

# On exceptional sets at the boundary for subharmonic functions

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## 1. Introduction

In this paper we shall discuss the following problem. Suppose  $u$  is subharmonic in a domain  $D \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ ,  $n \geq 3$ . Let  $E \subset \partial D$  be a closed set and suppose that  $\limsup_{P \rightarrow Q} u(P) \leq 0$  for all  $Q \in \partial D - E$ . In what way must the growth of  $u$  near  $\partial D$  be related to the size of  $E$  in order that it should follow that  $u \leq 0$ ? In the case when  $E$  consists of a single point this is answered by the Phragmén—Lindelöf theorems (for a treatment of these, see [6]). In the case when  $u$  is bounded from above it follows from [4] that if  $D$  is a Lipschitz domain and  $E$  is of vanishing  $(n-1)$ -dimensional Hausdorff measure then  $u \leq 0$ . The case when  $n=2$  can by the conformal mapping technique be reduced to a study of the situation in the unit disc, for which more can be said, see [5]. Therefore we assume from now on that  $n \geq 3$ .

We recall that a bounded domain  $D \subset \mathbb{R}^n$  is called a Lipschitz domain if to each point  $Q \in \partial D$  there is a coordinate system  $(\xi, \eta)$ ,  $\xi \in \mathbb{R}^{n-1}$ ,  $\eta \in \mathbb{R}$ , a Lipschitz function  $\varphi$  in  $\mathbb{R}^{n-1}$  (i.e.  $\sup_{x \neq y} |x-y|^{-1} |\varphi(x) - \varphi(y)| < \infty$ ) and a neighbourhood  $V$  of  $Q$  such that  $D \cap V = \{(\xi, \eta) : \varphi(\xi) < \eta\} \cap V$ . If  $E \subset \mathbb{R}^n$  we denote by  $\omega(\cdot, E)$  the harmonic measure of the set  $E \cap \partial D$  with respect to  $D$ . For the properties of  $\omega$  see [8, Chapter 8]. If  $Q \in D$  we put

$$A(Q) = \sup \{ \omega(Q, B(P, \varrho)) : P \in \mathbb{R}^n \}.$$

(Sometimes we will write  $A(Q, Q, D)$ ). Notice that if  $K \subset D$  is a compact set then it follows from Harnack's inequality that there is a number  $C_K < \infty$  such that  $\sup \{ A(Q, Q_1) / A(Q, Q_2) : Q_1, Q_2 \in K \} \leq C_K$  for all  $Q > 0$ . In § 4 we give estimates of  $A$ . Let  $d(P)$  denote the distance from  $P$  to  $\partial D$ . If  $u$  is a function in  $D$  we define

$$M(Q) = \sup \{ u^+(P) : d(P) > Q \},$$

where  $u^+ = \max(u, 0)$ .

**Theorem.** *Let  $D$  be a Lipschitz domain in  $R^n$ ,  $n \geq 3$ , and let  $F \subset \partial D$  be a closed set of vanishing  $\alpha$ -dimensional Hausdorff measure, where  $0 < \alpha < n - 1$ . Let  $u$  be subharmonic in  $D$  and suppose  $\limsup_{P \rightarrow Q} u(P) \leq 0$  for all  $Q \in \partial D - F$ . If*

$$(1.1) \quad A(\varrho)M(\varrho) = O(\varrho^\alpha) \quad \text{as } \varrho \rightarrow 0$$

then  $u \leq 0$ .

We remark that for sufficiently regular domains (see § 4) we have the estimate  $c_1 \varrho^{n-1} \leq A(\varrho) \leq c_2 \varrho^{n-1}$  where  $c_1 > 0$ . Hence in this case condition (1.1) equivalent to the condition  $M(\varrho) = O(\varrho^{\alpha+1-n})$  as  $\varrho \rightarrow 0$ .

In this case the theorem is sharp as the following proposition shows.

**Proposition.** *Let  $B$  be the unit ball in  $R^n$ ,  $n \geq 2$ . If  $0 < \alpha < n - 1$  and  $E \subset \partial B$  is a closed set of positive  $\alpha$ -dimensional Hausdorff measure then there is a harmonic function  $u$  in  $B$  such that  $u(0) = 1$ ,  $\lim_{P \rightarrow Q} u(P) = 0$  for all  $Q \in \partial B - E$  and*

$$M(\varrho) = O(\varrho^{\alpha+1-n}).$$

### 2. Technical preliminaries

We start with the following observation. There is a number  $C = C(n)$  such that each ball in  $R^n$  of radius  $2\varrho$  can be covered by  $C(n)$  balls of radius  $\varrho$ . From the definition of  $A$  it follows that

$$(2.1) \quad A(2\varrho, Q) \leq CA(\varrho, Q) \quad \text{for all } Q \in D.$$

We will need the following elementary estimate for harmonic measure.

**Lemma 1.** *Let  $D$  be a Lipschitz domain in  $R^n$ ,  $n \geq 3$ . Then there is a number  $C = C(D) > 0$  such that if  $P \in \partial D$ ,  $\varrho > 0$  and  $Q \in B(P, \varrho) \cap D$  we have  $\omega(Q, B(P, 2\varrho)) \geq C$ .*

*Proof.* Since  $D$  is a Lipschitz domain there are numbers  $R$  and  $\alpha$ ,  $R > 0$ ,  $0 < \alpha < \pi/2$  such that to each point  $P \in \partial D$  there exists a cone  $K_P$  with vertex at  $P$ , congruent to  $K = \{x = (x_1, \dots, x_n) \in R^n : x_1 \geq (\cos \alpha) |x|\}$  with the property that  $K_P \cap \overline{B(P, R)} \subset R^n - D$ . For  $0 < \varrho < \frac{1}{2}R$ , let  $D(P, \varrho) = B(P, 2\varrho) - K_P$ . If  $\omega'$  denotes the harmonic measure of  $\partial D(P, \varrho) \cap B(P, 2\varrho)$  with respect to  $D(P, \varrho)$  then the maximum principle implies that  $\omega'(Q) \leq \omega(Q, B(P, 2\varrho))$  for all  $Q \in B(P, \varrho) \cap D$ . A change of scale shows that  $\inf \{\omega'(Q) : Q \in B(P, \varrho) \cap D(P, \varrho)\}$  is independent of  $P$  and  $\varrho$  and hence the lemma follows.

We shall need an estimate for the Green function of  $D$ .

**Lemma 2.** *Let  $D$  be as in Lemma 1 and let  $G$  be the Green function of  $D$ . If  $P' \in D$  there is a number  $C=C(P', D)$  such that if  $0 < \varrho < \frac{1}{3} d(P')$  then*

$$\varrho^{n-2} \sup \{G(P, P') : d(P) \leq \varrho\} \leq C\Lambda(\varrho, P').$$

*Proof.* Put  $B'(P) = B\left(P, \frac{1}{2} d(P)\right)$  for  $P \in D$ . Since  $G(P, Q) \leq |P-Q|^{2-n}$  it follows that  $d(P)^{n-2} \sup \{G(P, Q) : Q \in \partial B'(P)\} \leq 2^{n-2}$ . Pick a point  $P^* \in \partial D$  such that  $d(P) = |P-P^*|$ . Since  $B(P^*, 2d(P)) \supset B'(P)$ , there is by Lemma 1 a number  $C_1 = C_1(D) > 0$  such that  $\omega(Q, B(P^*, 4d(P))) \leq C_1$  for  $Q \in \overline{B'(P)}$ . The maximum principle now implies  $C_1 d(P)^{n-2} G(P, Q) \leq 2^{n-2} \omega(Q, B(P^*, 4d(P)))$  for all  $Q \in D - \overline{B'(P)}$  and the lemma follows.

We will need estimates for the harmonic measure of certain sets, which we shall now describe. For  $m > 0$  let  $L(m)$  be the set of all functions  $\varphi: R^{n-1} \rightarrow R$  such that  $\varphi(0) = 0$  and  $|\varphi(x) - \varphi(y)| \leq m|x-y|$ . For  $a > 0, r > 0$  let  $\Sigma = \Sigma(\varphi, r, a) = \{(x, y) : \varphi(x) < y < \varphi(x) + a(|x|-r), r < |x| < 2r\}$ . Let  $\Gamma = \Gamma(\varphi, r, a) = \partial\Sigma \cap \{(x, y) : |x| = 2r\}$ .

**Lemma 3.** *If  $m > 0$  and  $a > 0$  are given, then there are numbers  $C=C(a, m)$  and  $\lambda = \lambda(a)$  with the following properties. If  $\varphi \in L(m), r > 0$  and  $r < \varrho < 2r$  then*

$$\sup \{\omega(P) : P = (x, y) \in \Sigma(\varphi, r, a) \text{ and } |x| = \varrho\} \leq C(\varrho r^{-1} - 1)^\lambda,$$

where  $\omega$  is the harmonic measure of  $\Gamma(\varphi, r, a)$  with respect to  $\Sigma(\varphi, r, a)$ . In addition  $\lim_{a \rightarrow 0} \lambda(a) = \infty$ .

*Proof.* Since the assertion is invariant under changes of scale, it is sufficient to prove it for the case  $r=1$ . We extend  $\omega$  to all of  $R^n$  by putting  $\omega=0$  outside  $\Sigma$ . Let  $S$  be the unit sphere in  $R^{n-2}$ . We now define

$$m(s) = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_S \omega^2(s\theta, y) d\theta dy.$$

We claim there is a function  $\lambda': (0, \infty) \rightarrow (0, \infty)$  such that

$$(2.2) \quad m(s) \leq A(s-1)^{\lambda'(a)}, \quad 1 < s < 2,$$

where  $A$  is the area of  $\Gamma$ . We will show (2.2) by using the Carleman method, see [6]. We first make the assumption that  $\varphi$  is  $C^\infty$  in  $\{x: |x| < 3\}$ . From [1] follows that  $\omega|_\Sigma$  has a smooth extension across  $\partial\Sigma - \bar{\Gamma}$ . Hence we can differentiate  $m$  and we find by the Green formula:

$$\begin{aligned} m'(s) &= 2 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_S [(\partial/\partial s)\omega(s\theta, y)] \omega(s\theta, y) d\theta dy = \\ &= 2 \int_1^2 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_S |\nabla \omega(t\theta, y)|^2 d\theta dy dt. \end{aligned}$$

Here  $\nabla\omega$  denotes the gradient of  $\omega$ . Therefore

$$\begin{aligned} m''(s) &= 2 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_S |\nabla\omega(s\theta, y)|^2 d\theta dy \\ &\cong 2 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_S [(\partial/\partial y)\omega(s\theta, y)]^2 d\theta dy + \\ &+ 2 \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \int_S [(\partial/\partial s)\omega(s\theta, y)]^2 d\theta dy = B_1(s) + B_2(s). \end{aligned}$$

From Hölder's inequality we obtain  $(m'(s))^2 \cong 2m(s)B_2(s)$ . Since the function  $y \rightarrow \omega(s\theta, y)$ ,  $1 < s < 2$ ,  $\theta \in S$ , equals zero outside an interval of length  $a(s-1)$ , it follows from Wirtinger's inequality [7, Chapter 7] that  $B_2(s) \cong 2\pi^2(s-1)^{-2}a^{-2}m(s)$ . Using these estimates we find  $2m''(s)/m(s) \cong 4\pi^2a^{-2}(s-1)^{-2} + (m'(s)/m(s))^2$ , which implies

$$m''(s) \cong 2\pi a^{-1}(s-1)^{-1}m'(s), \quad 1 < s < 2.$$

We notice  $\lim_{s \rightarrow 1} m(s) = 0$  and  $\lim_{s \rightarrow 2} m(s) = A$ . Hence  $m(s) \cong A(s-1)^{\lambda'(a)}$ , where  $\lambda'(a) = 1 + 2\pi a^{-1}$  and inequality (2.2) is proved for the case when  $\varphi$  is  $C^\infty$  in  $\{|x| < 3\}$ .

If  $\varphi \in L(m)$  and not assumed  $C^\infty$  we can pick functions  $\varphi_i \in C^\infty(R^{n-1})$  such that  $\sup \{|\nabla\varphi_i(x)| : x \in R^{n-1}, i = 1, 2, \dots\} < \infty$ ,  $\varphi_i(0) = 0$ , and  $\varphi_i$  converges to  $\varphi$  uniformly on compact sets. If  $A_i$  is the area of  $\Gamma(\varphi_i, 1, a)$  and  $\omega_i$  denotes the harmonic measure of  $\Gamma(\varphi_i, 1, a)$  with respect to  $\Sigma(\varphi_i, 1, a)$  then  $A_i \rightarrow A$  and  $\omega_i(P) \rightarrow \omega(P)$  for each  $P \in \Sigma(\varphi, 1, a)$ . Hence (2.2) follows.

Let  $M(s) = \max \{\omega(x, y) : (x, y) \in \Sigma \text{ and } |x| = s\}$  where  $1 < s < 2$ . We notice that we find a number  $c'$ ,  $0 < c' < 1/2$ , only depending on  $m$  and such that if  $\xi \in R^{n-1}$  and  $1 < |\xi| < 3/2$  then  $B'_\xi \subset \Sigma(\varphi, 1, a)$ , where  $B'_\xi$  is the ball with center in  $P_\xi = (\xi, 1/2a(|\xi| - 1))$  and radius  $c'(|\xi| - 1)$ . We next choose a number  $c$ ,  $0 < c < c'$  such that  $D_\xi = \{(x, y) : |x - \xi| < c(|\xi| - 1), \varphi(x) < y < \varphi(x) + a(|x| - 1)\}$  is star-shaped with respect to  $P_\xi$ . This number can be taken to depend only on  $a$  and  $m$ . Hence it follows from [9, Lemma 2] that there is a number  $C$ , only depending on  $a$  and  $m$  such that if  $u$  is a non-negative harmonic function in  $D_\xi$ , with vanishing boundary values on  $\partial D_\xi \cap \{(x, y) : |x - \xi| < c(|\xi| - 1)\}$  then  $\sup \{u(\xi, t) : \varphi(\xi) < t < \varphi(\xi) + a(|\xi| - 1)\} \cong Cu(P_\xi)$ .

Letting  $1 < s < 3/2$ , let us now choose  $\xi \in R^{n-1}$ ,  $|\xi| = s$ , such that  $M(s) = \omega(\xi, \eta)$  for some  $\eta$ ,  $\varphi(\xi) < \eta < \varphi(\xi) + a(s-1)$ . From the reasoning above it follows that  $m(s) \cong C\omega(P_\xi)$ , where  $C$  can be taken to depend only on  $a$  and  $m$ . Let  $B_\xi$  be the ball with center  $P_\xi$  and radius  $c(|\xi| - 1)$ . Then  $B_\xi \subset D_\xi \subset \Sigma$ .

Since  $\omega^2$  is subharmonic in  $\Sigma$ , it follows there is a constant  $C = C(a, m)$  such

that

$$M^2(s) \cong C(s-1)^{-n} \int_{B_{\xi}} \omega^2(P) dP$$

$$\cong C(s-1)^{-1} \int_{|t-s| \leq c(s-1)} t^{n-2} m(t) dt \cong C(s-1)^{-n+\lambda'(a)+1}$$

and the lemma is proved.

### 3. The main result

We can now prove our main result.

*Proof of the theorem.* Let  $u$  and  $D$  be as in the theorem. We start with the following observation. Since  $D$  is a Lipschitz domain we can find a finite number of open sets  $V_1, \dots, V_N$  such that  $\partial D \subset \cup V_i$  and to each  $i$  there is an coordinate system  $(\xi, \eta)$   $\xi \in R^{n-1}$ ,  $\eta \in R$ , a Lipschitz function  $\varphi_i$  in  $R^{n-1}$  such that  $D \cap V'_i = \{(\xi, \eta) : \varphi_i(\xi) < \eta\} \cap V'_i$  where  $V'_i$  is an open set such that  $V'_i \supset \bar{V}_i$ . For  $Q \in \partial D$  we let  $I(Q)$  denote the largest index  $j$  for which  $Q \in V_j$ . If  $I(Q) = i$  we define for  $a > 0, r > 0$  the open set  $N(Q, r, a)$  in the following way. Let  $Q = (\xi_0, \varphi_i(\xi_0))$ . We now put  $M(Q, r, a) = \{(\xi, \eta) : |\xi - \xi_0| \leq 2r, \varphi_i(\xi) + a(|\xi - \xi_0| - r)^+ < \eta < \varphi(\xi) + ar\}$ . Under our assumptions there is a number  $r_0$  such that  $M(Q, r, a) \subset D$  for all  $r, 0 < r < r_0 = r_0(a, D)$ . For  $0 < r < r_0$  we define  $N(Q, r, a) = D - \overline{M(Q, r, a)}$ . For an integer  $m \geq 2$  we also define  $E(m) = E(m, Q, r, a)$  as the set  $\{(\xi, \eta) : 2^{-m-1}r \leq |\xi - \xi_0| - r < 2^{-m}r, \varphi(\xi) + a(|\xi - \xi_0| - r)\}$ . Finally, let  $\omega_m$  denote the harmonic measure of  $E(m)$  with respect to  $N(Q, r, a)$ . We claim that if  $P_0 \in D$  then there are numbers  $C = C(a, D, P_0)$ ,  $r_1 = r_1(a, D, P_0)$  and a function  $\sigma : R^+ \rightarrow R^+$  such that

$$(3.1) \quad \omega_m(P_0) \cong C 2^{-m\sigma(a)} \Lambda(r, P_0) \quad \text{for } 0 < r < r_1, \text{ and } \lim_{a \rightarrow 0} \sigma(a) = \infty.$$

To prove (3.1) we note there is no loss of generality in assuming  $\xi_0 = 0$  and  $\varphi_i(0) = 0$ . We put for  $r < |\xi| < 2r$ ,  $Q_\xi = (\varphi_i(\xi), a(|\xi| - r))$ . An inspection now shows there are numbers  $c = c(a, D)$  and  $r_2 = r_2(a, D)$  such that if  $0 < r < r_2$  and if  $Q_\xi \in E(m, Q, r, a)$ ,  $r \geq 2$ , then  $B(Q_\xi, 2cr2^{-m}) \subset N(Q, r, 2a)$ . Letting  $G'$  denote the Green function of  $N(Q, r, 2a)$  we now see there is a number  $C = C(a, D)$  such that if  $|P - Q_\xi| \leq cr2^{-m}$  then

$$(3.2) \quad Cr^{n-2} 2^{-m(n-2)} G'(P, Q_\xi) \geq 1.$$

If  $h$  denotes the harmonic measure of  $B(Q_\xi, c2^{-m}r) \cap \partial N(Q, r, a)$  with respect to  $N(Q, r, a)$  it follows from (3.2) and the maximum principle

$$(3.3) \quad h(P_0) \leq Cr^{n-2} 2^{-m(n-2)} G'(P_0, Q_\xi).$$

From Lemma 3 follows  $G'(P_0, Q_\xi) \leq C2^{-m\lambda(a)} m(r)$  where  $\lambda(a) \rightarrow \infty$  as  $a \rightarrow 0$  and  $m(r) = \sup \{G'(P_0, Q) : Q \in \Gamma(\varphi_i, 2r, a)\}$ . Since  $G' \leq G$ , where  $G$  is the Green func-

tion of  $D$ , it follows from Lemma 2 that  $r^{n-2}m(r) \leq CA(r, P_0)$  for  $r$  sufficiently small. We note there is a constant  $C$ , such that to all  $m \geq 2$  we can find points  $\xi_i, 2^{-m}r \leq |\xi_i| < 2^{1-m}r, 1 \leq i \leq C2^{m(n-2)}$  such that  $E(m, Q, r, a) \subset \cup B(Q_{\xi_i}, c2^{-m}r)$ . This yields (3.1).

We can now complete the proof of the Theorem. Our assumptions mean that to all  $\varepsilon > 0$  we can find points  $Q_1, \dots, Q_M$  in  $F$  and numbers  $\varepsilon_i, 0 < \varepsilon_i < \varepsilon$  such that  $F \subset \cup_1^M B(Q_i, \varepsilon_i)$  and

$$(3.4) \quad \sum_{i=1}^M \varepsilon_i^\alpha \leq \varepsilon.$$

We put  $D' = \cap_1^M N(Q_i, \varepsilon_i, a)$  and let  $P_0 \in D$ , where we will choose  $a$  later. If  $\varepsilon$  is sufficiently small then  $P_0 \in D'$ . It is now convenient to split  $\partial D'$  into different parts. Let for  $m \geq 2, 1 \leq i \leq M, A_{m,i} = \partial D' \cap E(m, Q_i, \varepsilon_i, a), A_{1,i} = \partial D' \cap \cap M(Q_i, \varepsilon_i, a) - (\cup_{m=2}^\infty A_{m,i})$ . We put  $\mu_{m,i} = \sup \{u^+(P) : P \in A_{m,i}\}$  and let  $h_{m,i}$  denote the harmonic measure of  $A_{m,i}$  with respect to  $N(Q_i, \varepsilon_i, a)$ . Since  $u$  is bounded from above in  $D'$  the maximum principle gives

$$(3.5) \quad u^+(P_0) \leq \sum_{i=1}^M \sum_{m=1}^\infty \mu_{m,i} h_{m,i}(P_0).$$

It is easy to see there is a number  $c = \beta = \beta(a, D)$  such that the distance between  $A_{m,i}$  and  $\partial D$  is greater than  $\beta 2^{-m} \varepsilon_i$ . From Lemma 2 and (3.1) follows the existence of a constant  $C = C(a, D, P_0)$  such that  $h_{m,i}(P_0) \leq C 2^{-m\sigma(a)} A(\varepsilon_i, P_0)$ . Using (2.1) we find  $h_{m,i}(P_0) \leq c^{m+1} 2^{-m\sigma(a)} A(\beta 2^{-m} \varepsilon_i, P_0)$ . From this and our assumption on  $u$  we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} u^+(P_0) &\leq \sum_{i=1}^M \sum_{m=1}^\infty c^{m+1} 2^{-m\sigma(a)} M(\beta 2^{-m} \varepsilon_i) A(\beta 2^{-m} \varepsilon_i, P_0) \\ &\leq C \sum_{i=1}^M \varepsilon_i^\alpha \sum_{m=1}^\infty c^m 2^{-m\sigma(a) - m\alpha}. \end{aligned}$$

We now pick  $a$  so small that the last sum converges. With this choice of  $a$  it follows from (3.4) that  $u^+(P_0) \leq C\varepsilon$  for all  $\varepsilon > 0$ . Since  $P_0$  was arbitrary in  $D$  it follows that  $u \leq 0$  and the theorem is proved.

We shall now prove Proposition 1.

*Proof of Proposition 1.* Let  $B$  be the unit ball of  $R^n$  and let  $P(\cdot, y)$  be the Poisson kernel for  $B$  with pole at  $y \in \partial B$ . If  $x \in B - \{0\}$  let  $x^* = \frac{x}{|x|}$ . From the explicit representation of  $P$ , see [8, Chapter 1] it follows that

$$P(x, y) \leq Cd(x) / (|y - x^*| + d(x))^n.$$

If  $E \subset \partial B$  is a closed set of positive  $\alpha$ -dimensional Hausdorff measure,  $0 < \alpha < n - 1$ , it follows from [3, p. 7] that there is a probability measure  $\mu$  with support in  $E$  such that  $\mu(B(x, r)) \leq Cr^\alpha$  for all  $x \in R^n$  and  $r > 0$ . Let  $v(x) = \int P(x, y) d\mu(y)$ . Then

$v$  is non-negative and harmonic in  $B$ , and  $\lim_{P \rightarrow Q} v(P) = 0$  for all  $Q \in \partial B - E$ . If  $x \neq 0$  then

$$u(x) \cong Cd(x) \int (|y - x^*| + d(x))^{-n} d\mu(y).$$

Putting  $g(t) = \mu(B(x^*, r))$ , an integration by parts shows

$$\begin{aligned} u(x) &= Cd(x) \int_0^\infty (t + d(x))^{-n-1} g(t) dt \cong Cd(x) \int_0^\infty (t + d(x))^{-n-1} t^\alpha dt \\ &= C(n, \alpha) d(x)^{\alpha-n+1} \end{aligned}$$

and the proposition is proved.

#### 4. Concluding remarks

In this section we shall discuss estimates of  $A(\varrho)$ . To begin with we notice that if  $D$  is a Lipschitz domain, then to each  $P \in D$  there is a constant  $c = c(D, P) > 0$  such that

$$(4.1) \quad A(\varrho, P) \cong c\varrho^{n-1}, \quad 0 < \varrho < 1.$$

For otherwise  $\liminf_{\varrho \rightarrow 0} \varrho^{1-n} A(\varrho, P) = 0$ . Letting  $\sigma$  denote the surface measure of  $\partial D$  it is easily seen that there is a  $c > 0$  such that if  $Q \in \partial D$  and  $0 < r < 1$  then  $\sigma(B(Q, r)) \cong cr^{n-1}$ . Hence we would have  $\liminf_{r \rightarrow 0} \frac{\omega(P, B(Q, r))}{\sigma(B(Q, r))} = 0$  for all  $Q \in \partial D$ .

Arguing as in [10, Theorem 14.5] this would mean  $\omega = 0$ . This contradiction establishes (4.1).

Let  $0 < \theta < \pi/2$  and put  $K_\theta = \{x = (x_1, \dots, x_n) : x_1 \cong |x| \cos \theta\}$ . We say that a Lipschitz domain is  $\theta$ -regular if for all points  $Q \in \partial D$  there is a cone  $\Gamma_Q$  congruent to  $K_\theta$  and with vertex at  $Q$  such that  $\Gamma_Q \subset R^n - D$ . Let  $\lambda_\theta(r) = \omega(e, B(0, r), R^n - K_\theta)$ , where  $e = (-1, 0, \dots, 0)$ . From Lemma 2 and the maximum principle it now follows that  $\omega(P, B(Q, r), D) \cong C\omega(P, B(Q, 2r), R^n - K_\theta)$  for all  $Q \in \partial D$  and all  $P \in D$ . Harnack's inequality now shows that

$$(4.2) \quad A(\varrho, P, D) \cong C\lambda_\theta(\varrho)$$

where  $C$  can be taken to depend only on  $P, D$  and  $\theta$ . Estimates for  $\lambda_\theta$  can be read off from the estimates for Green functions for cones in [2]. We omit the details but it follows there is to each  $\theta, 0 < \theta < \pi/2$  a number  $h(\theta) < n - 1$  such that

$$\lambda_\theta(\varrho) = O(\varrho^{h(\theta)}) \quad \text{as } \varrho \rightarrow 0$$

and  $h(\theta) \rightarrow n - 1$  as  $\theta \rightarrow \pi/2$ .

If there is a number  $R > 0$  such that to each point  $Q \in \partial D$  there is a closed ball  $B_Q$  with the property that  $B_Q \subset R^n - D$  and  $B_Q \cap \partial D \supset \{Q\}$  we find, using the arguments leading to (4.2)

$$\Lambda(Q, P, D) \cong C\lambda(Q)$$

where  $\lambda(Q) = \omega(e, B(0, r), B')$ ,  $e = (-1, 0, \dots, 0)$ ,  $B' = \{P: |P+e| < 1\}$ . Since  $\lambda(Q) \cong CQ^{n-1}$  it follows that

$$(4.3) \quad \Lambda(Q, P, D) \cong CQ^{n-1}.$$

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