \beta \in \wedge^l(\mathbb{R}^N)$. The exterior and interior multiplication operators on $\wedge(\mathbb{R}^N)$ are linear operators defined by

$$\mu_k : \wedge^l \to \wedge^{l+1}; \quad \mu_k(1) = e^k,\ \mu_k(e^i) = e^k \wedge e^i,\ \cdots$$

and

$$\mu_k^* : \wedge^l \to \wedge^{l-1}; \quad \mu_k^*(e^i) = \delta_{ki},\ \mu_k^*(e^i \wedge e^l) = \delta_{ki} e^l - \delta_{kl} e^i,\ \cdots$$

respectively. The exterior and interior operators can be written as ([GHL])

$$d = \sum_{k=1}^N \mu_k \frac{\partial}{\partial x_k}, \qquad \delta = \sum_{k=1}^N \mu_k^* \frac{\partial}{\partial x_k}.$$

We define the interior product between a 1-form α and an $l-$form u by setting

$$\alpha \vee u = (-1)^{(l-1)N} * (\alpha \wedge *u).$$

Suppose Ω is a bounded Lipschitz domain in $\mathbb{R}^N$. We denote by $L^2(\Omega, \wedge^l)$ the space of square integrable $l-$forms on Ω.

Definition B.1. Let $0 \le l \le N$. For $u \in L^2(\Omega, \wedge^l)$, we say that $du = 0$ on Ω if

$$\int_\Omega u \wedge d\varphi = 0$$

for all $\varphi \in C_0^\infty(\Omega, \wedge^{N-l-1})$.

Definition B.2. For $u \in L^2(\Omega, \wedge^l)$ with $du = 0$ on Ω, we define $n \wedge u|_{\partial\Omega} \in H^{-1/2}(\partial\Omega, \wedge^{l+1})$ by

$$< n \wedge u|_{\partial\Omega}, \psi >_{\partial\Omega} = (-1)^l \int_\Omega u \wedge d\Psi,$$

where $\Psi \in C^1(\bar{\Omega}, \wedge^{N-l-1})$ and $\psi = \Psi|_{\partial\Omega}$, $H^{-1/2}(\partial\Omega, \wedge^{l+1})$ is the space of $(l+1)$-forms f each of whose components is in $H^{-1/2}(\partial\Omega)$.

Remark. It is easy to show that the definition of $< n \wedge u|_{\partial\Omega}, \psi >_{\partial\Omega}$ is independent of the choice of the extension Ψ. Note that

$$\|n \wedge u|_{\partial\Omega}\|_{H^{-1/2}(\partial\Omega, \wedge^{l+1})} \leq C\|u\|_{L^2(\Omega, \wedge^l)}$$

for all $u \in L^2(\Omega, \wedge^l)$ such that $du = 0$ (see, for example, [HLMZ]).

The Green's formula is as follows: if $u \in L^2(\Omega, \wedge^l)$ with $du \in L^2(\Omega, \wedge^{l+1})$ and $\varphi \in H^1(\Omega, \wedge^{N-l-1})$ then

$$\int_\Omega du \wedge \varphi + (-1)^l \int_\Omega u \wedge d\varphi = < n \wedge u|_{\partial\Omega}, \varphi >_{\partial\Omega} .$$

The formula follows from Stokes' theorem and the facts that $C_0^\infty(\bar{\Omega}, \wedge^l)$ is dense in the space $\{u \in L^2(\Omega, \wedge^l) : du \in L^2(\Omega, \wedge^{l+1})\}$ (see, for example, [ISS, Corollary 3.6]) and in the Sobolev space $H^1(\Omega, \wedge^k)$.

Acknowledgment: The authors would like to thank Martin Costabel, Tom ter Elst and Kewei Zhang for helpful discussions and suggestions.

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