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Analytic Continuation of Representations and Estimates of Automorphic Forms

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Introduction Analytic vectors and their analytic continuation. Let  $G$  be a Lie group and  $(\tilde{\Gamma}, G, V)$  a continuous representation of  $G$  in a topological vector space  $V$ . A vector  $v \in V$  is called analytic if the function  $\hat{f}_v : g \mapsto \tilde{\Gamma}(g)v$  is a real analytic function on  $G$  with values in  $V$ . This means that there exists a neighborhood  $U$  of  $G$  in its complexification  $G^{\mathbb{C}}$  such that  $\hat{f}_v$  extends to a holomorphic function on  $U$ . In other words, for each element  $g \in U$  we can unambiguously define the vector  $\tilde{\Gamma}(g)v$  as  $\hat{f}_v(g)$ , i.e., we can extend the action of  $G$  to a somewhat larger set. In this paper we will show that the possibility of such an extension sometimes allows one to prove some highly nontrivial estimates. Unless otherwise stated,  $G = \mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{R})$ , so  $G^{\mathbb{C}} = \mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{C})$ . We consider a typical representation of  $G$ , i.e., a representation of the principal series. Namely, fix  $\lambda \in \mathbb{C}$  and consider the space  $D^{\lambda}$  of smooth homogeneous functions of degree  $\lambda - 1$  on  $\mathbb{R}^2 \setminus 0$ , i.e.,  $D^{\lambda} = \{f : \mathbb{R}^2 \setminus 0 \rightarrow \mathbb{C} : f(ax, ay) = |a|^{\lambda - 1} f(x, y)\}$ ; we denote by  $(\tilde{\Gamma}^{\lambda}, G, D^{\lambda})$  the natural representation of  $G$  in the space  $D^{\lambda}$ . Restriction to  $\mathrm{S}^1$  gives an isomorphism  $D^{\lambda} \cong C^{\infty}(\mathrm{S}^1)$ , and for basis vectors of  $D^{\lambda}$  one can take the vectors  $e_k = \exp(2ikI)$ . If  $\lambda = it$ , then  $(\tilde{\Gamma}^{\lambda}, D^{\lambda})$  is a unitary representation of  $G$  with the invariant norm  $\|f\|_2^2 = \int_{\mathrm{S}^1} |f|^2 dI$ . Consider the vector  $v = e_0 \in D^{\lambda}$ . We claim that  $v$  is an analytic vector and we want to exhibit a large set of elements  $g \in G^{\mathbb{C}}$  for which the expression  $\tilde{\Gamma}(g)v$  makes sense. The vector  $v$  is represented by the function  $(x^2 + y^2)^{-\lambda/2}$ . For any  $a > 0$  consider the diagonal matrix  $g_a = \mathrm{diag}(a^{-1}, a)$ . Then This last expression makes sense as a vector in  $D^{\lambda}$  for any complex  $a$  such that  $|\arg(a)| < \pi/4$  (since in this case  $\mathrm{Re}(a^2 x^2 + a^2 y^2) > 0$ ). Hence, we see that the function  $\hat{f}_v$  extends analytically to the subset  $I = \{g_a : |\arg(a)| < \pi/4\} \cong \mathbb{A}^{\times} \cdot \mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{C})$ . The same argument shows that the function  $\hat{f}_v$  extends analytically to the domain  $U = \mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{R}) \cdot \mathrm{I} \cdot \mathrm{K} \subset \mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{C})$  (open in the usual topology), 330 JOSEPH BERNSTEIN AND ANDRE REZNIKOV where  $K = \mathrm{SO}(2, \mathbb{R})$  and  $K^{\mathbb{C}} = \mathrm{SO}(2, \mathbb{C})$ ; thus, for any  $g \in U$  we unambiguously define the vector  $\tilde{\Gamma}(g)v$ . As  $g$  approaches the boundary of  $U$ , the vector  $\tilde{\Gamma}(g)v \in D^{\lambda}$  has very specific asymptotic behavior that we will use in order to obtain information about this vector. 0.2. Triple products. Let us describe an application of the principle of analytic continuation to a problem in the theory of automorphic functions. Namely, we will show how to apply the principle in order to settle a conjecture of Peter Sarnak on triple products. As a corollary of our result we will get a new bound on Fourier coefficients of cusp forms. Recall the setting. Let  $H$  be the upper half-plane with the hyperbolic metric of constant curvature  $-1$ . We consider the natural action of the group  $G = \mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{R})$  on  $H$  and identify  $H$  with  $G/K$  by means of this action. Fix a lattice  $\Gamma \subset G$  and consider the Riemann surface  $Y = \Gamma \backslash H$ . In this paper we will discuss both cocompact and noncocompact lattices of finite covolume. For simplicity of exposition, in most of the paper we will only discuss the cocompact case. Then in Section 4 we will describe how to overcome the extra difficulties in case of noncocompact lattices. The Laplace-Beltrami operator  $\Delta$  acts on the space of functions on  $Y$ . When  $Y$  is compact it has discrete spectrum; we denote by  $\lambda_0 < \lambda_1 \leq \dots$  its eigenvalues on  $Y$  and by  $f_i$  the corresponding eigenfunctions. (We assume that  $f_i$  are  $L^2$  normalized:  $\|f_i\| = 1$ .) These functions  $f_i$  are usually called automorphic functions or Maass forms (see [B]). To state the problem about triple products, fix one automorphic function,  $f$ , and consider the function  $f^2$  on  $Y$ . Since  $f^2$  is not an eigenfunction, it is not an automorphic function. Since  $f^2 \in L^2(Y)$ , we may consider its spectral decomposition in the basis  $\{f_i\}$ : Here the coefficients are given by the triple product integrals: Later we will explain why these triple products are of interest and how they are related to the theory of Rankin-Selberg L-functions (see also [S], which was our starting point). Claim. The coefficients  $c_i$  decay exponentially as  $\exp(-\lambda_i^{1/2})$ . More precisely, let us introduce new parameters (the meaning of this parametrization will become clear in subsection 0.3). The main result of the paper is the proof of the following theorem which settles a conjecture of P. Sarnak (see [S]): Theorem. There exists a constant  $C > 0$  such that Corollary. There exists a constant  $C > 0$  such that Remarks. 1. The bound in the theorem is essentially sharp. Namely, our method gives the following lower bound on the average: For a single triple product we cannot do better than the bound in the corollary. For congruence subgroups we can speculate about the true "size" of these triple products. It is known (see 0.6) that in certain cases the  $c_i$  are equal (up to an explicit factor) to the value of the triple Garrett L-function at  $1/2$ . For these L-functions, the Lindelöf conjecture predicts  $b_i \ll |t|^{1/2 + \epsilon}$ . This is consistent with our bound together with the Weyl law: the number of eigenfunctions with  $|\lambda| \leq T$  is proportional to  $T^{1/2}$ . 2. We will prove similar results for nonuniform lattices (see §4). 3. This type of question has been considered before. The first result on exponential decay of the coefficients  $c_i$  for a holomorphic cusp form  $f$  was proven by A. Good ([G]) for the general (i.e., nonarithmetic) nonuniform lattices thanks to a special feature of holomorphic Poincaré series. Recently, M. Jutila ([J]) extended these results to the nonholomorphic case (Maass forms), but only for the group  $\mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$ , using Kuznetsov's formula and nontrivial arithmetic information (Weil's bounds on Kloosterman's sums and deep results of Iwaniec). In particular, all these methods work only for nonuniform lattices. In [S], P. Sarnak introduced a new method to estimate the triple products based on analytic continuation of certain matrix coefficients of the function  $f$ ; this method works for uniform lattices as well. Being partly based on the theory of spherical harmonics, it led to a weaker bound (by a power of  $T$ ). Our method, in addition to the analytic continuation, uses more sophisticated representation theory, in particular, an idea of G-invariant norms on representations and gives the optimal result (possibly, up to a power of logarithm). 4. Our method gives a more general result than Theorem 0.2. We can obtain similar logarithmic bounds for any polynomial expression in any finite number of automorphic functions  $f_k$  instead of  $f^2$ , as above. 332 JOSEPH BERNSTEIN AND ANDRE REZNIKOV 5. One can ask the same question about growth of triple products for polynomial expressions in automorphic functions of nonzero weight. In this case the decay is also exponential with the same exponent as in Claim 0.2, but the bound in the analogue of Theorem 0.2 is a power of  $T$  and not logarithmic as above. The main interest in triple products and their bounds stems from their relation to the theory of automorphic L-functions. We will discuss this relation in 0.6. We also show in 0.7 that Theorem 0.2 implies a new bound on the Fourier coefficients of automorphic functions in the case of nonuniform lattices. 0.3. Automorphic representations. To explain our method, we first recall the relation of automorphic functions to automorphic representations of  $G$ . For a given lattice  $\Gamma$  in  $G$  we denote by  $X$  the quotient space  $X = \Gamma \backslash G$ . The group  $G$  acts on  $X$ , hence, on the space of functions on  $X$ . We can identify This induces an isometric embedding  $L^2(Y) \hookrightarrow L^2(X)$ , the image consisting of all  $K$ -invariant functions. For any eigenfunction  $f$  of the Laplace operator  $\Delta$  on  $Y$  we consider the closed  $G$ -invariant subspace  $L^2_{\Gamma}(f)$  generated by  $f$  under the  $G$ -action. Conversely, fix an irreducible unitary representation  $(\tilde{\Gamma}, L)$  of the group  $G$  and a  $K$ -fixed unit vector  $v \in L$ . Then any  $G$ -morphism  $\hat{f} : L \rightarrow L^2(X)$  defines an eigenfunction  $f = \hat{f}(v)$  of  $\Delta$  on  $Y$ ; if  $\hat{f}$  is an isometric embedding, then  $\|f\| = 1$ . Thus, the eigenfunctions  $f$  correspond to the tuples  $(\tilde{\Gamma}, L, v)$ . Usually it is more convenient to work with smooth vectors. Let  $V = L^{\infty}$  be the subspace of smooth vectors in  $L$ . Then  $\hat{f}$  gives a morphism  $\hat{f} : V \rightarrow L^2(X)$   $\hat{f} \in C^{\infty}(X)$ . If  $X$  is compact, then  $\mathrm{Mor} G(L, L^2(X)) \cong \mathrm{Mor} G(V, C^{\infty}(X))$ . Thus, the eigenfunctions correspond to the tuples  $(\tilde{\Gamma}, V, v)$ . All irreducible unitary representations of  $G$  with  $K$ -fixed vector are classified: these are representations of the principal and complementary series and the trivial representation. For simplicity, consider representations of the principal series only. In this case the representation  $(\tilde{\Gamma}, V)$  in the space of smooth vectors is isomorphic to the representation  $(\tilde{\Gamma}^{\lambda}, D^{\lambda})$  for some  $\lambda$  (see 0.1). The eigenvalue of the corresponding automorphic function equals  $\lambda = 1 + \lambda^2$ . 0.4. The method. We describe here the idea behind the proof of Theorem 0.2. Let  $L$  in  $\mathbb{A}^{\times} \cdot \mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{C})$  be the space corresponding to the automorphic function  $f$  as above (see 0.3). Let  $\mathrm{pr} : L \rightarrow L^2(X)$  be the orthogonal projection. ANALYTIC CONTINUATION 333 Since the function  $f^2$  is  $K$ -invariant and there is at most one  $K$ -fixed vector in each irreducible representation of

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abstract

Properties of analytic vectors in representations of  $\mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{R})$  are used to give new bounds for the triple products recently considered by P. Sarnak. A conjecture of Sarnak about such products is proved. The results of this paper generalize results of A. Good and M. Jutila about special cases, but the techniques are entirely different. One consequence of these results is a new estimate of the magnitude of the Fourier coefficients of cusp forms for non-arithmetic sub-groups of  $\mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{R})$ .

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