EMBEDDINGS AND RELATED TOPICS IN GRAND VARIABLE EXPONENT HAJŁASZ-MORREY-SOBOLEV SPACES

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Abstract. Embeddings in the framework of grand variable exponent function spaces are studied. In particular, embeddings from grand variable exponent Hajłasz-Sobolev-Morrey spaces to variable exponent Hölder spaces are established. The regularity of a fractional integral operator defined with respect to a non-doubling measure is also investigated. In particular, mapping properties of this operator from a grand variable exponent Morrey space to a grand variable parameter Hölder space are studied. The results are proved under the log-Hölder continuity condition on the exponents. The spaces are defined, generally speaking, on quasi-metric measure spaces, however, the results are new even for Euclidean spaces.

1. Introduction

Our aim is to study problems related to embeddings from grand variable exponent Hajłasz-Morrey-Sobolev spaces (*GVEHMSS* briefly) $(HM)_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(X)$ to variable parameter Hölder spaces $H^{\lambda(\cdot)}(X)$ (*VPHS* briefly) under the log-Hölder continuity condition on exponents and parameters. We treat also the regularity of a fractional integral operator in appropriate spaces. In particular, mapping properties of fractional-type integral operators defined on an open set Ω in \mathbb{R}^n with Ahlfors upper *N*-regular Borel measure μ on Ω , from grand variable exponent Morrey spaces (*GVEMS* briefly) to *VPHS* are also studied.

The study of Hajłasz-Sobolev embeddings in the variable exponent setting was initiated in [1]. Later, a similar problem from the grand variable exponent viewpoint was investigated in [7], where the authors also studied Sobolev–type embeddings in the framework of these spaces defined on open sets in \mathbb{R}^n .

In the last two decades it was realized that classical function spaces are no longer adequate for solving a number of contemporary problems arising naturally in various mathematical models of applied sciences. It thus became necessary to introduce and study the new nonstandard function spaces (*NSFS*) from various viewpoints. We emphasize that in recent years the following function spaces were studied: variable exponent Lebesgue and Sobolev spaces, "grand" function spaces, Morrey-type spaces, etc.

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NSFS are extensively investigated by many authors nowadays. We emphasize some recent books and surveys published in this area, and recall, for example, the monographs [3], [5], [22], [23], the survey paper [17], etc.

Classical Morrey spaces were introduced by C. Morrey in 1938 and applied to the regularity problems of solutions to partial differential equations. We mention, for example, the recent two-volume monograph [27] for properties of Morrey-type spaces, and related topics.

Classical grand Lebesgue spaces $L^{p_c}(\Omega)$, where Ω is a bounded open set in \mathbb{R}^n , naturally arise, for example, when studying integrability problems of the Jacobian under minimal hypotheses (see [18]), while $L^{p_c}, \theta(\Omega)$, $\theta > 0$, is related to the investigation of the nonhomogeneous *n*-harmonic equation div $A(x, \nabla u) = \mu$ (see [14]). It is known (see, e.g., [12]) that the space $L^{p_c}, \theta(\Omega)$ is non-reflexive and non-separable.

Grand Morrey spaces were introduced in [25], where the boundedness of integral operators in these spaces was also established. Later, H. Rafeiro [26] considered the space, where the author "grandified" the parameter of the space as well.

Grand variable exponent Lebesgue spaces were introduced in [19] (see also [6] for more precise spaces). These spaces unify two non-standard spaces: variable and grand Lebesgue spaces. In the present paper we are interested in Hajłasz-Sobolev space based on *GVEMS* defined over quasi-metric measure spaces. The latter spaces were introduced in [21].

Sobolev embeddings in variable exponent Lebesgue spaces were studied in the papers [4], [9], [10] (see also the monograph [5] and references cited therein).

Finally we mention that the results of this paper were announced in [8].

2. Preliminaries

In this section we recall the definition and some properties of a quasi-metric measure space.

Let *X* be a topological space endowed with a locally finite complete measure μ and quasi-metric $d: X \times X \mapsto \mathbb{R}_+$ satisfying the following conditions:

(i) d(x,y) = 0 if and only if x = y;

(ii) d(x,y) = d(y,x) for all $x, y \in X$;

(iii) there exists a constant $\kappa \ge 1$ such that for all $x, y, z \in X$,

$$d(x,y) \leqslant \kappa[d(x,z) + d(z,y)];$$

(iv) for every neighborhood V of a point $x \in X$ there exists r > 0 such that the ball $B(x,r) = \{y \in X : d(x,y) < r\}$ with center x and radius r is contained in V.

It is also assumed that all balls $B(x,r) := \{y \in X : d(x,y) < r\}$ in X are measurable with finite measure, $\mu\{x\} = 0$ for all $x \in X$, and that the class of continuous functions with compact supports is dense in the space of integrable functions on X.

In this case we say that (X,d,μ) is a quasi-metric measure space. Further, we say that the measure μ of the quasi-metric measure space (X,d,μ) is Ahlfors upper α -regular (or satisfies the growth condition) if there is a positive constant *C* such that for all $x \in X$ and R > 0,

$$\mu(B(x,R)) \leqslant CR^{\alpha}.$$
 (1)

A quasi-metric measure space with this growth condition is also called a space of non-homogeneous type.

The measure μ on X is said to satisfy a doubling condition ($\mu \in DC(X)$) if there is a constant $D_{\mu} > 0$ such that

$$\mu B(x,2r) \leqslant D_{\mu} \cdot \mu B(x,r) \tag{2}$$

for every $x \in X$ and r > 0. The best possible constant in (2) is called the doubling constant for μ and will be denoted again by D_{μ} .

Denote by d_X the diameter of X. Throughout the paper we will assume that $d_X < \infty$. In this case μ is a finite measure, i.e. $\mu(X) < \infty$.

Further, it can be checked (see also [16], Lemma 14.6) that there is a positive constant *C* such that whenever $0 < r \le \rho < d_X$, $x \in X$ and $y \in B(x, r)$,

$$\frac{\mu B(x,\rho)}{\mu B(y,r)} \leqslant C\left(\frac{\rho}{r}\right)^N$$

where

$$N = \log_2 D_{\mu} \tag{3}$$

and D_{μ} is the doubling constant. Consequently, since $d_X < \infty$, there is a positive constant C_N such that

$$\mu(B(x,r)) \geqslant C_N r^N \tag{4}$$

whenever $x \in X$ and $0 < r < d_X$, where N is defined by (3).

A quasi-metric measure space (X, d, μ) with doubling measure μ is called a space of homogeneous type (*SHT*).

Recall that for a quasi-metric measure space (X, d, μ) with condition (1), the doubling condition might be not satisfied.

Examples of *SHT* are: (a) domain Ω in \mathbb{R}^d satisfying the condition: there is a positive constant C > 0 such that $|\Omega \cap B(x,r)| \ge Cr^d$, where |E| is the Lebesgue measure induced on Ω ; here N = d; (b) regular curves, i.e. rectifiable curves Γ satisfying the condition: $v(\Gamma \cap D(x,r)) \le Cr$, where D(x,r) is the disc with center x and radius r > 0 and v is the arc-length measure on Γ (in this case N = 1); (c) nilpotent Lie groups G with appropriate distance and Haar measure, where N = Q is a homogeneous dimension of G. In particular, the Heisenberg group \mathscr{H}^n is a special case of such a group with Q = 2n + 2).

For basic properties and examples of an SHT we refer e.g., to [2].

To introduce grand variable exponent Hajłasz–Morrey spaces we need to recall some auxiliary definitions.

We denote by $\mathbf{P}_0(X)$ (resp. $\mathbf{P}(X)$) the family of all real-valued μ -measurable functions $p(\cdot)$ on X such that

$$0 < p_{-} \leq p_{+} < \infty$$
, (resp. $1 < p_{-} \leq p_{+} < \infty$,)

where

$$p_{-} := p_{-}(X) := \inf_{X} p(x), \quad p_{+} := p_{+}(X) := \sup_{X} p(x).$$

It is clear that $\mathbf{P}_0(X) \subset \mathbf{P}(X)$.

We say that a function $p(\cdot) \in \mathbf{P}_0(X)$ belongs to the class $\mathscr{P}^{\log}(X)$ (or $p(\cdot)$ satisfies the log-Hölder continuity condition) if there is a positive constant ℓ such that for all $x, y \in X$ with $0 < d(x, y) \leq 1/2$,

$$|p(x) - p(y)| \leq \frac{\ell}{-\ln(d(x,y))}.$$
(5)

The best possible constant in (5) is called the log-Hölder continuity constant and will be denoted again by ℓ .

Let $q(\cdot) \in \mathbf{P}(X)$. The variable exponent Lebesgue space $L^{q(\cdot)}(X)$ (or $L^{q(x)}(X)$) (*VELS* briefly) is also called a Nakano space. It is a special case of more general spaces called Musielak–Orlicz spaces. $L^{q(\cdot)}(X)$ is the class of all μ -measurable functions f on X for which

$$S_{q(\cdot)}(f) := \int_X |f(x)|^{q(x)} d\mu(x) < \infty.$$

 $L^{q(\cdot)}(X)$ is a Banach function space when given the norm defined by

$$\|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}(X)} = \inf \left\{ \lambda > 0 : S_{q(\cdot)}(f/\lambda) \leq 1 \right\}.$$

The class of exponents $\mathscr{P}^{\log}(X)$ plays an important role in the theory mapping properties of integral operators in $L^{q(\cdot)}$ spaces. For example, maximal, fractional and singular integral operators are bounded in $L^{q(\cdot)}$ under the condition $q(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(X)$ (see, e.g., the monographs [3], [5], [22] and references cited therein).

The following relations hold for VELSs (see, e.g., [24] and p. 3 of [22]):

$$\begin{split} \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}}^{q_+} &\leqslant S_{q(\cdot)}(f) \leqslant \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}}^{q_-}, \ \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}} \leqslant 1, \\ \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}}^{q_-} &\leqslant S_{q(\cdot)}(f) \leqslant \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}}^{q_+}, \ \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}} \geqslant 1. \end{split}$$

Recall that (see e.g., [24]) Hölder's inequality in VELS's has the following form:

$$\|fg\|_{L^{1}} \leqslant C_{q(\cdot)} \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}} \|g\|_{L^{q'(\cdot)}},\tag{6}$$

where

$$C_{q(\cdot)} = \frac{1}{q_{-}} + \frac{1}{(q')_{-}}, \quad q'(\cdot) = \frac{q(\cdot)}{q(\cdot) - 1}$$

Further, the following statement is valid (see, e.g., [22], p. 9):

LEMMA 1. Let $s(\cdot)$ and $r(\cdot)$ be variable exponents on X such that $1 < s_{-} \leq s(x) \leq r(x) \leq r_{+} < \infty \ \mu$ -a.e. We set

$$\frac{1}{p(x)} = \frac{1}{s(x)} - \frac{1}{r(x)}$$

If $1 \in L^{p(\cdot)}$, then

$$\|f\|_{L^{s(\cdot)}} \leq 2^{1/s_{-}} \|1\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}} \|f\|_{L^{r(\cdot)}}.$$

We say that $\varphi(\cdot) \in A_{q(\cdot)}$, where $1 < q_{-} \leq q_{+} < \infty$, if $\varphi(\cdot)$ is defined and bounded on $(0,q_{-}-1)$, is non-decreasing on $(0,\delta)$ for some small positive constant δ , and

$$\lim_{x\to 0^+}\varphi(x)=0.$$

Further, we write that the pair of variable exponents $(p(\cdot),q(\cdot)) \in \widetilde{\mathbf{P}}(X)$ if $1 < q_{-} \leq q(\cdot) \leq p(\cdot) \leq p_{+} < \infty$.

Let $(p(\cdot),q(\cdot)) \in \widetilde{\mathbf{P}}(X)$ and let $\varphi(\cdot) \in A_{q(\cdot)}$. We recall the definitions of the spaces $L_{q(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(X)$ and $L_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(X)$ determined by the norms

$$\|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(X)} = \sup_{\substack{x \in X \\ 0 < r < d_X}} (\mu B(x,r))^{\frac{1}{p(x)} - \frac{1}{q(x)}} \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}(B(x,r))}$$

and

$$\|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}(X)} = \sup_{0 < c < q_{-}-1} \phi(c)^{\frac{1}{q_{-}-c}} \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)-c}(X)}$$

respectively, where c is a constant.

The spaces $L_{q(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(X)$ and $L_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(X)$ are variable exponent Morrey spaces (*VEMS* briefly) and *GVEMS*, respectively.

If $p(\cdot) = q(\cdot)$, then $L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(X)$ is the VELS $L^{q(\cdot)}(X)$.

DEFINITION 1. Let $(p(\cdot),q(\cdot)) \in \widetilde{\mathbf{P}}(X)$ and let $\varphi(\cdot) \in A_{q(\cdot)}$. We say that a function $f \in L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}(X)$ belongs to the Hajłasz-Morrey space $(HM)^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}(X)$ if there is a non-negative $g \in L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}(X)$ such that

$$|f(x) - f(y)| \le d(x, y)[g(x) + g(y)], \quad \mu - a.e \text{ in } X.$$

In this case $g(\cdot)$ is called a generalized gradient of f.

For $p(\cdot) \equiv q(\cdot)$ this space was introduced and studied in [7].

If $p(\cdot) \equiv q(\cdot) \equiv p_c = const$ and formally $\theta = 0$, then we have the space $(HS)^{p_c}(X)$ which was introduced by P. Hajłasz [15] as a generalization of the classical Sobolev spaces W^{1,p_c} to the general setting of quasi-metric measure spaces.

PROPOSITION 1. The space $(HM)_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(X)$ is the Banach space with respect to the norm:

$$\|f\|_{(HM)^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}(X)} = \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}(X)} + \inf\|g\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}(X)}$$

where the infimum is taken over all generalized gradients g of f.

Let $p_- > N$. We say that a bounded function f belongs to the variable exponent Hölder space (*VEHS* briefly) $H^{p(\cdot)}(X)$, if there exists C > 0 such that

$$|f(x) - f(y)| \leq Cd(x, y)^{\max\{1 - N/p(x), 1 - N/p(y)\}}$$

for every $x, y \in X$ (see [1] for this definition).

Norms in these spaces are defined as follows:

$$||f||_{H^{p(\cdot)}(X)} = ||f||_{L^{\infty}(X)} + [f]_{H^{p(\cdot)}(X)}$$

where

$$[f]_{H^{p(\cdot)}(X)} := \sup_{\substack{x,y \in X \\ 0 < d(x,y) \leqslant 1}} \frac{|f(x) - f(y)|}{d(x,y)^{\max\{1 - N/p(x), 1 - N/p(y)\}}}.$$

3. Embeddings

Throughout this section it will be assumed that (X, d, μ) is an *SHT* and that *N* is defined by (3).

To prove the main result of this section we need some definitions and auxiliary statements.

LEMMA 2. (see [7]) Let $\alpha(\cdot)$ and $\beta(\cdot)$ be μ -measurable functions on X such that $0 < \alpha_{-} \leq \alpha_{+} < \infty$, $0 < \beta_{-} \leq \beta_{+} < \infty$. Suppose that f is a locally integrable function on X. Then for all $x, y \in X$,

$$|f(x) - f(y)| \leq C(\mu, \alpha(\cdot), \beta(\cdot)) \left[d(x, y)^{\alpha(x)} M^{\#}_{\alpha(\cdot)} f(x) + d(x, y)^{\beta(y)} M^{\#}_{\alpha(\cdot)} f(y) \right],$$

where $C(\mu, \alpha, \beta)$ is the constant defined by

$$C(\mu,\alpha(\cdot),\beta(\cdot)) := D_{\mu} \max\left\{\frac{1}{2^{\alpha_{-}}-1}; 2^{\beta_{+}}\left(\frac{1}{2^{\beta_{-}}-1}+D_{\mu}\right)\right\}$$

and

$$M_{\alpha(\cdot)}^{\#}f(x) = \sup_{x \in X, r > 0} \frac{r^{-\alpha(x)}}{\mu B(x,r)} \int_{B(x,r)} |f(y) - f_{B(x,r)}| d\mu(y).$$

Denote by $M_{\lambda(\cdot)}$ the fractional maximal operator given by the formula:

$$M_{\lambda(\cdot)}f(x) = \sup_{\substack{x \in X \\ r > 0}} \frac{r^{\lambda(x)}}{\mu B(x,r)} \int_{B(x,r)} |f(y)| d\mu(y), \ 0 \leq \lambda(x) < \lambda_+ < N.$$

LEMMA 3. Let $0 \leq \lambda_{-} \leq \lambda_{+} < 1$, $(p(\cdot),q(\cdot)) \in \widetilde{P}(X)$, $\varphi(\cdot) \in A_{q(\cdot)}$. Suppose that $f \in (HM)_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(X)$ and that g is its gradient. Then

$$M_{1-\lambda(\cdot)}^{\#}f(x) \leqslant 4\kappa M_{\lambda(\cdot)}g(x),$$

where κ is the quasi-metric constant.

Proof. Let g be the gradient of f. Then for B := B(x, r),

$$\begin{split} &\int_{B} |f(y) - f_{B}| d\mu(y) \\ \leqslant &\frac{1}{\mu(B)} \int_{B} \int_{B} |f(y) - f(z)| d\mu(y) d\mu(z) \\ \leqslant &\frac{1}{\mu(B)} \int_{B} \int_{B} d(y,z) [g(y) + g(z)] d\mu(y) d\mu(z) \\ \leqslant &\frac{2\kappa r}{\mu(B)} \int_{B} \int_{B} [g(y) + g(z)] d\mu(y) d\mu(z) \\ \leqslant &\frac{4\kappa r}{\mu(B)} \int_{B} \int_{B} g(y) d\mu(y) d\mu(z) = 4\kappa r \int_{B} g(y) d\mu(y) \end{split}$$

Now the conclusion follows. \Box

Lemmas 2 and 3 imply the next statement.

LEMMA 4. Let $\alpha(\cdot)$ and $\beta(\cdot)$ be μ -measurable functions on X such that $0 \leq \alpha_{-} \leq \alpha_{+} < 1$, $0 \leq \beta_{-} \leq \beta_{+} < 1$. Suppose that $(p(\cdot),q(\cdot)) \in \widetilde{P}(X), \phi(\cdot) \in A_{q(\cdot)}$. Assume that $f \in (HM)_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(X)$ and that g is its gradient. Then for all $x, y \in X$,

$$|f(x) - f(y)| \leq \overline{C}(\mu, \alpha(\cdot), \beta(\cdot)) \left[d(x, y)^{1 - \alpha(x)} M_{\alpha(\cdot)} g(x) + d(x, y)^{1 - \beta(y)} M_{\beta(\cdot)} g(y) \right],$$

where

$$\overline{C}(\mu,\alpha(\cdot),\beta(\cdot)) := 8C(\mu,1-\alpha(\cdot),1-\beta(\cdot))$$

and

$$C(\mu, 1 - \alpha(\cdot), 1 - \beta(\cdot)) = D_{\mu} \max\left\{\frac{1}{2^{1-\alpha_{+}} - 1}; 2^{1-\beta_{-}}\left(\frac{1}{2^{1-\beta_{+}} - 1} + D_{\mu}\right)\right\}.$$

LEMMA 5. Let $(r(\cdot), s(\cdot)) \in \widetilde{P}(X)$ and let, in addition, $r(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(X)$. Then for $f \in L^{s(\cdot)}_{r(\cdot)}$

$$M_{N/s(\cdot)}f(x) \leq C_{s(\cdot),r(\cdot)} \|f\|_{L^{s(\cdot)}_{r(\cdot)}},$$

where $C_{s(\cdot),r(\cdot)}$ is such that

$$\sup_{0 < c < \sigma} C_{s(\cdot), r(\cdot) - c} < \infty \tag{7}$$

for some small positive constant σ .

Proof. We have

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{R^{\frac{N}{s(x)}}}{\mu B(x,R)} \int_{B(x,R)} |f| d\mu &\leq \frac{2R^{\frac{N}{s(x)}}}{\mu B(x,R)} \|f\|_{L^{r(\cdot)}(B(x,R))} \|1\|_{L^{r'(\cdot)}(B(x,R))} \\ &\leq \frac{C_{r(\cdot)}R^{\frac{N}{s(x)}}R^{\frac{N}{r'(\cdot)}}}{R^{N}} \|f\|_{L^{r(\cdot)}(B(x,R))} \\ &\leq \frac{C_{s(\cdot),r(\cdot)}R^{\frac{N}{s(x)}}R^{\frac{N}{r'(x)}}R^{\frac{N}{r(x)}-\frac{N}{s(x)}}}{R^{N}} \|f\|_{L^{s(\cdot)}_{r(\cdot)}(X)} \\ &= C_{s(\cdot),r(\cdot)} \|f\|_{L^{s(\cdot)}_{r(\cdot)}(X)}. \end{aligned}$$

It remains to observe that condition (7) holds for the constant $C_{s(\cdot),r(\cdot)}$.

LEMMA 6. Let $p(\cdot)$ and $q(\cdot)$ are the variable exponents such that $p_- > N$ and $q(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(X)$. Suppose that $f \in (HM)_{q(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(X)$. Let g be a generalized gradient of f. Then

$$|f(x) - f(y)| \leq \widetilde{C}_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)} ||g||_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}} d(x,y)^{1-N/\max\{p(x),p(y)\}}$$

where $\widetilde{C}_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)}$ is a constant satisfying the condition

$$\sup_{0 < c < \sigma} \widetilde{C}_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)-c} < \infty \tag{8}$$

for some small positive constant σ .

Proof. Applying Lemmas 4 and 5 we have

$$\begin{split} |f(x) - f(y)| &\leq C_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)} \left[d(x,y)^{1-N/p(x)} M_{N/p(x)} g(x) + d(x,y)^{1-N/p(y)} M_{N/p(y)} g(y) \right] \\ &\leq C_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)} \|g\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(X)} \left[d(x,y)^{1-N/p(x)} + d(x,y)^{1-N/p(y)} \right] \\ &\leq \widetilde{C}_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)} \|g\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(X)} d(x,y)^{\max\{1-N/p(x);1-N/p(y)\}}. \end{split}$$

Since condition (8) holds for the constant $\widetilde{C}_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)}$, we are done. \Box

We will need some more auxiliary statements

LEMMA 7. ([23], p. 834) Let (X, d, μ) be an SHT, $r(\cdot) \in \mathbf{P}(X) \cap \mathscr{P}^{\log}(X)$. Then the following estimate holds for all balls B, $\mu(B) \leq 1$:

$$\mu(B)^{r_-(B)-r_+(B)} \leqslant C_{r(\cdot)},$$

where $C_{r(\cdot)}$ is a constant such that

$$\sup_{0 < c < \sigma} C_{r(\cdot) - c} < \infty$$

for some small positive constant σ .

LEMMA 8. Let (X, d, μ) be an SHT and let σ be a small positive constant. Suppose that $q(\cdot) \in \mathbf{P}(X) \cap \mathscr{P}^{\log}(X)$ and $\varphi(\cdot) \in A_{q(\cdot)}$. Then there is a positive constant $C_{q(\cdot),\sigma,\varphi(\cdot)}$ such that

$$\|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}(X)} \leqslant C_{q(\cdot),\sigma,\phi(\cdot)} \sup_{0 < c \leqslant \sigma} \phi^{1/(q_--c)} \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)-c}(X)}.$$

Proof. Without loss of generality we can assume that $\mu(X) \leq 1$. Let $\sigma < c < q_- - 1$. Then by Lemmas 1, 7, and the fact that $q(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(X)$ we find that for a ball B := B(x, r),

$$\begin{split} \varphi(c)^{\frac{1}{q_{-}-c}}\mu(B)^{\frac{1}{p(x)}-\frac{1}{q(x)-c}} \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)-c}(B)} &\leq 2\varphi(c)^{\frac{1}{q_{-}-c}}\mu(B)^{\frac{1}{p(x)}-\frac{1}{q(x)-c}} \|1\|_{L^{l(\cdot)}(B)} \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)-\sigma}(B)} \\ &\leq C_{q(\cdot),\sigma,\varphi(\cdot)}\varphi(\sigma)^{\frac{1}{q_{-}-\sigma}}\mu(B)^{\frac{1}{p(x)}-\frac{1}{q(x)-\sigma}} \|f\|_{L^{q(\cdot)-\sigma}(B)} \end{split}$$

where $l(\cdot) = \frac{(q(\cdot)-c)(q(\cdot)-\sigma)}{c-\sigma}$. Since

$$\|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}(X)} = \max\Big\{\sup_{0 < c \leqslant \sigma} \varphi(c)^{\frac{1}{q_{-}-c}} \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)-c}(X)}, \sup_{\sigma < c < q_{-}-1} \varphi(c)^{\frac{1}{q_{-}-c}} \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)-c}(X)}\Big\},$$

we have the desired result. \Box

A similar relation for grand Lebesgue spaces with constant exponents was first observed in [11].

THEOREM 1. Let (X, d, μ) be an SHT with $\mu(X) < \infty$, and let N be determined by (3). Let $p(\cdot)$ and $q(\cdot)$ be variable exponents such that $p_- > N$ and $(p(\cdot), q(\cdot)) \in \widetilde{P}(X)$. Let $q(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(X), \varphi(\cdot) \in A_{q(\cdot)}$. Then

$$(HM)^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}(X) \hookrightarrow H^{p(\cdot)}(X).$$

Proof. Taking Lemma 8 into account, we deal with small positive *c*. Let $0 < c < \sigma < q_{-} - 1$. Then applying Lemma 5, we have that for $x \in X, R_0 > 0$,

$$\begin{split} \left| f(x) - f_{B(x,R_0)} \right| &\leq D_{\mu} R_0^{1-N/p(x)} M_{1-N/p(\cdot)}^{\#} f(x) \\ &\leq C R_0^{1-N/p(x)} M_{N/p(\cdot)} g(x) \\ &\leq \overline{C} R_0^{1-N/p(x)} \|g\|_{L_{q(\cdot)-c}^{p(\cdot)}(X)}. \end{split}$$

On the other hand,

$$\begin{split} \left| f_{B(x,R_0)} \right| &\leq 2\mu \left(B\left(x,R_0 \right) \right)^{-1} \| f \|_{L^{q(\cdot)-c}(B(x,R_0))} \| 1 \|_{L^{(q(\cdot)-c)'}(B(x,R_0))} \\ &\leq 2R_0^{-N/(q(x)-c)} \| f \|_{L^{q(\cdot)-c}(X)} \leq 2R_0^{-N/p(x)} \| f \|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)-c}(X)}. \end{split}$$

Thus, taking $R_0 = \min\{1, \mu(X)\}$, we find that

$$\begin{split} |f(x)| &\leq C \left[R_0^{1-N/p(x)} + R_0^{-N/p(x)} \right] \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)-c}(X)} \\ &\leq C \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)-c}(X)}. \end{split}$$

Thus, $f \in L^{\infty}(X)$.

Further, observe that

$$|f(x) - f(y)| \leq \widetilde{C}_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)-c} \|g\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)-c}(X)} d(x,y)^{\max\{1-N/p(x);1-N/p(y)\}}$$
(9)

where the constant $\widetilde{C}_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)-c}$ is such that

$$\sup_{0 < c < \sigma} \widetilde{C}_{p(\cdot),q(\cdot)-c} < \infty.$$

Finally, multiplying both sides of inequality (9) by $\varphi(c)^{\frac{1}{q_{-}-c}}$ and taking the supremum with respect to $c, 0 < c < \sigma$ (observe that the left-hand side of (9) does not depend on c) we have the desired result. \Box

4. Regularity of potentials

Let Ω be an open set in \mathbb{R}^d and let μ be a Borel measure on Ω . In this section we investigate the regularity of fractional integrals

$$J_{\Omega}^{\gamma}f(x) = \int_{\Omega} \frac{f(y)}{|x-y|^{n-\gamma}} d\mu(y), \ 0 < \gamma < n, \ x \in \Omega$$

for $f \in L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}(\Omega)$, where the measure μ on Ω satisfies the condition: there are positive constants c_0 and n such that for all $x \in \Omega$ and R > 0,

$$\mu(D(x,R)) \leqslant c_0 R^n, \ D(x,R) := B(x,R) \cap \Omega.$$
(10)

In this section we will need the following class of exponents on Ω .

DEFINITION 2. We say that $p(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}(X)$ if there is a positive constant ℓ_1 such that

$$\mu(B(x,R))^{p_-(D(x,R))-p_+(D(x,R))} \leq \ell_1$$

for all $x \in X$ and small positive *R*.

It is known that (see, e.g., [23], p. 834) that if (X, d, μ) is an *SHT*, then $\mathscr{P}^{log}(\Omega) \subset \mathscr{P}(\Omega)$.

DEFINITION 3. Let γ be a constant such that $0 < \gamma < n$ and let ε be a constant such that $0 < \varepsilon \leq 1$. A function $k_{\gamma} : \Omega \times \Omega \to \mathbb{C}$ is said to be a fractional kernel of order γ if there exists a positive constant C_k such that

(a)
$$|k_{\gamma}(x,y)| \leq \frac{C_{k_{\gamma}}}{|x-y|^{n-\gamma}}, \quad x \neq y;$$
 (11)

(b)
$$\left|k_{\gamma}(x,y)-k_{\gamma}\left(x',y\right)\right| \leq \frac{C_{k_{\gamma}}|x-x'|^{\varepsilon}}{|x-y|^{n-\gamma+\varepsilon}}, \quad |x-y| \geq 2\left|x'-x\right|.$$
 (12)

For k_{γ} , let

$$K^{\gamma}f(x) = \int_{\Omega} k_{\gamma}(x, y) f(y) d\mu(y), \quad x \in \Omega.$$

LEMMA 9. [13], [28]. Let (X, d, μ) be a metric measure space and let $x, y, z \in X$ be such that $2d(x, y) \leq d(x, z)$. Then the following estimate holds:

$$|d(x,z)^{\gamma-n} - d(y,z)^{\gamma-n}| \leq C \frac{d(x,y)}{d(x,z)^{n-\gamma+1}}$$

for $0 < \gamma < n$, where the positive constant *C* depends only on *n* and γ . Consequently conditions (a) and (b) are satisfied for $k_{\gamma}(x,y) = |x-y|^{\gamma-n}$ and $\varepsilon = 1$ with the constant $C_{k_{\gamma}}$.

Let $\lambda : \Omega \to (0,1]$ be a measurable function satisfying the condition $0 < \lambda_{-} \leq \lambda_{+} \leq 1$. We say that a function f on Ω is in the space $H^{\lambda(\cdot)}(\Omega)$ if

$$[f]_{\lambda(\cdot)} = \sup_{\substack{x, x+h\in\Omega\\0<|h|\leqslant 1}} \frac{|f(x+h) - f(x)|}{|h|^{\lambda(x)}}$$

is finite. In particular, we denote

$$[f]_{\gamma-\eta/p(\cdot)} := [f]_{\widetilde{H}^{p(\cdot)}_{\gamma,\eta}(\Omega)}$$

LEMMA 10. Let $p(\cdot)$ be an exponent on Ω such that $p(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(\Omega)$. Then there is a positive constant C depending on the log-Hölder continuity constant ℓ for $p(\cdot)$ such that

$$\frac{1}{C}|h|^{p(x+h)} \leq |h|^{p(x)} \leq C|h|^{p(x+h)}, \quad |h| \leq 1; \ x, x+h \in \Omega.$$

Proof. Since $p(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(\Omega)$ we have that for all *x* and *h* such that if $x, x+h \in \Omega$, $|h| \leq 1$,

$$|p(x+h) - p(x)| \leq \frac{\ell}{-\ln|h|}$$

holds. Hence,

$$|h|^{|p(x+h)-p(x)|} \leqslant e^{-\ell}$$

from which the desired relation follows. \Box

LEMMA 11. Let $q(\cdot)$ be an exponent such that $q(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}(\Omega)$ with appropriate constant ℓ_1 . Then $\frac{1}{q'(\cdot)} \in \mathscr{P}(\Omega)$ with constant $(\max\{1,\ell_1\})^{\frac{1}{(q_--1)^2}}$.

Proof. It is enough to observe that for a set $D := B \cap \Omega$, $\mu(D) \leq 1$, where B is a ball with center in Ω , we have

$$\mu(D)^{\left(\frac{1}{q'}\right)_{-}(D) - \left(\frac{1}{q'}\right)_{+}(D)} = \left(\mu(D)^{q_{-}(D) - q_{+}(D)}\right)^{\frac{1}{(q_{-}-1)^{2}}} \leqslant \ell_{1}^{\frac{1}{(q_{-}-1)^{2}}}.$$

Lemma 11 implies the next statement:

LEMMA 12. Let $q(\cdot)$ be an exponent such that $q(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}(\Omega)$. Then there is a positive constant $\overline{C}_{q(\cdot)}$ such that for all $x \in \Omega$ and r > 0,

$$\left\|\chi_{D(x,r)}\right\|_{L^{q'(\cdot)}} \leqslant \overline{C}_{q(\cdot)}\mu(D(x,r))^{\frac{1}{q'(x)}}.$$

Moreover, the constant $\overline{C}_{a(\cdot)}$ is such that

$$\sup_{0<\varepsilon<\eta}\overline{C}_{q(\cdot)-\varepsilon}<\infty$$

for some small positive constant η .

The following statement is a quantitative version of Theorem 4.6 in [20].

PROPOSITION 2. Let $\mu(\Omega) < \infty$ and let μ satisfy (10). Let k_{γ} satisfy (a) and (b) of Definition 3. Let γ and ε be constants such that $0 < \varepsilon \leq \gamma < n$. Assume that $\left(p(\cdot),q(\cdot)\right) \in \tilde{P}(\Omega), \ \frac{n}{\gamma} < p_{-} \leq p_{+} < \frac{n}{\gamma-\varepsilon}.$ If $q(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}(\Omega)$ and $p(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(\Omega)$ then there exists a constant $C = C_{k_{\gamma},n,q(\cdot),p(\cdot),\varepsilon}$ such that

$$[K^{\gamma}f]_{\widetilde{H}^{p(\cdot)}_{\gamma,\eta}(\Omega)} \leqslant C \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)},$$

where C satisfies the condition

$$\sup_{0<\lambda<\eta}C_{k\gamma,n,q(\cdot)-\lambda,p(\cdot),\varepsilon}<\infty$$

with a small positive constant η .

Proof. By conditions (a) and (b) of Definition 3 we find that

$$\begin{split} |K^{\gamma}f(x+h) - K^{\gamma}f(x)| &\leq \int_{\Omega} \left| k_{\gamma}(x+h,y) - k_{\gamma}(x,y) \right| |f(y)| d\mu(y) \\ &\leq \int_{D(x,2|h|)} \left| k_{\gamma}(x+h,y) \right| |f(y)| d\mu(y) \\ &+ \int_{D(x,2|h|)} \left| k_{\gamma}(x,y) \right| |f(y)| d\mu(y) \\ &+ \int_{\Omega \setminus D(x,2|h|)} \left| k_{\gamma}(x+h,y) - k_{\gamma}(x,y) \right| |f(y)| d\mu(y) \\ &\leq C_{k_{\gamma}} \int_{D(x,2|h|)} \frac{|f(y)|}{|x+h-y|^{n-\gamma}} d\mu(y) \\ &+ C_{k_{\gamma}} \int_{D(x,2|h|)} \frac{|f(y)|}{|x-y|^{n-\gamma}} d\mu(y) \\ &+ C_{k_{\gamma}} |h|^{\varepsilon} \int_{\Omega \setminus D(x,2|h|)} \frac{|f(y)|}{|x+h-y|^{n-\gamma+\varepsilon}} d\mu(y) \\ &=: I_{1} + I_{2} + I_{3}, \end{split}$$

where |h| is small and $x + h \in \Omega$.

Further, by using the representation $|x+h-y|^{\gamma-n} = \frac{n-\gamma}{1-2^{\gamma-n}} \int_{|x+h-y|}^{2|x+h-y|} t^{\gamma-n-1} dt$, and Fubini's theorem, we see that

$$I_1 \leqslant C_{k_{\gamma},n} \int_0^{6|h|} f_t(x+h)t^{\gamma-1}dt,$$

where $f_t(x) := \frac{1}{t^n} \int_{D(x,t)} |f(y)| d\mu(y)$ and the positive constant $C_{k_{\gamma},n}$ depends only k_{γ}, n .

Applying now the Hölder inequality in the space $L^{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)$, the growth condition for μ , the assumptions $1/q'(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}(\Omega)$, $p(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(\Omega)$, and observing that

$$\frac{1}{c}|h|^{\gamma-n/p(x+h)} \leq |h|^{\gamma-n/p(x)} \leq c|h|^{\gamma-n/p(x+h)}$$

for some constant c > 1, we find that

$$\begin{split} f_{t}(x+h) &\leq C_{q(\cdot)}t^{-n} \left\| \chi_{D(x+h,t)}f \right\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} \left\| \chi_{D(x+h,t)} \right\|_{L^{q'(\cdot)}(\Omega)} \\ &\leq C_{q(\cdot)}\overline{C}_{q(\cdot)}t^{-n}\mu(D(x+h,t))^{1/q'(x+h)} \left\| \chi_{D(x+h,t)}f \right\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} \\ &\leq C_{q(\cdot)}\overline{C}_{q(\cdot)}C_{0}t^{-n/q(x+h)} \left\| \chi_{D(x+h,t)}f \right\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} \\ &= C_{q(\cdot)}\overline{C}_{q(\cdot)}C_{0}t^{-n/p(x+h)}t^{n/p(x+h)-n/q(x+h)} \left\| \chi_{D(x+h,t)}f \right\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} \\ &\leq C_{q(\cdot)}\overline{C}_{q(\cdot)}C_{0}^{2}t^{-n/p(x+h)}\mu(D(x+h,t))^{1/p(x+h)-1/q(x+h)} \left\| \chi_{D(x+h,t)}f \right\|_{L^{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} \\ &\leq D \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)}t^{-n/p(x+h)}, \end{split}$$

where

$$D = C_0^2 C_{q(\cdot)} \overline{C}_{q(\cdot)}.$$
(13)

Consequently, since $1/p(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(\Omega)$ and $\gamma > \frac{n}{p_-}$, we have

$$I_{1} \leq C_{k\gamma} D \frac{6^{n}}{\gamma - \frac{n}{p_{-}}} \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} |h|^{\gamma - n/p(x+h)}$$
$$\leq C \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} |h|^{\gamma - n/p(x)},$$

where

$$C = c C_{k\gamma} D \frac{6^n}{\gamma - \frac{n}{p_-}}$$
(14)

Further, similar arguments yield

$$I_2 \leqslant C \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} |h|^{\gamma - n/p(x)}.$$

To estimate I_3 we observe that if $|x-y| \ge 2|h|$, then $|x-y+h| \ge |x-y|-|h| \ge 2|h|$ |h|. Therefore

$$\begin{split} I_{3} &\leqslant C_{k_{\gamma}}|h|^{\varepsilon} \int_{\Omega \setminus D(x,2|h|)} \frac{|f(y)|}{|x-y+h|^{n-\gamma+\varepsilon}} d\mu(y) \\ &\leqslant C_{k_{\gamma}}|h|^{\varepsilon} \int_{\Omega \setminus D(x,2|h|)} |f(y)| \left(\int_{|x-y+h|}^{2|x-y+h|} t^{\gamma-n-\varepsilon-1} dt \right) d\mu(y) \\ &\leqslant C_{k_{\gamma}}|h|^{\varepsilon} \int_{|h|}^{\infty} t^{\gamma-n-\varepsilon-1} \left(\int_{D(x+h,t)} |f(y)| d\mu(y) \right) dt \\ &= C_{k_{\gamma}}|h|^{\varepsilon} \int_{|h|}^{\infty} t^{\gamma-\varepsilon-1} f_{t}(x+h) dt. \end{split}$$

Repeating the arguments used to estimate I_1 we see that

$$f_t(x+h) \leqslant Dt^{-n/p(x+h)} \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)}$$

Since we assumed that $\gamma < \varepsilon + n/p_+$ and $1/p(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(\Omega)$, we obtain

$$\begin{split} I_{3} &\leqslant C \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} |h|^{\varepsilon} \int_{|h|}^{\infty} t^{\gamma - n/p(x+h) - \varepsilon - 1} dt \\ &\leqslant C \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)} |h|^{\gamma - n/p(x)}, \end{split}$$

where $C \equiv C_{k_{\gamma},n,q(\cdot),p(\cdot),\varepsilon}$ is a positive constant. Combining the estimates for I_1, I_2 and I_3 we finally obtain that

$$\|K^{\gamma}f\|_{H^{\gamma-\frac{n}{p(\cdot)}}(\Omega)} \leqslant C_{k_{\gamma},n,q(\cdot),p(\cdot),\varepsilon} \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot)}(\Omega)},$$

where the constant $C_{k_{\gamma},n,q(\cdot),p(\cdot),\varepsilon}$ satisfies

$$\sup_{0 < c < \sigma} C_{k_{\gamma}, n, q(\cdot) - c, p(\cdot), \varepsilon} < \infty$$

for some small positive constant σ . \Box

Finally, taking into account Proposition 2 and Lemma 9 we have

THEOREM 2. Let Ω be an open set in \mathbb{R}^d and let μ be a Borel measure on Ω satisfying condition (10). Suppose that $\mu(\Omega) < \infty$. Further, let $p(\cdot)$ and $q(\cdot)$ be variable exponents on Ω such that $(p(\cdot),q(\cdot)) \in \widetilde{P}(\Omega)$. Assume that $\phi(\cdot) \in A_{q(\cdot)}$. Suppose that γ and ε are positive constants such that $\frac{n}{\gamma} < p_- \leq p_+ < \frac{n}{\gamma-\varepsilon}$. Let $q(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}(\Omega)$ and let $p(\cdot) \in \mathscr{P}^{\log}(\Omega)$. Then the operator J_{Ω}^{γ} is bounded from $L_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(\Omega)$ to $\widetilde{H}_{\gamma,n}^{p(\cdot)}(\Omega)$, i.e. there is a positive constant c_0 such that for all $f \in L_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(\Omega)$,

$$[J_{\Omega}^{\gamma}f]_{\widetilde{H}^{p(\cdot)}_{\gamma,n}(\Omega)} \leqslant c_0 \|f\|_{L^{p(\cdot)}_{q(\cdot),\phi(\cdot)}(\Omega).}$$

$$\tag{15}$$

DEFINITION 4. Let $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^d$ be an open set and let *n* be a positive constant. We say that a Borel measure μ defined on Ω satisfies condition $A(n,\Omega)$ (or $\mu \in A(n,\Omega)$) if there is a positive constant c_0 such that for all $x \in \Omega$ and $R \in (0, diam\Omega)$,

$$\frac{1}{c_0}R^n \leqslant \mu\left(D(x,R)\right) \leqslant c_0 R^n.$$
(16)

For example, the induced Lebesgue measure $|\cdot|_d$ on $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^d$ satisfying the condition $|D(x,R)|_d \ge C_0 R^d$ belongs to the class $A(d,\Omega)$; arc-length measure v on a regular curve Γ belongs to $A(1,\Gamma)$; the Haar measure on a nilpotent Lie groups G belongs to A(Q,G), where Q is the homogeneous dimension of G.

It is easy to see that any measure μ satisfying condition (16) is doubling.

COROLLARY 1. Let μ be a finite measure on a bounded open set $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^d$ satisfying the condition $A(n,\Omega)$. Suppose that $p(\cdot)$ and $q(\cdot)$ are variable exponents on Ω such that $\left(p(\cdot),q(\cdot)\right) \in \widetilde{P}(\Omega)$. Assume that $\varphi(\cdot) \in \mathscr{A}_{q(\cdot)}$. Let γ and ε be positive constants such that $\frac{n}{\gamma} < p_- \leq p_+ < \frac{n}{\gamma-\varepsilon}$. Then the operator J_{Ω}^{γ} is bounded from $L_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(\Omega)$ to $\widetilde{H}_{\gamma,n}^{p(\cdot)}(\Omega)$, i.e. there is a positive constant c_0 such that for all $f \in L_{q(\cdot),\varphi(\cdot)}^{p(\cdot)}(\Omega)$, (15) holds.

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