

# Higman embeddings

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**Theorem.** (Gromov's solution of Milnor's problem) Any group of polynomial growth **has a nilpotent subgroup of finite index.**

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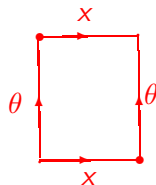
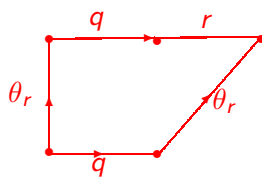
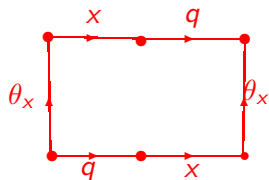
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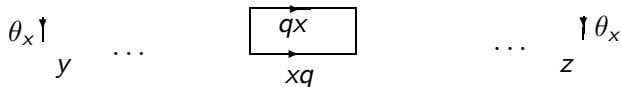
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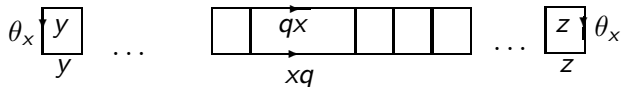


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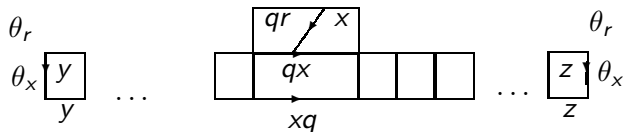
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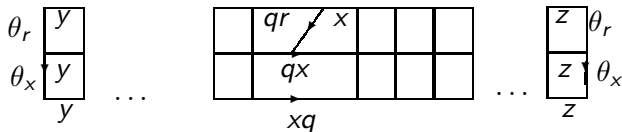


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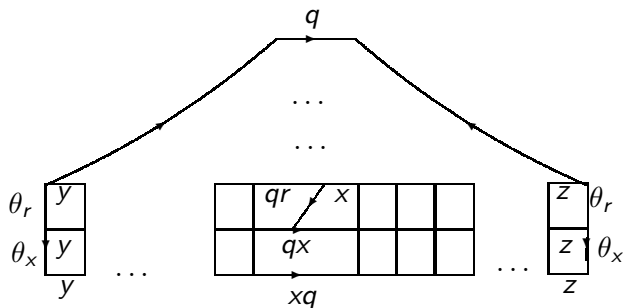


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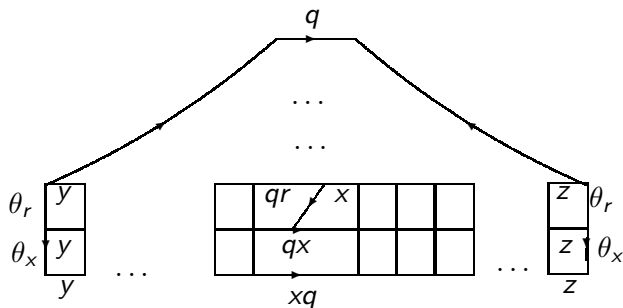


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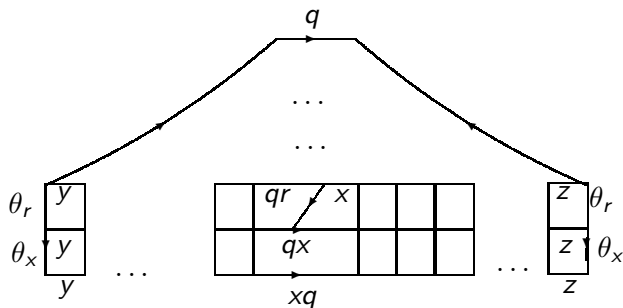
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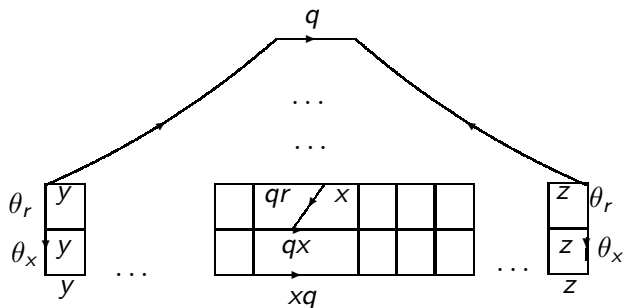
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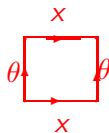
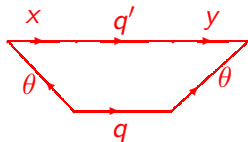
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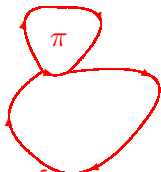
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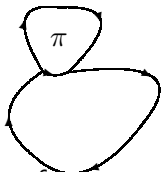


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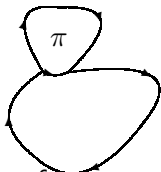
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A typical diagram over the surface group presentation (genus  $> 1$ )

**Definition.** A group is *hyperbolic* if its Dehn function is linear.

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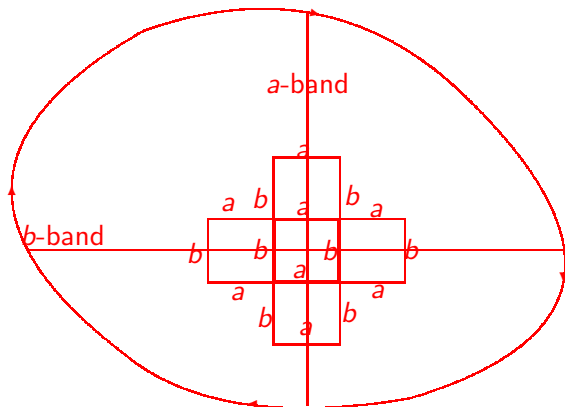
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for every word  $u$  in the alphabet  $\{a_1, a_2\}$ ,  $N = 28$ ,  
 $k_1, \dots, k_N, q_1, q_2, q_3$  are new letters, and the words between consecutive  $k$ 's are copies of  $uq_1uq_2uq_3$  written in disjoint alphabets.

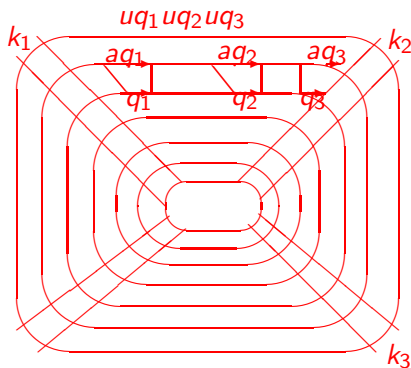
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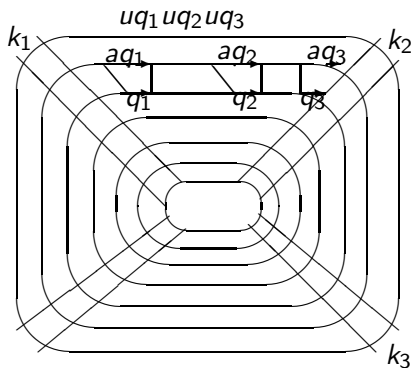
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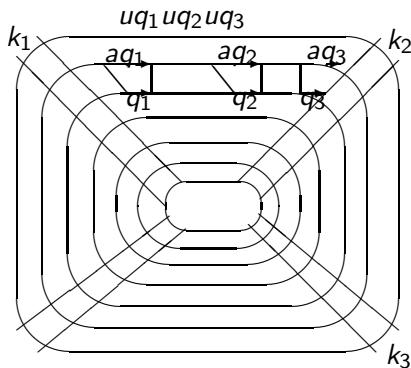
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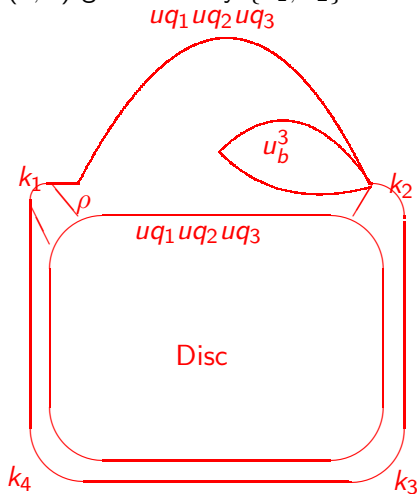
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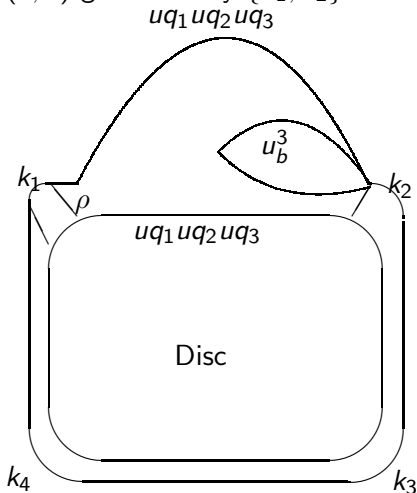
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Here  $a_i\rho = \rho a_i b_i$ ;  $i = 1, 2$ , plus commutativity relations, so  $\rho K(u) = K(u)u_b^n\rho$ . Hence  $u_b^n = 1$

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**Theorem (Olshanskii, S.)** The natural homomorphism of  $B(2, n)$  into  $H$  is an embedding. The group  $H$  has isoperimetric function  $n^{8+\epsilon}$  provided  $n$  is odd and  $\geq 10^{10}$ ;  $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \epsilon = 0$ .



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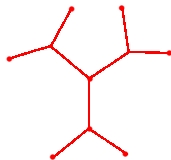
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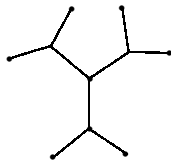
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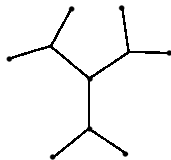
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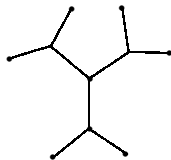
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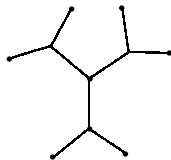
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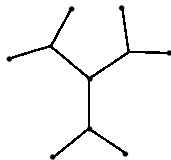
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The proof uses all the ideas mentioned above: we embed the free Burnside group  $B(2, n)$  into a finitely presented group  $G = \langle a_1, a_2, x_1, \dots, x_s \rangle$ , then let a new generator  $t$  conjugate each  $x_i$  to a word  $w_i(a_1, a_2)$ .



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**Problem.** Is there a finitely presented torsion group?