

HOMOGENEOUS LOCALLY COMPACT SPACES

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ABSTRACT. This is a survey of the recent results and unsolved problems about locally compact homogeneous metric spaces. Mostly, homogeneous finite-dimensional *ANR*-spaces are discussed.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper we survey the most recent results and unsolved problems concerning homogeneous finite-dimensional spaces. It can be considered as an continuation of our previous paper [43]. As in [43], we are mainly interested in locally compact metric homogeneous *ANR*s, but some problems concerning more general homogeneous spaces are also considered. Recall that a space X is *homogeneous* if for every two points $x, y \in X$ there is a homeomorphism h mapping X onto itself with $h(x) = y$. This implies that X is *locally homogeneous*, i.e. for every two points $x, y \in X$, there exists a homeomorphism h mapping a neighborhood U_x of x onto a neighborhood $U_y = h(U_x)$ of y and satisfying the condition $h(x_1) = y$.

There are many interesting problems about homogeneous spaces. Probably, the best known is the Bing-Borsuk conjecture [3] stating that every n -dimensional homogeneous metric *ANR*-compactum, $n \geq 3$, is an n -manifold. This conjecture is true in dimensions 1 and 2 [3]. Recently, Bryant-Ferry [11] provided a revised version of their paper containing counter-examples to that conjecture. They constructed for every $n \geq 6$ infinitely many, topologically distinct, homogeneous *ANR*-compacta of dimension n that are not topological manifolds. So, this conjecture is still open in dimensions 3, 4 and 5. Another open problem is whether there is a non-degenerated finite-dimensional locally homogeneous, in particular homogeneous, *AR*-spaces, see [3], [4]. On the other hand, finite-dimensional locally compact homogeneous

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ANRs share many properties with Euclidean manifolds, see for example [42], [43], [45]. So, although homogeneous finite-dimensional *ANR*-compacta may not be Euclidean manifolds, it is still interesting to what extent they have common properties with Euclidean manifolds. The survey paper of Halverson-Repovš [21] contains more information for different type of homogeneity.

Recall that a metric space X is an absolute neighborhood retract (br., *ANR*) if for every embedding of X as a closed subset of a metric space M there exists a neighborhood U of X in M and a retraction $r : U \rightarrow X$, i.e. a continuous map r with $r(x) = x$ for all $x \in X$. Contractible *ANR*-spaces form the class of absolute retracts (br., *AR*).

Unless stated otherwise, all spaces are locally compact separable metric and all maps are continuous. Reduced Čech homology $\check{H}_n(X; G)$ and cohomology $\check{H}^n(X; G)$ with coefficients from an abelian group G are considered. Singular homology and cohomology groups are denoted, respectively, by $H_k(X; G)$ and $H^k(X; G)$. By a dimension we mean the covering dimension \dim , the cohomological dimension with respect to a group G is denoted by \dim_G . Recall that \dim_G is the largest integer n such that there exists a closed set $A \subset X$ with $\check{H}^n(X, A; G) \neq 0$.

2. HOMOGENEOUS SPACES AND THE BING-BORSUK CONJECTURE

It is interesting whether some of the counter examples to the Bing-Borsuk conjecture constructed by Bryant-Ferry have the stronger version of homogeneity, the so called strong local homogeneity. Recall that a space X is *strongly locally homogeneous* (br., *SLH*) if every point in X has a base of neighborhoods U such that for every $y, z \in U$ there is a homeomorphism $h : X \rightarrow X$ with $h(y) = z$ and $h(x) = x$ for all $x \notin U$. Every strongly locally homogeneous space X is homogeneous provided X is connected. Moreover, if no two-point set disconnects a connected strongly locally homogeneous space X , then X is *n-homogeneous* for all $n \geq 1$ [2]: if A, B are two n -element subsets of X , then there is a homeomorphism h on X such that $h(A) = B$. The question whether there is an *SLH*-counter example to the Bing-Borsuk conjecture is interesting because every Euclidean manifold has this property. So, the Bing-Borsuk conjecture can be restated:

Question 2.1. *Is it true that every n -dimensional strongly locally homogeneous *ANR*-compactum is an n -manifold?*

Jakobsche [19] proved that the 3-dimensional Bing-Borsuk conjecture implies the Poincaré conjecture. Assuming the Poincaré conjecture is not true, he constructed a 3-dimensional homogeneous compact

ANR-space which is not a manifold. Any such an example have the additional property of n -homogeneity for all n , see [18, Theorem 8.1]. There is a strong expectation that Jacobsche's construction provides a 3-dimensional *SLH* compact ANR-space which is not a manifold. Therefore, we have another natural question:

Question 2.2. *Is it true that the restated Bing-Borsuk conjecture in dimension 3 imply the Poincare conjecture?*

Topological n -manifolds X have the following property: For every $x \in X$ the groups $H_k(X, X \setminus \{x\}; \mathbb{Z}) = 0$ if $k < n$ and $H_n(X, X \setminus \{x\}; \mathbb{Z}) = \mathbb{Z}$. A space with this property is said to be a \mathbb{Z} -homology n -manifold. A *generalized n -manifold* is a locally compact n -dimensional ANR-space which is a \mathbb{Z} -homology n -manifold. Every generalized ($n \leq 2$)-manifold is known to be a topological n -manifold [48]. On the other hand, for every $n \geq 3$ there exists a generalized n -manifold X such that X is not locally Euclidean at any point, see for example [12]. Let us mention that the Bryant-Ferry [11] counter examples to the Bing-Borsuk conjecture are generalized n -manifolds with the disjoint disks property, $n \geq 6$.

Bryant [8] suggested another modification of the Bing-Borsuk conjecture:

Conjecture 2.3. [8][*Modified Bing-Borsuk conjecture*] *Every locally compact homogeneous ANR-space of dimension $n \geq 3$ is a generalized n -manifold.*

A partial result concerning the Modified Bing-Borsuk conjecture is an old result of Bredon [6], reproved by Bryant [10]:

Theorem 2.4. [6],[10] *If X is a locally compact homogeneous ANR-space of dimension n such that the groups $H_k(X, X \setminus \{x\}; \mathbb{Z})$, $k \leq n$, are finitely generated, then X is a generalized n -manifold.*

Another result related to the Modified Bing-Borsuk conjecture was obtained by Bryant [7]:

Theorem 2.5. [7] *Every n -dimensional homologically arc-homogeneous ANR-compactum is a generalized manifold.*

Here, a space X is homologically arc-homogeneous [35] if for every path $\alpha : \mathbb{I} = [0, 1] \rightarrow X$ the inclusion induced map

$$H_*(X \times \{0\}, X \times \{0\} - (\alpha(0), 0)) \rightarrow H_*(X \times \mathbb{I}, (X \times \mathbb{I}) - \Gamma(\alpha))$$

is an isomorphism, where $\Gamma(\alpha)$ is the graph of α .

More information about generalized manifolds can be found in Bryant [9].

The last two theorems in this section show that \mathbb{Z} -homology manifolds have also common properties with Euclidean manifolds. Recall that a space X is a *Cantor n -manifold* [22], [39] if X cannot be separated by a closed subset F of dimension $\leq n - 2$, (i.e., $X \setminus F$ is disconnected).

Theorem 2.6. [27] *Let X be a locally compact, locally connected \mathbb{Z} -homology n -manifold with $\dim X = n > 1$ at each point. Then X is a local Cantor manifold, i.e. every open connected subset of X is a Cantor n -manifold.*

This result was extended in [38, Corollary 4.2].

Theorem 2.7. [38] *Let X be a complete metric space which is a \mathbb{Z} -homology n -manifold. Then every open arcwise connected subset of X is a Mazurkiewicz arc manifold with respect to the class of all spaces of dimension $\leq n - 2$.*

Note that a space X (not necessarily metrizable) is a *Mazurkiewicz arc manifold* with respect to the class of all spaces of dimension $\leq n - 2$ [38] if for ever two closed disjoint sets $A, B \subset X$, both having non-empty interiors in X , and every F_σ -set $F \subset X$ with $\dim F \leq n - 2$, there is an arc C in $X \setminus F$ joining A and B .

3. HOMOGENEOUS ANR -SPACES

We show in this section that finite-dimensional homogeneous ANR -spaces share many properties with Euclidean manifolds. In particular, the local cohomological and homological structure of homogeneous n -dimensional ANR -spaces is similar to the corresponding local structure of \mathbb{R}^n . We also discuss another two problems of Bing-Borsuk [3] and their relation to the problem whether there exists a finite-dimensional non-degenerated homogeneous AR -compactum.

We say that a finite-dimensional space X is *dimensionally full-valued* if $\dim X \times Y = \dim X + \dim Y$ for any compactum Y . It is known that all polyhedra and all one-dimensional compacta are dimensionally full-valued. Pontryagin [34] constructed in 1930 a family $\{\Pi_p : p \text{ is prime}\}$ of 2-dimensional homogeneous but not ANR -compacta such that $\dim(\Pi_p \times \Pi_q) = 3$ for $p \neq q$. During the same time Borsuk raised the question whether $\dim X \times Y = \dim X + \dim Y$ for any ANR -compacta X and Y . Kodama [26] provided a partial answer of Borsuk's question by proving that every 2-dimensional ANR -compactum is dimensionally full-valued. In 1988 Dranishnikov [15] gave a negative answer to Borsuk's question by constructing a family of 4-dimensional metric ANR -compacta M_p , where p is a prime number, such that $\dim(M_p \times M_q) = 7$

for all $p \neq q$. The spaces M_p are not homogeneous. After Dranishnikov constructed his examples, the question whether homogeneous ANR-compacta are dimensionally full-valued was raised. It goes back to [8] and was also discussed in [13] and [17].

This question was answered recently (for 3-dimensional homogeneous ANR-compacta it was known earlier [45]).

Theorem 3.1. [42] *Let X be a finite-dimensional locally homogeneous ANR-space. Then the following holds:*

- (i) X is dimensionally full-valued;
- (ii) If X is homogeneous, then every $x \in X$ has a neighborhood W_x such that $\text{bd } \overline{U}$ is dimensionally full-valued for all $U \in \mathcal{B}_x$ with $\overline{U} \subset W_x$.

According to [5], a finite-dimensional compactum X is dimensionally full-valued if and only if $\dim_G X = \dim X$ for any group G . It was shown in [45] that an n -dimensional ANR-compactum X is dimensionally full-valued iff there exists a point $x \in X$ with $\check{H}_n(X, X \setminus x; \mathbb{Z})$ is not trivial.

Suppose (K, A) is a pair of closed subsets of a space X with $A \subset K$. Then we denote by $j_{K,A}^n : \check{H}^n(K; G) \rightarrow \check{H}^n(A; G)$ the inclusion induced cohomology homomorphism (recall that $\dim_G X \leq n$ if and only if $j_{X,A}^n$ is surjective for every closed $A \subset X$). We say that an element $\gamma \in \check{H}^n(A; G)$ is not extendable over K if γ is not contained in the image $j_{K,A}^n(\check{H}^n(K; G))$. If (K, A) is as above, K is called an (n, G) -cohomology membrane spanned on A for an element $\gamma \in \check{H}^n(A; G)$ if γ is not extendable over K , but it is extendable over any proper closed subset P of K containing A . The continuity of the Čech cohomology implies the following fact: If A is a closed subset of a compact space X and $\gamma \in \check{H}^n(A; G)$ is not extendable over X , then there is an n -cohomology membrane for γ spanned on A . A space X is said to be a cohomological (n, G) -bubble [40] if $\check{H}^n(X; G) \neq 0$ but $\check{H}^n(B; G) = 0$ for every closed proper subset $B \subset X$.

The next theorem shows that the local cohomological structure of homogenous n -dimensional ANR-spaces is similar to the local structure of \mathbb{R}^n (this was established earlier in [45] for homogeneous ANR-compacta and countable principal domains G).

Theorem 3.2. [42] *Let X be a connected homogeneous ANR-space with $\dim X = n \geq 2$ and G be a countable group. Then every point $x \in X$ has a basis \mathcal{B}_x of open sets $U \subset X$ satisfying the following conditions:*

- (1) $\text{int}\bar{U} = U$ and the complement of $\text{bd}U$ has exactly two components;
- (2) $\check{H}^{n-1}(\text{bd}U; G) \neq 0$, $\check{H}^{n-1}(\bar{U}; G) = 0$ and \bar{U} is an $(n-1, G)$ -cohomology membrane spanned on $\text{bd}U$ for any non-zero $\gamma \in \check{H}^{n-1}(\text{bd}U; G)$;
- (3) $\text{bd}U$ is a cohomological $(n-1, G)$ -bubble;

A similar description of the local homology structure of homogeneous ANR-compacta is given in [44].

We say that a space X has an n -dimensional G -obstruction at a point $x \in X$ [31] if there is $W \in \mathcal{B}_x$ such that the homomorphism $j_{U,W}^n : H^n(X, X \setminus U; G) \rightarrow H^n(X, X \setminus W; G)$ is nontrivial for every $U \in \mathcal{B}_x$ with $U \subset W$. Kuzminov [31] proved that every compactum X with $\dim_G X = n$ contains a compact set Y with $\dim_G Y = n$ such that X has an n -dimensional G -obstruction at any point of Y .

Theorems 3.1-3.2 provides more properties of homogeneous n -dimensional spaces which are typical for n -manifolds.

Corollary 3.3. *Let X be a locally homogeneous ANR-spaces with $\dim_X = n \geq 2$ and G be a countable group. Then*

- (1) $f(U)$ is open in X provided $U \subset X$ is open and $f : U \rightarrow X$ is an injective map;
- (2) $\dim A = n$, where $A \subset X$ is closed, if and only if A has a non-empty interior in X ;
- (3) $\check{H}^n(P; G) = 0$ for any proper compact set $P \subset X$;
- (4) X has an n -dimensional G -obstruction at every $x \in X$. Moreover, there is $W \in \mathcal{B}_x$ such that the homomorphism $j_{U,V}^n$ is surjective for any $U, V \in \mathcal{B}_x$ with $\bar{U} \subset V \subset \bar{V} \subset W$.

Properties (1) and (2) were also established by Lysko [32] and Seidel [36].

We say that X is *cyclic in dimension n* if there is a group G such that $\check{H}^n(X; G) \neq 0$. If a space is not cyclic in dimension n , it is called *acyclic in dimension n* . If X is an n -dimensional ANR-compactum, the duality [22] between Čech homology and cohomology, and the universal coefficient formulas imply the following equivalence: $\check{H}_n(X; G) \neq 0$ for some group G if and only if X cyclic in dimension n .

We denote by $\mathcal{H}(n)$ the class of all homogeneous metric ANR-compacta of dimension n .

Question 3.4. [3] *Let $X \in \mathcal{H}(n)$. Is it true that:*

- (1) X is cyclic in dimension n ?
- (2) No closed subset of X , acyclic in dimension $n-1$, separates X ?

The next theorem shows that the two parts of Question 3.4 have positive or negative answers simultaneously.

Theorem 3.5. [44] *The following conditions are equivalent:*

- (1) *For all $n \geq 1$ and $X \in \mathcal{H}(n)$ there exists a group G with $\check{H}^n(X; G) \neq 0$ (resp., $\check{H}_n(X; G) \neq 0$);*
- (2) *If $X \in \mathcal{H}(n)$, $n \geq 1$, and $F \subset X$ is a closed set separating X , then there exists a group G with $\check{H}^{n-1}(F; G) \neq 0$ (resp., $\check{H}_{n-1}(F; G) \neq 0$);*
- (3) *If $X \in \mathcal{H}(n)$, $n \geq 1$, and $F \subset X$ is a closed set separating X with $\dim F \leq n - 1$, then there exists a group G such that $\check{H}^{n-1}(F; G) \neq 0$ (resp., $\check{H}_{n-1}(F; G) \neq 0$).*

Note that for any finite-dimensional homogeneous continuum X (not necessarily ANR) we have the following result [24]: If $\check{H}^n(X; G) \neq 0$ for some group G , then $\check{H}^{n-1}(F; G) \neq 0$ for any closed set $F \subset X$ separating X with $\dim_G F \leq n - 1$.

On the other hand, the structure of cyclic homogeneous ANR continua is described in [46] (the notion of strong V_G^n -continua is given in Section 4).

Theorem 3.6. [46] *Let X be a homogeneous metric ANR-continuum such that $\dim_G X = n$ and $\check{H}^n(X; G) \neq 0$ for some group G . Then*

- (1) *X is a cohomological (n, G) -bubble;*
- (2) *X is a strong V_G^n -continuum;*
- (3) *$\check{H}^{n-1}(A; G) \neq 0$ for every closed set $A \subset X$ separating X .*

Items (1) and (3) were also established by Yokoi [40] for the case G is a principal ideal domain.

Clearly, the cyclicity of finite-dimensional homogeneous ANR-compacta provides a negative answer to the next question.

Question 3.7. [3], [4] *Does there exist a non-degenerate finite-dimensional homogeneous AR-compactum?*

According to Fadell [16] there is no non-degenerate strongly homogeneous space. Here, a compactum X is *strongly homogeneous* if X is connected and for every $x_1 \in X$ there is an open set U containing x_1 and a continuous map $L_U : U \rightarrow C(X, X)$ with the following properties ($C(X, X)$ is the space of continuous maps from X into X with the compact-open topology): (i) For every $x \in U$, $L_U(x) : X \rightarrow X$ is a homeomorphism such that $L_U(x)(x_1) = x$; (ii) $L_U(x_1)$ is the identity homeomorphism on X . This kind of homogeneity seems to be quite strong because Fadell's result implies that the Hilbert cube Q is not strongly homogeneous.

On the other hand it is interesting if we consider strongly locally homogeneous spaces in Question 3.7.

Question 3.8. *Does there exist a non-degenerate finite-dimensional strongly locally homogeneous AR-compactum?*

Another question in that direction was listed in [47].

Question 3.9. [47] *Is the Hilbert cube Q the only homogeneous non-degenerate compact AR?*

4. SEPARATION OF HOMOGENEOUS SPACES

We already observed that the existence of finite-dimensional AR-compacta is equivalent to the question whether homogeneous n -dimensional ANR-compacta can be separated by closed sets A acyclic in dimension $n - 1$ with $\dim A \leq n - 1$. In this section we discuss the question of separating homogeneous n -dimensional spaces by sets of a smaller dimension. Cantor manifolds defined in Section 2 (just before Theorem 2.6) were introduced by Urysohn [39] in 1925 as a generalization of Euclidean manifolds. One of the first results concerning separation of homogeneous spaces was established by Krupski [28], [29].

Theorem 4.1. *Every region in a homogeneous n -dimensional space cannot be separated by a subset of dimension $\leq n - 2$.*

The notion of Cantor manifolds was generalized in different ways. Inspired by the classical result of Mazurkiewicz that any region in \mathbb{R}^n cannot be cut by subsets of dimension $\leq n - 2$ (a subset cuts if its complement is not continuum-wise connected), Hadjiivanov-Todorov [20] introduced the class of *Mazurkiewicz manifolds*. This notion was generalized in [25] as follows: A normal space (not necessarily metrizable) X is a *Mazurkiewicz manifold with respect to \mathcal{C}* , where \mathcal{C} is a class of spaces, if for every two closed, disjoint subsets $X_0, X_1 \subset X$, both having non-empty interiors in X , and every F_σ -subset $F \subset X$ with $F \in \mathcal{C}$, there exists a continuum K in $X \setminus F$ joining X_0 and X_1 . Obviously, every Mazurkiewicz manifold with respect to the class at most $(n - 2)$ -dimensional spaces is a Cantor n -manifold.

A new dimension \mathcal{D}_K , unifying both the covering and the cohomological dimension, was introduced in [25]. By \mathcal{D}_K^n we denote all spaces X with $\mathcal{D}_K(X) \leq n$. Concerning that dimension, we have the following result:

Theorem 4.2. [30] *Let X be a homogeneous locally connected space. Then every region $U \subset X$ with $\mathcal{D}_K(U) = n$ is a Mazurkiewicz manifold with respect to the class \mathcal{D}_K^{n-2} .*

Alexandroff [1] introduced another property which is possessed by compact closed n -manifolds, to so-called continua V^n . Here is the general notion of Alexandroff manifold, see [38]: A connected space X is an *Alexandroff manifold with respect to a given class \mathcal{C}* of spaces if for every two disjoint closed subsets X_0, X_1 of X , both having non-empty interiors, there exists an open cover ω of X such that no partition P between X_0 and X_1 admits an ω -map onto a space $Y \in \mathcal{C}$. The Alexandroff *continua* V^n are compact Alexandroff manifolds with respect to the class of all spaces Y with $\dim Y \leq n - 2$. Recall that a partition between two disjoint sets X_0, X_1 in X is a closed set $F \subset X$ such that $X \setminus F$ is the union of two open disjoint sets U_0, U_1 in X with $X_0 \subset U_0$ and $X_1 \subset U_1$. An ω -map $f : P \rightarrow Y$ is such a map that $f^{-1}(\gamma)$ refines ω for some open cover γ of Y .

A cohomological version of V^n -continua was considered in [37]. A compactum X is a V_G^n -continuum [37], where G is a given group, if for every open disjoint subsets U_1, U_2 of X there is an open cover ω of $X_0 = X \setminus (U_1 \cup U_2)$ such that any partition P in X between U_1 and U_2 does not admit an ω -map g onto a space Y with $g^* : \check{H}^{n-1}(Y; G) \rightarrow \check{H}^{n-1}(P; G)$ being a trivial homomorphism. If, in addition, there is also an element $\gamma \in \check{H}^{n-1}(X_0; G)$ such that for any partition P between U_1 and U_2 and any ω -map g of P into a space Y we have $0 \neq i_P^*(\gamma) \in g^*(\check{H}^{n-1}(Y; G))$, where i_P is the embedding $P \hookrightarrow X_0$, X is called a *strong V_G^n -continuum* [46]. Because $\check{H}^{n-1}(Y; G) = 0$ for every space Y with $\dim Y \leq n - 2$, every V_G^n -continuum is a V^n -continuum in the sense of Alexandroff.

The following question, raised in [38], is one of the remaining open problems concerning separation of homogeneous ANR-spaces.

Question 4.3. *Let X be a homogeneous ANR-continuum with $\dim X = n$ and G be a group.*

- (1) *Is X a V^n -continuum?*
- (2) *Is X a V_G^n -continuum?*

According to Theorem 3.6, Question 4.3 has a positive answer provide $\check{H}^n(X; G) \neq 0$. For strongly locally homogeneous spaces (not necessarily ANRs) the answer of Question 4.3(1) is also positive.

Theorem 4.4. [23] *Every strongly locally homogeneous connected space with $\dim_G X = n$ is an Alexandroff manifold with respect to the class of spaces Y with $\dim_G Y \leq n - 2$.*

Finally, let's mention another recent result extending Theorem 4.1, as well as, the result from [33] that no region in 2-dimensional strongly locally homogeneous space cannot be separated by an arc (we say that a closed set $C \subset X$ is irreducibly separating X if there are two disjoint

open sets G_1, G_2 in X such that $\overline{G_1} \cap \overline{G_2} = C$ and $X = \overline{G_1} \cup \overline{G_2}$). We say that a point $x \in X$ has a *special base* \mathcal{B}_x if for any neighborhoods U, V of x in X with $\overline{U} \subset V$ there is $W \in \mathcal{B}_x$ such that $\text{bd}W$ separates $\overline{V} \setminus U$ between $\text{bd}\overline{V}$ and $\text{bd}\overline{U}$.

Theorem 4.5. [41] *Let Γ be a region in a finite-dimensional homogeneous space X with $\dim_G X = n \geq 2$, where G is a countable Abelian group. Then Γ cannot be irreducibly separated by any closed set $C \subset X$ with the following property:*

- (i) $\dim_G C \leq n - 1$ and $H^{n-1}(C; G) = 0$;
- (ii) *There is a point $b \in C \cap \Gamma$ having a special local base \mathcal{B}_C^b in C with $H^{n-2}(\text{bd}_C U; G) = 0$ for every $U \in \mathcal{B}_C^b$.*

If X is strongly locally homogeneous, the finite-dimensionality of X can be omitted and condition (ii) can be weakened to the following one:

- (iii) *There is $b \in C \cap \Gamma$ having an ordinary base \mathcal{B}_C^b in C with $H^{n-2}(\text{bd}_C U) = 0$, $U \in \mathcal{B}_C^b$.*

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