

# Bregman Gradient Methods for Relatively-Smooth Optimization

PhD defence



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Joint work with Adrien Taylor, Dmitrii Ostrovskii, Hadrien Hendrikx, Mathieu Even.

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# Large-scale optimization

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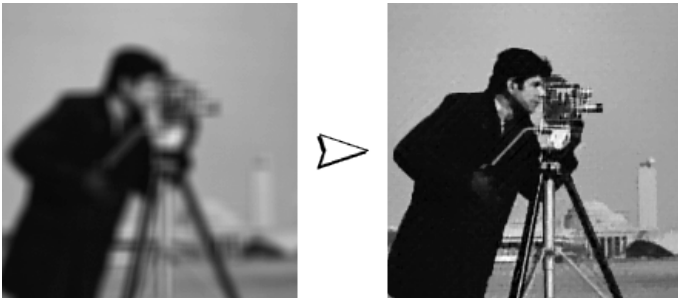
We want to solve

$$\min_{x \in \mathcal{C}} f(x) \quad (\text{P})$$

where  $\mathcal{C}$  is a convex set of  $\mathbb{R}^d$ ,  $d \gg 1$ .

## Signal processing

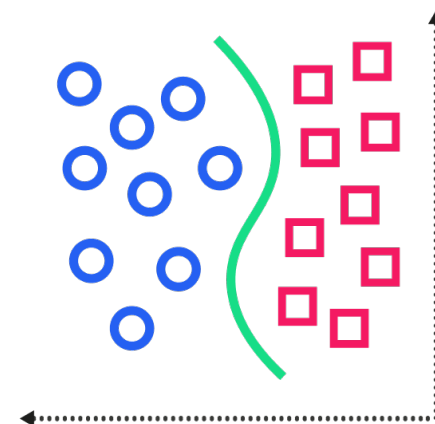
Recovery of unknown signal from partial and noisy observations



Source: LASIP toolbox

## Machine learning

Learning a prediction function from training data



Source: ipullrank.com

# Our objective

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$$\min_{x \in \mathcal{C}} f(x) \quad (\text{P})$$

- **Iterative methods:** solve a series of subproblems to compute a sequence

$$x_0, x_1, x_2, \dots, x_k \dots$$

which approaches the solution  $x_*$ .

- **First-order methods:** for large-scale problems, the algorithm has only cheap access to **first-order oracle**

$$x \mapsto \left( f(x), \nabla f(x) \right).$$

- In practice,  $f$  is not a **black box**: use problem structure to devise **efficient** algorithms, with **theoretical guarantees**.
- **Our approach:** Bregman methods and relatively-smooth optimization.

$$\nabla^2 f \preceq L \nabla^2 h \quad (\text{Bauschke, Bolte, Teboulle, 2017})$$

# Outline

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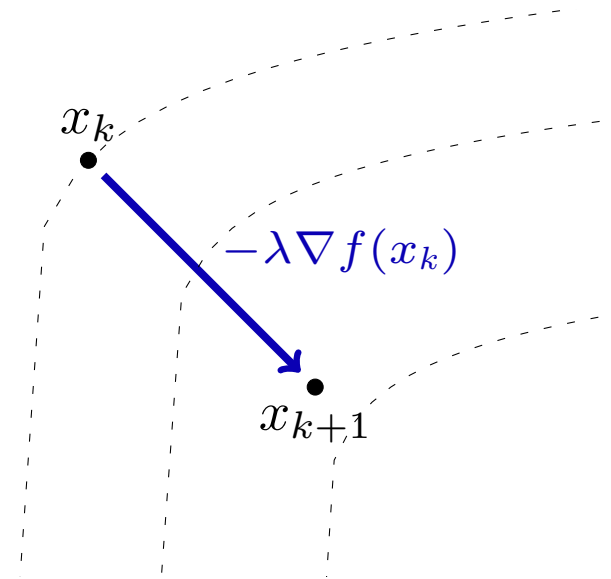
- **Bregman gradient methods and relative smoothness**
- Application to low-rank minimization
- Theoretical complexity: lower bound and computer-aided analyses
- Stochastic variants

# Gradient descent

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$$x_{k+1} = \Pi_{\mathcal{C}} [x_k - \lambda \nabla f(x_k)] \quad (\text{GD})$$

$\lambda$  is the step size,  $\Pi_{\mathcal{C}}$  denotes projection on  $\mathcal{C}$ .



# Smoothness

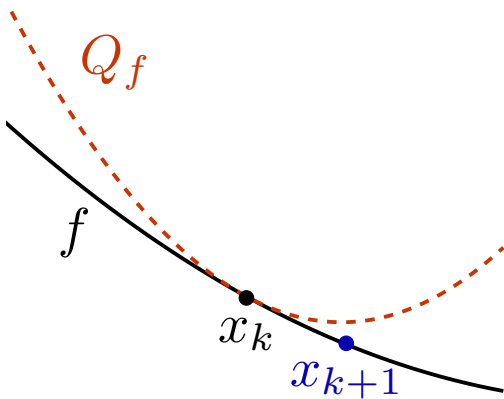
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$$x_{k+1} = \operatorname{argmin}_{u \in \mathcal{C}} f(x_k) + \langle \nabla f(x_k), u - x_k \rangle + \frac{1}{2\lambda} \|u - x_k\|^2 \quad (\text{GD})$$

GD iteratively minimizes a **quadratic approximation** of  $f$ : when is it accurate?

**Smoothness assumption:** if  $f$  has a  $L$ -Lipschitz continuous gradient, then for every  $\lambda \in (0, 1/L]$ ,

$$f(u) \leq f(x_k) + \langle \nabla f(x_k), u - x_k \rangle + \frac{1}{2\lambda} \|u - x_k\|^2.$$



The quadratic model is an upper approximation of  $f$ .

# Bregman gradient descent

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Are we limited to a quadratic model? A more general method is

$$x_{k+1} = \operatorname{argmin}_{u \in \mathcal{C}} f(x_k) + \langle \nabla f(x_k), u - x_k \rangle + \frac{1}{\lambda} D_h(u, x_k) \quad (\text{BGD})$$

where

$$D_h(x, y) = h(x) - h(y) - \langle \nabla h(y), x - y \rangle \geq 0$$

is the **Bregman divergence** induced by some strictly convex **kernel** function  $h$  adapted to  $\mathcal{C}$ .

**Examples:**

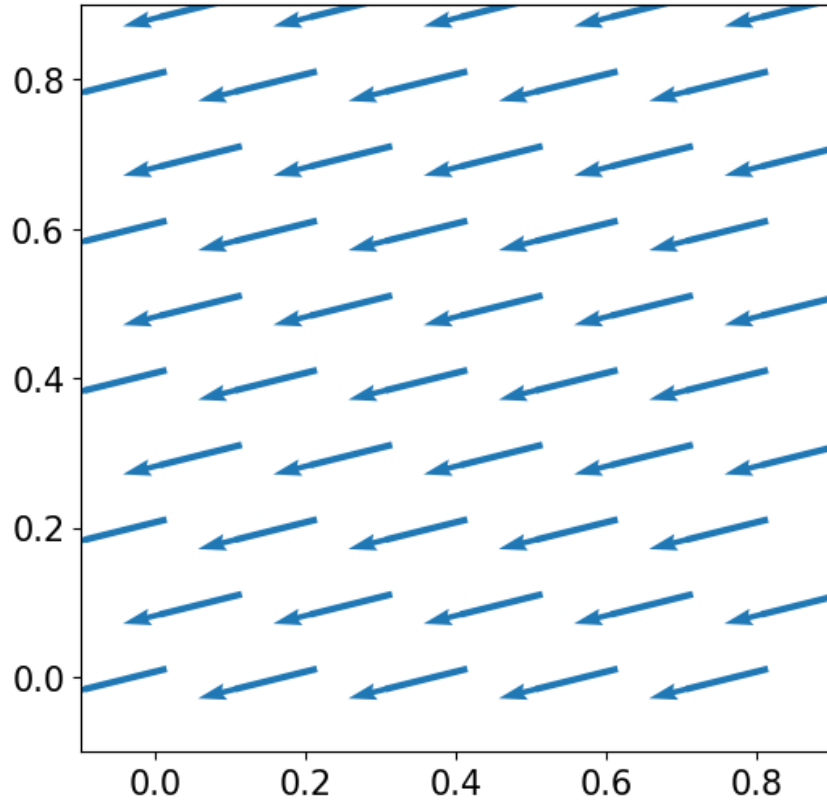
- **Euclidean:**  $h(x) = \frac{1}{2}\|x\|^2$ : then  $D_h(x, y) = \frac{1}{2}\|x - y\|^2$ ,
- **Entropy:**  $h(x) = \sum_{i=1}^d x^i \log(x^i) - x^i$ , then  $D_h = D_{\text{KL}}$  and (BGD) writes

$$x_{k+1} = x_k \cdot \exp[-\lambda \nabla f(x_k)],$$

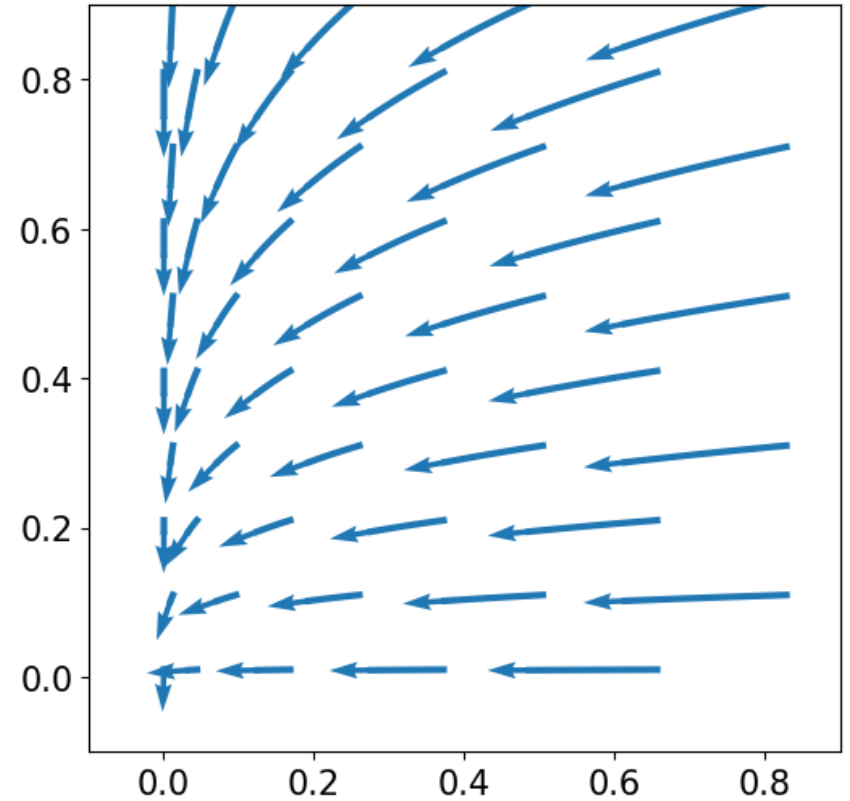
Also called Mirror descent / NoLips...

# Effect of Bregman divergence

Comparing the Bregman update with  $\nabla f(x_k) = (4, 1)$  from different starting points and kernel functions:



(a) Euclidean

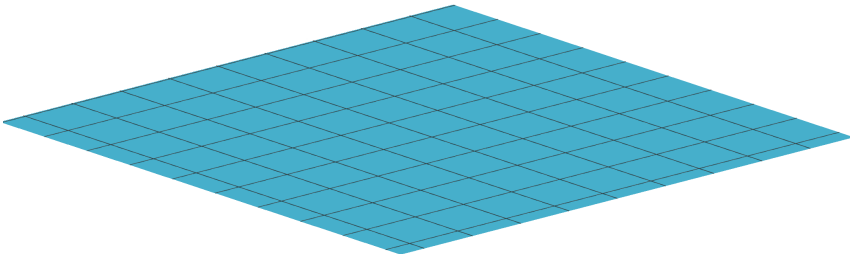


(b) Entropy

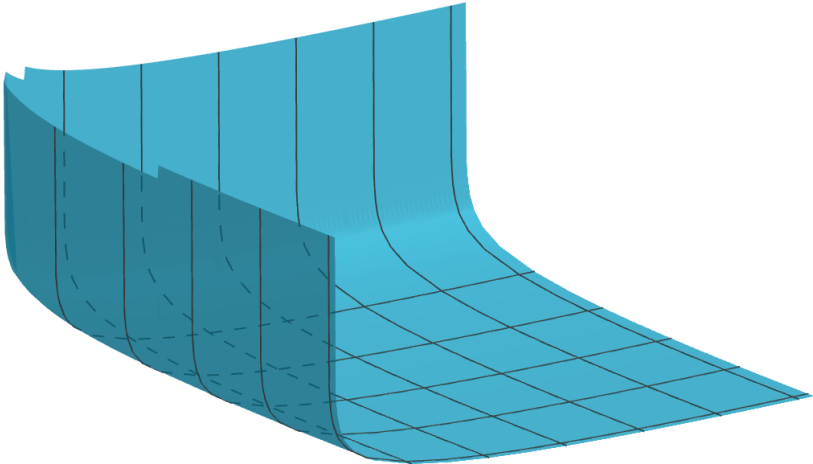


# Effect of Bregman divergence

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(c) Euclidean

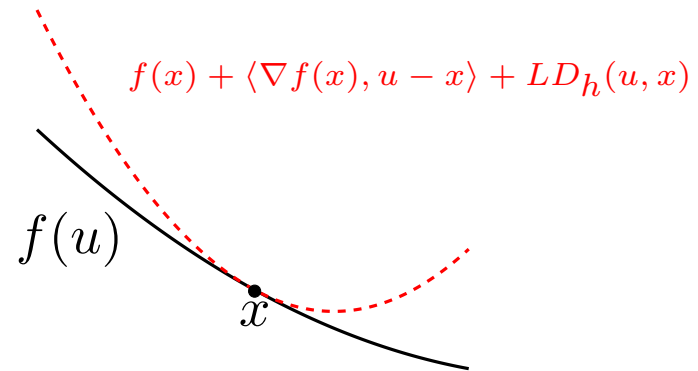


(d) Entropy

# Relative smoothness

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(Bauschke, Bolte, Teboulle, 2017)



$f$  is  **$L$ -smooth relative** to the kernel function  $h$  if

$$f(u) \leq f(x) + \langle \nabla f(x), u - x \rangle + LD_h(u, x).$$

For  $C^2$  functions, equivalent to

$$\nabla^2 f(x) \preceq L \nabla^2 h(x).$$

Similarly, **relative strong convexity** is defined as (Lu, Freund, Nesterov, 2018):

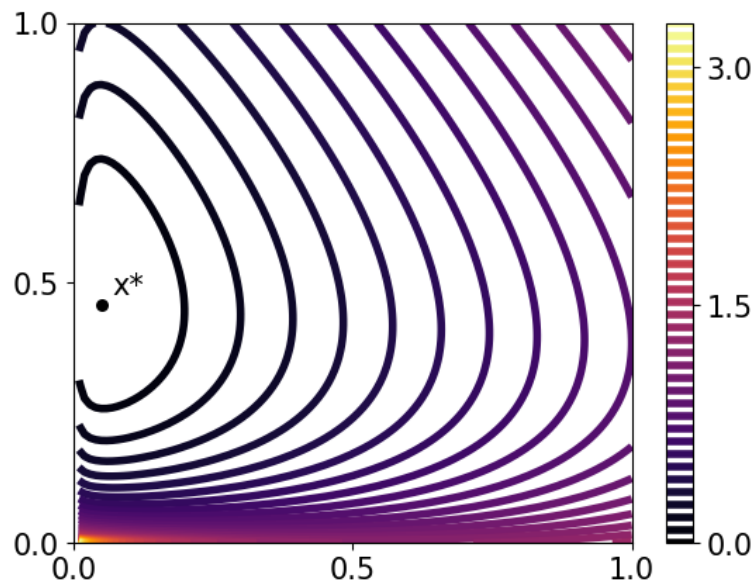
$$\mu \nabla^2 h(x) \preceq \nabla^2 f(x).$$

# Example of relatively-smooth function

**Linear inverse problems with Poisson noise** (Bauschke et al., 2017): let  $b \in \mathbb{R}^m$ ,  $A \in \mathbb{R}_+^{m \times d}$ ,

$$\min_{x \in \mathbb{R}_+^n} D_{KL}(b, Ax) = \sum_{j=1}^m b_j \log\left(\frac{b_j}{A_j x}\right) - A_j x + b_j$$

Applications in medical imaging, astronomy...



**Figure 1:** Example for  $d = 2$

Standard smoothness does not hold as the Hessian is singular when  $A_j x \rightarrow 0$ , but relative smoothness holds with

$$h(x) = \sum_{i=1}^d -\log(x^i).$$

# Convergence guarantees

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If  $f$  is  $L$ -smooth relative to  $h$ , then BGD with step size  $\lambda = 1/L$  satisfies:

- If  $f$  is **convex** (Bauschke, Bolte, Teboulle, 2017):

$$f(x_N) - f(x_*) \leq \frac{LD_h(x_*, x_0)}{N}$$

- If  $f$  is  $\mu$ -**strongly convex relative to**  $h$  (Lu, Freund, Nesterov 2018):

$$f(x_N) - f(x_*) \leq L \left(1 - \frac{\mu}{L}\right)^N D_h(x_*, x_0)$$

- If  $f$  is **non-convex** (Bolte et al., 2018):
  - the sequence  $\{f(x_k)\}$  is nonincreasing,
  - if  $\mathcal{C} = \mathbb{R}^d$  and  $f$  satisfies the *Kurdyka–Lojasiewicz property*: the sequence  $\{x_k\}$  converges to a critical point.

# How to choose the kernel in practice?

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$$x_{k+1} = \operatorname{argmin}_{u \in \mathcal{C}} f(x_k) + \langle \nabla f(x_k), u - x_k \rangle + \frac{1}{\lambda} D_h(u, x_k) \quad (\text{BGD})$$

We seek  $h$  such that

- the inner objective in (BGD) is a **good approximation** of  $f$ , the inequality

$$\nabla^2 f(x) \preceq L \nabla^2 h(x)$$

holds as tightly as possible;

- the inner minimization problem can be solved easily.

There is often a tradeoff between these two goals!

# Outline

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- Bregman gradient methods and relative smoothness
- **Application to low-rank minimization**
- Theoretical complexity: lower bound and computer-aided analyses
- Stochastic variants

# Non-convex low-rank minimization

$$\min_{X \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times r}} \underbrace{\mathcal{L}(XX^T)}_{\text{differentiable error function}} + \underbrace{g(X)}_{\text{nonsmooth penalty}}$$

$$\begin{bmatrix} X \\ X \\ X \\ X \end{bmatrix} \times \begin{bmatrix} X^T \\ X^T \\ X^T \\ X^T \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} XX^T \\ XX^T \\ XX^T \\ XX^T \end{bmatrix}$$

$r \in \mathbb{N}$  is the **target rank**,  $\mathcal{L}$  is a  $L_1$ -smooth error function (typically a quadratic),

- **Example:** symmetric nonnegative matrix factorization

$$\min_{X \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times r}} \|XX^T - M\|^2 \quad \text{subject to } X \geq 0.$$

- $f(X) = \mathcal{L}(XX^T)$  is **not globally smooth** (typically quartic)  $\rightarrow$  standard Euclidean methods might not be adapted.

## Objective

Design kernels  $h$  adapted to  $f$  by leveraging the **quartic** structure, and apply Bregman *proximal* gradient method

$$X_{k+1} = \operatorname{argmin}_{U \in \mathcal{C}} f(X_k) + \langle \nabla f(X_k), U - X_k \rangle + \frac{1}{\lambda} D_h(U, X_k) + g(U) \quad (\text{BPG})$$

# Two different kernels

## The “simple” norm kernel

$$h_n(X) = \frac{\alpha}{4}\|X\|^4 + \frac{\sigma}{2}\|X\|^2.$$

**Proposition (D., d’Aspremont, Bolte, 2021):**  $f$  is 1-smooth relative to  $h_n$  for  $\alpha, \sigma$  high enough.

- **Bregman update:** **easy** (computing  $\nabla F(X_k)$  + simple scalar equation).

## The “more refined” Gram kernel

$$h_G(X) = \frac{\alpha}{4}\|X\|^4 + \frac{\beta}{4}\|X^T X\|^2 + \frac{\sigma}{2}\|X\|^2.$$

**Proposition (D., d’Aspremont, Bolte, 2021):**  $f$  is 1-smooth relative to  $h_G$  for  $\alpha, \beta, \sigma$  high enough.

- **Better approximation** of  $f$  than  $h_n$  for **well-conditioned  $\mathcal{L}$** ;
- **Bregman update:** **harder**. Computable **only for unpenalized problems ( $g = 0$ )** and requires solving a subproblem of dimension  $r$  (the target rank).



# Experiments: Distance Matrix Completion

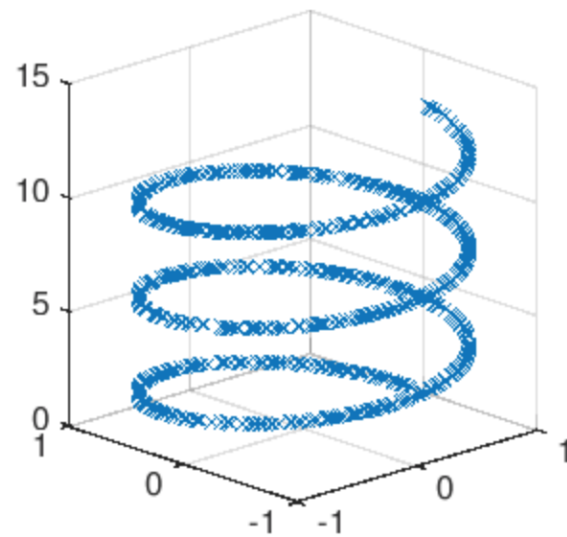
Recover the position of  $n$  points  $X_1^*, \dots, X_n^*$  in  $\mathbb{R}^r$  from an incomplete set of pairwise distances

$$\{d_{ij} = \|X_i^* - X_j^*\|^2 \mid (i, j) \in \Omega\}.$$

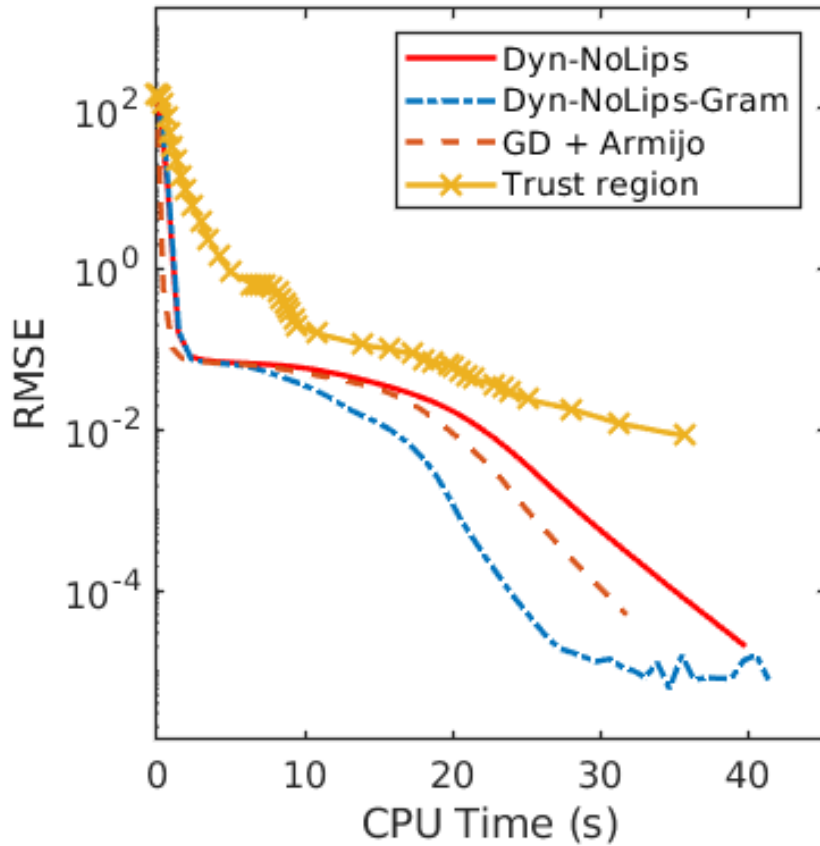
$$\min_{X \in \mathbb{R}^{n \times r}} f(X) = \sum_{(i,j) \in \Omega} (\|X_i - X_j\|^2 - d_{ij})^2 \quad (\text{EDMC})$$

**Unconstrained problem:** we compare the norm kernel  $h_n$  with the Gram kernel  $h_G$ .

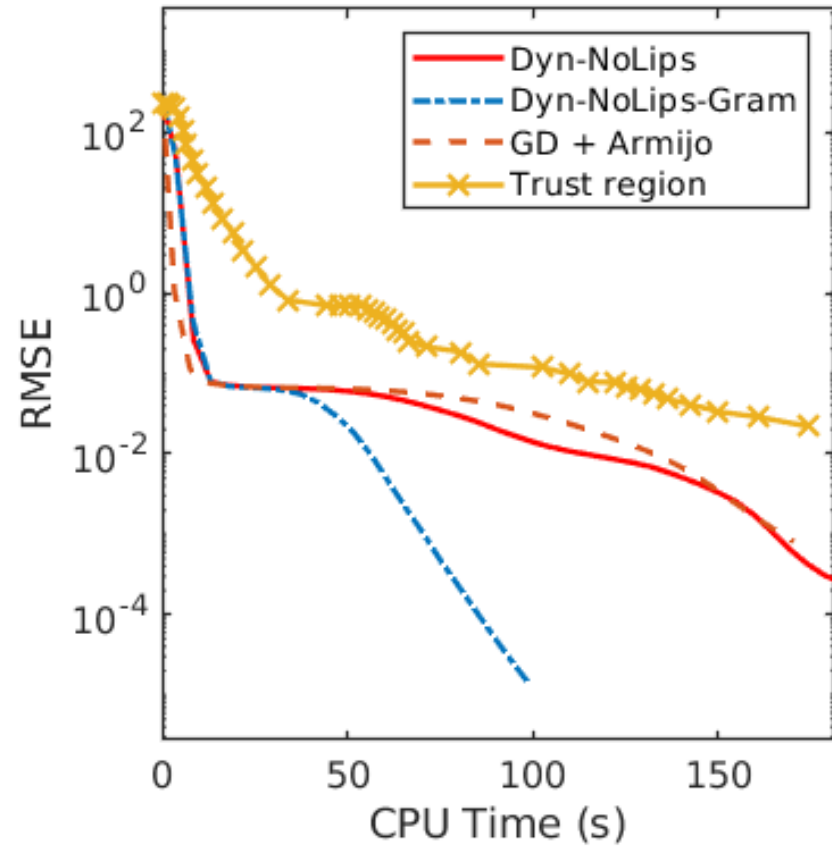
Experiments on synthetic Helix dataset with 10% known distances, dimension  $r = 3$ .



# Experiments: Distance Matrix Completion



(a)  $n = 2000$



(b)  $n = 5000$

**Figure 2:** Experiments on Helix dataset

# Outline

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- Bregman gradient methods and relative smoothness
- Application to low-rank minimization
- **Theoretical complexity: lower bound and computer-aided analyses**
- Stochastic variants

# The question of acceleration

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We recall the convergence rate of BGD for relatively smooth convex functions

$$f(x_N) - f(x_*) \leq \frac{LD_h(x_*, x_0)}{N}.$$

Is there an algorithm that does better ?

Algorithm	Supplementary assumptions	Convergence rate
Accelerated gradient descent (Nesterov, 1983)	$h(x) = \frac{1}{2}\ x\ ^2$	$O(1/N^2)$
Accelerated BGD (Auslender and Teboulle, 2006)	$h$ is $\mu$ -strongly convex and $f$ is $L$ -smooth	$O(1/N^2)$
Accelerated BGD (Hendrikx et al., 2020; Hanzely et al., 2021)	$h$ satisfies <i>triangle scaling inequality</i>	Improved <b>asymptotically</b>

These assumptions are quite restrictive... What about the general case?

# A lower bound for relatively-smooth convex minimization

In the general case, the  $\mathcal{O}(1/N)$  rate of BGD is **optimal**.

## Theorem (D., Taylor, d'Aspremont, Bolte, 2021)

For every  $N \geq 1$ , there exists functions  $f_N, h_N : \mathbb{R}^{2N+1} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  and  $x_0 \in \mathbb{R}^{2N+1}$  such that

- $f_N$  is  $L$ -smooth relative to  $h_N$ ,
- for **any Bregman first-order method**  $\mathcal{A}$  initialized at  $x_0$ , after  $N$  iterations we have

$$f_N(x_N) - f_N(x_*) \geq \frac{LD_{h_N}(x_*, x_0)}{4N + 1}.$$

- **Bregman first-order method:** uses  $\nabla f, \nabla h, \nabla h^*$  and linear operations.
- Additional assumptions are needed to achieve acceleration.
- Worst-case functions  $f_N, h_N$  are “nearly” nondifferentiable.

# Computer-aided analyses

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**Performance estimation:** computing the **worst-case** behavior of a first-order through optimization (Drori and Teboulle, 2014; Taylor et al., 2017).

Recall the convergence rate of BGD for  $f$  **convex** and  $L$ -**smooth relative to**  $h$ :

$$f(x_N) - f(x_*) \leq \frac{LD_h(x_*, x_0)}{N}$$

Is this the best possible bound for **generic**  $f$  and  $h$  ? What are the corresponding worst-case functions ?

## Performance Estimation Problem

maximize

subject to  $h$  is a kernel (differentiable and strictly convex),

$f$  is convex and  $L$ -smooth relative to  $h$ ,

$x_1, \dots, x_N$  are generated from  $x_0$  by BGD with step size  $1/L$ ,

in the variables  $x_0, \dots, x_N, x_*, f, h$ .

# How to solve the PEP?

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- Reduction to a finite-dimensional problem by replacing  $f, h$  with their discrete representations at  $x_0, \dots, x_N$  (Drori and Teboulle, 2014):

$$(f_i, g_i) = (f(x_i), \nabla f(x_i)),$$

$$(h_i, s_i) = (h(x_i), \nabla h(x_i)).$$

- Equivalence with original problem is guaranteed by **interpolation conditions** (Taylor et al., 2017), which we extend to the relatively smooth setting.

$$x_i \neq x_j \implies h_i - h_j - \langle s_j, x_i - x_j \rangle > 0, \quad (\text{strict convexity of } h)$$

$$s_i \neq s_j \implies x_i \neq x_j, \quad (\text{differentiability of } h)$$

⋮

- The PEP is then equivalent to a finite-dimensional problem in  $\{(x_i, f_i, g_i, h_i, s_i)\}$ , with quadratic constraints: can be solved via **semidefinite programming**.

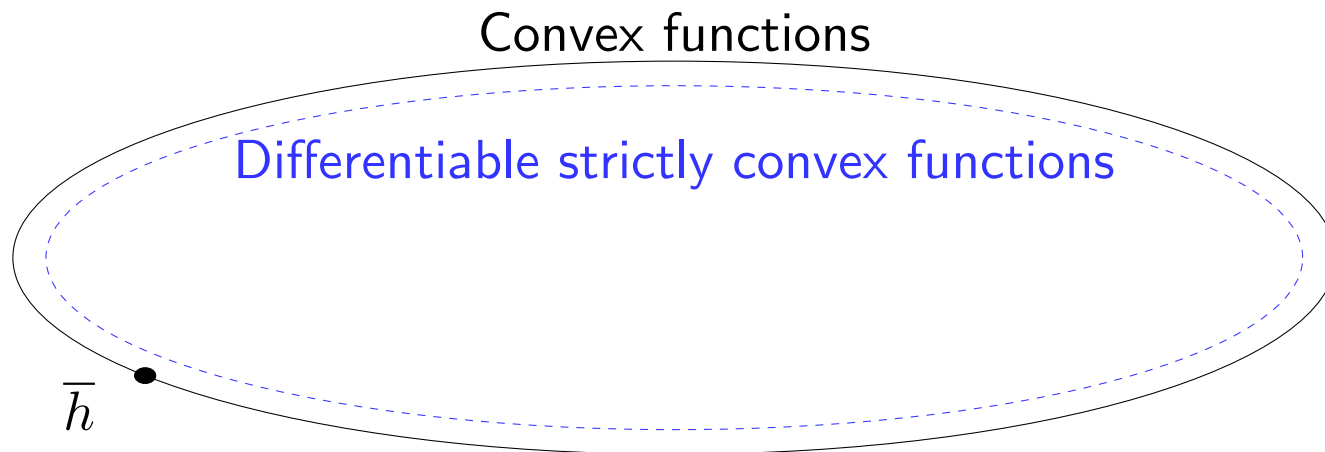
# Results and insights

- The numerical value of the PEP is **exactly**  $L/N$ : the bound

$$f(x_N) - f(x_*) \leq \frac{LD_h(x_*, x_0)}{N}$$

is tight in the worst case for BGD.

- **Limiting nonsmooth behavior:** the feasible set is not closed; the supremum is reached as  $(f, h)$  approach some nonsmooth limiting functions  $(\bar{f}, \bar{h})$ .



- With some modifications, discovered worst-case functions which are hard for **any Bregman method** → general lower bound



# The case of entropy

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Joint work with D. Ostrovskii

The case of **generic**  $h$  is too hard: let us now focus on a particular kernel, the entropy

$$h_e(x) = \sum_{i=1}^d x^i \log x^i - x^i$$

## Performance Estimation Problem - entropic case

maximize  $(f(x_N) - f(x_*)) / D_{h_e}(x_*, x_0)$

subject to  $f$  is convex and  $L$ -smooth relative to  $h_e$  (*entropic-smooth*),  
 $x_1, \dots, x_N$  are generated from  $x_0$  by BGD with step size  $1/L$ ,

in the variables  $x_0, \dots, x_N, x_*, f$ .

Not solvable yet (convex program on *cone of pairwise Kullback-Leibler matrices*)

# Outline

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- Bregman gradient methods and relative smoothness
- Application to low-rank minimization
- Theoretical complexity: lower bound and computer-aided analyses
- **Stochastic variants**

# Bregman stochastic gradient descent

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Joint work with Hadrien Hendrikx and Mathieu Even

$$\min_{x \in \mathcal{C}} f(x) := \mathbb{E}_{\xi} [f_{\xi}(x)] \quad (\text{P})$$

where functions  $f_{\xi}$  are  $L$ -smooth and  $\mu$ -strongly convex relative to  $h$ .

## Bregman SGD

$$x_{k+1} = \operatorname{argmin}_{u \in \mathcal{C}} \langle g_k, u - x_k \rangle + \frac{1}{\lambda} D_h(u, x_k),$$
$$g_k = \nabla f_{\xi_k}(x_k) \text{ for } \xi_k \text{ such that } \mathbb{E}[g_k] = \nabla f(x_k).$$

**Convergence rate:** with  $\lambda = 1/(2L)$ ,

$$\mathbb{E}[D_h(x^*, x_k)] \leq \underbrace{\left(1 - \frac{\mu}{2L}\right)^k}_{\text{linear convergence}} D_h(x^*, x_0) + \underbrace{\lambda \frac{\sigma^2}{\mu}}_{\text{noise}}.$$

**Noise assumption:**  $\sigma^2$  is the variance of  $\nabla f_{\xi}(x^*)$  “with respect to Bregman divergence”.

# Variance reduction

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We now assume that the problem is a finite sum:

$$\min_{x \in \mathcal{C}} f(x) := \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n f_i(x),$$

where  $f_i$  are  $L$ -smooth and  $\mu$ -strongly convex relative to  $h$ .

**Variance reduction methods** leverage the finite sum assumption to obtain *fast* convergence rates (Schmidt et al., 2013; Johnson and Zhang, 2013; Defazio et al., 2014).

## Bregman-SAGA

$$x_{k+1} = \operatorname{argmin}_{u \in \mathcal{C}} \langle \tilde{g}_k, u - x_k \rangle + \frac{1}{\lambda} D_h(u, x_k)$$

$$\tilde{g}_k = \nabla f_{i_k}(x_k) - \underbrace{\sum_{i=1}^n \beta_i \nabla f_i(\phi_i)}$$

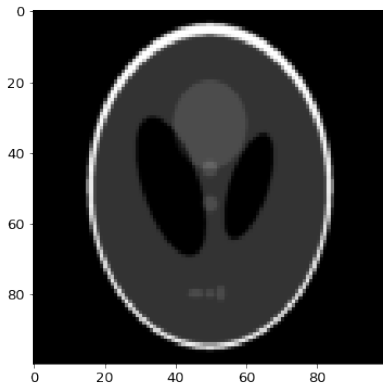
contains previously computed gradients

Same situation as for acceleration: **asymptotical** convergence result under **additional regularity of  $h$** .

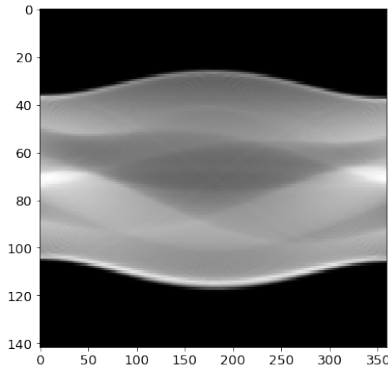
# Experiments: tomographic reconstruction problem

Inverse problem with Poisson noise

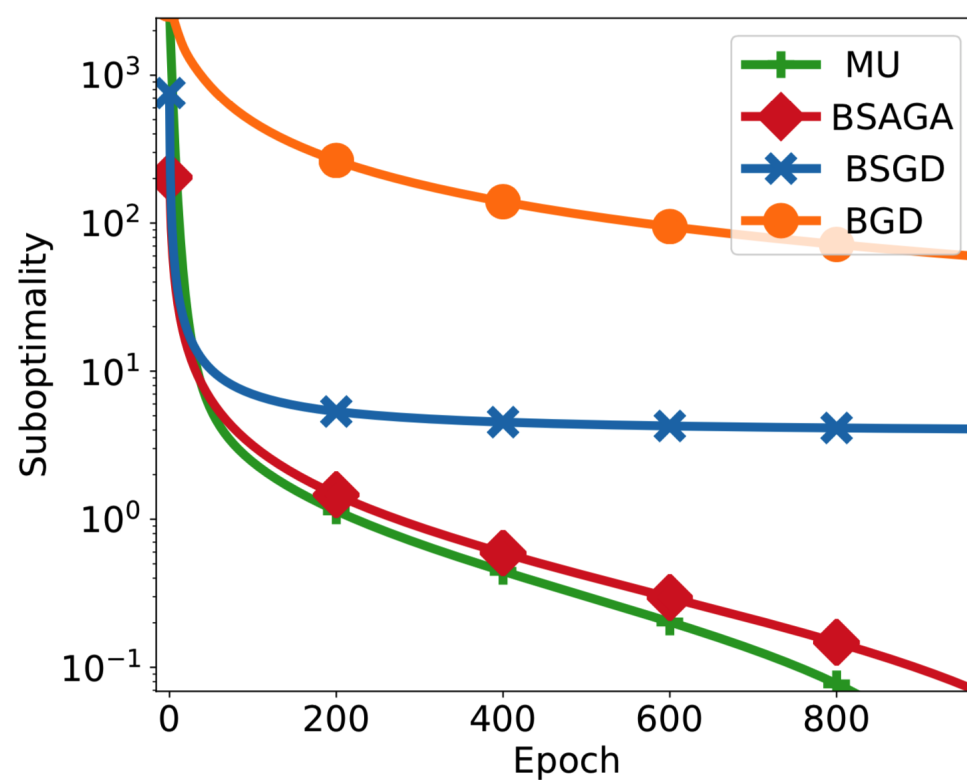
$$f(x) = D_{KL}(b, Ax), \quad h(x) = \sum_{i=1}^d -\log x^i.$$



Original signal  $x^*$



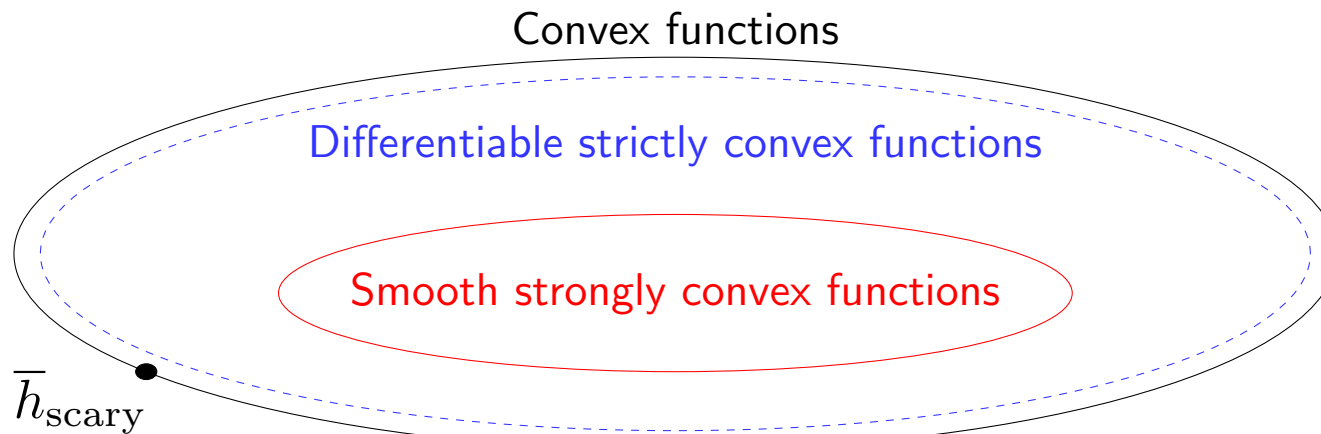
Sinogram  $Ax^*$



# Perspectives

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- **Relatively-smooth optimization:** emerging subject, with many applications left to be explored;



- **Algorithmic extensions** (acceleration, variance reduction...): find the right regularity properties;
- **Adaptivity** to improve practical performance.

**Thank you!**



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# Supplementary material



# How to solve the PEP?

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## Performance Estimation Problem

maximize  $(f_N - f_*) / (h_* - h_0 - \langle s_0, x_* - x_0 \rangle)$

subject to  $h$  is a kernel (differentiable and strictly convex),

$f$  is convex and  $L$ -smooth relative to  $h$ ,

$f(x_i) = f_i, h(x_i) = h_i, \nabla f(x_i) = g_i, \nabla h(x_i) = s_i \quad \forall i \in I,$

$x_1, \dots, x_N$  are generated from  $x_0$  by BGD with step size  $1/L$ ,

in the variables  $\{x_i, f_i, h_i, g_i, s_i\}_{i \in I}, f, h$ .

- Reduction to a finite-dimensional problem (Drori and Teboulle, 2014);

# How to solve the PEP?

---

## Performance Estimation Problem

maximize  $(f_N - f_*) / (h_* - h_0 - \langle s_0, x_* - x_0 \rangle)$

subject to there exist  $f, h$  such that  $h$  is a kernel,

$f$  is convex and  $L$ -smooth relative to  $h$ ,

$f(x_i) = f_i, h(x_i) = h_i, \nabla f(x_i) = g_i, \nabla h(x_i) = s_i \quad \forall i \in I,$

$x_1, \dots, x_N$  are generated from  $x_0$  by BGD with step size  $1/L$ ,

in the variables  $\{x_i, f_i, h_i, g_i, s_i\}_{i \in I}$ .

- Reduction to a finite-dimensional problem (Drori and Teboulle, 2014);
- Equivalence with original problem is guaranteed by **interpolation conditions**;

# How to solve the entropic PEP ?

- Reduction to a finite-dimensional problem by replacing  $f$  with its discrete representation

$$\{(f_i, g_i)\}_{1 \leq i \leq N} = \{(f(x_i), \nabla f(x_i))\}_{1 \leq i \leq N}.$$

- Equivalence with original problem is guaranteed by **interpolation conditions**, which we extend to the entropic-smooth setting:

$$f_i - f_j - \langle g_j, x_i - x_j \rangle \geq LD_{\text{KL}} \left[ x_i, x_i \circ \exp \left( \frac{g_j - g_i}{L} \right) \right] \quad \forall i, j.$$

- The PEP is then equivalent to a finite-dimensional problem on a convex cone, the **Kullback-Leibler cone** with **log-linear constraints**:

$$\mathcal{K}_m(A) = \left\{ \left[ D_{\text{KL}}(x_i, x_j) \right]_{1 \leq i, j \leq m} \left| \begin{array}{l} d \in \mathbb{N} \text{ and } x_1, \dots, x_m \in \mathbb{R}^d \\ \text{such that } \sum_{j=1}^m A_{ij} \log(x_j) = 0, \\ i = 1 \dots q \end{array} \right. \right\}.$$

... no known solver yet

# Bregman SGD - theoretical guarantees

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Assume

■ **Sampling:**  $g_k = \nabla f_{\xi_k}(x_k)$  for some  $\xi_k$  and  $\mathbb{E}_{\xi_k} [g_k] = \nabla f(x_k)$ ,

■ **Variance:**

$$\mathbb{E}_{\xi_k} [P_{x_k} (\nabla f_{\xi_k}(x^*))] \leq \sigma^2$$

where  $P_x(v)$  is the Bregman counterpart of  $\|v\|^2$ :

$$P_x(v) = \frac{1}{4\lambda^2} D_{h^*} [\nabla h(x) - 2\lambda v, \nabla h(x)]$$

■ **Regularity:** functions  $f_\xi$  are  $L$ -smooth and  $\mu$ -strongly convex relative to  $h$ .

## Theorem (D., Hendriks, Even, 2021)

The iterates of Bregman SGD with step size  $\lambda = 1/(2L)$  satisfy

$$\mathbb{E} [D_h(x^*, x_k)] \leq \underbrace{\left(1 - \frac{\mu}{2L}\right)^k}_{\text{linear convergence}} D_h(x^*, x_0) + \underbrace{\lambda \frac{\sigma^2}{\mu}}_{\text{noise}}.$$

# Bregman-SAGA, theoretical guarantees

## Assumption: gain function

There exists a gain function  $G$  such that for any  $x, y, v \in \mathbb{R}^d$  and  $\lambda \in [-1, 1]$ ,

$$D_{h^*}(x + \lambda v, x) \leq G(x, y, v) \lambda^2 D_{h^*}(y + v, y).$$

$G$  determines the step size and convergence rate.

- **$h$  is quadratic:** then  $G = 1$ , Bregman-SAGA rate is

$$\mathcal{O} \left( 1 - \min \left( \frac{\mu}{8L}, \frac{1}{2n} \right) \right)^k.$$

- **$h^*$  has Lipschitz Hessian** (and extra local smoothness): with the right choice of step size, Bregman-SAGA rate is

$$\mathcal{O} \left( 1 - \min \left( \frac{\mu}{8G_k L}, \frac{1}{2n} \right) \right)^k \quad \text{with } G_k \rightarrow 1 \text{ as } k \rightarrow \infty.$$

Asymptotical rate under additional regularity: same situation as for accelerated BGD (Hendrikx et al., 2020; Hanzely et al., 2021)