

Spectral rigidity of some arithmetic surfaces

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Abstract nonsense

- Generally speaking, stuff is hard to understand.
- A framework: introduce an invariant

$$F : \mathbf{Stuff} \rightarrow \mathbf{Things}$$

- For a thing $\in \mathbf{Things}$, study the fiber

$$F^{-1}(\text{thing}) \subset \mathbf{Stuff}$$

- Rigidity: $F^{-1}(\text{thing})$ is a singleton

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- Rigidity: $F^{-1}(\text{thing})$ is a singleton (bonus points: when F is not-so-complicated and \mathbf{Things} not so mysterious.)

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In this talk:

- **Stuff** := closed Riemannian manifolds (M, g)
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Theorem

Certain hyperbolic 2 manifolds are absolutely spectrally rigid. Principal congruence covers of surfaces arising from maximal orders in quaternion algebras with type number 1 are spectrally rigid.

Background

A (very hard) question: Which measures μ arise as $\text{spec}_{M,g}$ for some (M, g) ?

Examples:

- For a flat torus \mathbb{R}^n/L ,

$$\text{spec}_{\mathbb{R}^n/L, dx^2} = \sum_{x \in L^*} \delta_{-||x||^2}$$

where L^* is the lattice dual to L . Case $L = \mathbb{Z}^n$: which integers are sums of n squares? In how many ways?

- For a round $n-1$ dimensional sphere S^{n-1} :

$$\text{spec}_{S^{n-1}} = \sum_{a \geq 0} \frac{(a + n/2 - 1) \prod_{j=1}^{n-3} (a + j)}{(n/2 - 1) \cdot (n-3)!} \delta_{a^2 + (n-2)a}$$

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- Two Riemannian manifolds (M_1, g_1) and (M_2, g_2) are said to be **isospectral**, or belong to the same **spectral genus**, when $\text{spec}_{M_1, g_1} = \text{spec}_{M_2, g_2}$.
- (M, g) is **spectrally rigid** if its spectral genus is a singleton.
- Mark Kac asked in 1966 whether all Riemannian manifolds are spectrally rigid.
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- Milnor, two years prior: no!

EIGENVALUES OF THE LAPLACE OPERATOR ON CERTAIN MANIFOLDS

By J. MILNOR

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Communicated February 6, 1964

To every compact Riemannian manifold M there corresponds the sequence $0 = \lambda_1 \leq \lambda_2 \leq \lambda_3 \leq \dots$ of eigenvalues for the Laplace operator on M . It is not known just how much information about M can be extracted from this sequence.¹ This note will show that the sequence does not characterize M completely, by exhibiting two 16-dimensional toruses which are distinct as Riemannian manifolds but have the same sequence of eigenvalues.

By a *flat torus* is meant a Riemannian quotient manifold of the form R^n/L , where L is a lattice (= discrete additive subgroup) of rank n . Let L^* denote the dual lattice, consisting of all $y \in R^n$ such that $x \cdot y$ is an integer for all $x \in L$. Then each $y \in L^*$ determines an eigenfunction $f(x) = \exp(2\pi i x \cdot y)$ for the Laplace operator on R^n/L . The corresponding eigenvalue λ is equal to $(2\pi)^2 y \cdot y$. Hence, the number of eigenvalues less than or equal to $(2\pi r)^2$ is equal to the number of points of L^* lying within a ball of radius r about the origin.

According to Witt² there exist two self-dual lattices $L_1, L_2 \subset R^{16}$ which are distinct, in the sense that no rotation of R^{16} carries L_1 to L_2 , such that each ball about the origin contains exactly as many points of L_1 as of L_2 . It follows that the Riemannian manifolds R^{16}/L_1 and R^{16}/L_2 are not isometric, but do have the same sequence of eigenvalues.

In an attempt to distinguish R^{16}/L_1 from R^{16}/L_2 one might consider the eigenvalues of the Hodge-Laplace operator $\Delta = d\delta + \delta d$, applied to the space of differential p -forms. However, both manifolds are flat and parallelizable, so the identity

$$\Delta(f dx_{i_1} \wedge \dots \wedge dx_{i_p}) = (\Delta f) dx_{i_1} \wedge \dots \wedge dx_{i_p}$$

shows that one obtains simply the old eigenvalues, each repeated $\binom{16}{p}$ times.

¹ Compare Avakumović, V., "Über die Eigenfunktionen auf geschlossenen Riemannschen Mannigfaltigkeiten," *Math. Zeits.*, **65**, 327-344 (1956).

² Witt, E., "Eine Identität zwischen Modulformen zweiten Grades," *Abh. Math. Sem. Univ. Hamburg*, **14**, 323-337 (1941). See p. 324. I am indebted to K. Ramannathan for pointing out this reference.

Heat invariants

- A **spectral invariant**, or **audible property**, is one which is constant along spectral genera.
- A key source of spectral invariants: the trace of the heat kernel

$$\Theta_{M,g}(t) = \int e^{-\lambda t} d\operatorname{spec}_{M,g}(\lambda)$$

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Theorem (Minakshisundaram-Pleijel)

Let M and N be compact Riemannian manifolds of dimension n . If $\Theta_M(t) = \Theta_N(t)$ for all $t > 0$, then M and N are isometric.

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Theorem (Minakshisundaram-Pleijel)

Let M and N be compact Riemannian manifolds of dimension n . Then

$\Theta_{M,g}(t) \sim \frac{(4\pi t)^{-n/2}}{(2\pi)^{n/2}} \int_M e^{-\lambda_1 t} d\lambda_1$

as $t \rightarrow 0$, where λ_1 is the first eigenvalue of the Laplacian on M .

Therefore, if M and N are spectrally isometric, then

$\lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{\Theta_{M,g}(t)}{(4\pi t)^{-n/2}} = \frac{\Theta_{N,g}(t)}{(4\pi t)^{-n/2}}$

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- There are constants $a_k(M, g) = a_k$ such that, as $t \rightarrow 0^+$ one has

$$\Theta_{M,g}(t) = (4\pi t)^{-\dim(M)/2} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} a_k t^k.$$

- The coefficients a_k are integrals of polynomials in curvatures and its derivatives. The first three are:

$$a_0 = \operatorname{vol}(M), \quad a_1 = \frac{1}{6} \int_M \tau, \quad a_2 = \frac{1}{360} \int_M (5\tau^2 - 2|\operatorname{Ric}|^2 - 10|R|^2).$$

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- Evidently, dimension, volume, and total (scalar) curvature are spectral invariants.
- Consequently anything isospectral to a surface is a surface
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- In fact: by Gauss-Bonnet a_1 for a surface is a topological invariant.
- Comparing a_1 and a_2 , any variation in curvature is audible.

Heat invariants: consequences

- Evidently, dimension, volume, and total (scalar) curvature are spectral invariants.
- Consequently anything isospectral to a **hyperbolic** surface is a **hyperbolic** surface, **to which it is homeomorphic!**
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Hyperbolic surfaces: Fuchsian uniformization

- A compact hyperbolic surface admits a description as $\Gamma \backslash \mathbb{H}$ for a cocompact lattice $\Gamma \in \mathrm{PSL}(2, \mathbb{R}) \approx \mathrm{Isom}^+(\mathbb{H})$, where \mathbb{H} is the hyperbolic plane.
- $\mathbb{H} \rightarrow \Gamma \backslash \mathbb{H}$ is the universal covering map, Γ is the deck group, and identifies with the fundamental group of the quotient.
- Elements of Γ are *pointed homotopy* classes of closed curves, conjugacy classes in Γ are *free homotopy* classes of closed curves on the compact surface.
- Within each such free homotopy class is a unique geodesic representative. Its length ℓ is related to the trace t of a representative matrix by $2e^{\ell/2} = t + \sqrt{t^2 - 4}$.
- Define the **length** and **trace spectrum** of $\Gamma \backslash \mathbb{H}$:

$$\mathrm{Lspec} = \sum_{\ell \in \ell(\Gamma)} m(\ell) \delta_\ell, \quad \mathrm{Tspec} = \sum_{t \in \mathrm{tr}(\Gamma)} m(t) \delta_t$$

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- A hyperbolic surface $\Gamma \backslash \mathbb{H}$ is **arithmetic** if there exists
 - A totally real number field k ,
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- Classic example:

$$k = \mathbb{Q}, A = M(2, \mathbb{Q}), \mathcal{O} = M(2, \mathbb{Z}), \Gamma = \mathrm{PSL}(2, \mathbb{Z})$$

- Key fact: the isomorphism class of the quaternion algebra A is a complete invariant of the commensurability class of an arithmetic surface.

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Hyperbolic surfaces: audibility of arithmeticity

Selberg Trace formula: for a closed hyperbolic surface, knowledge of eigenvalue spectrum is equivalent to knowledge of the length spectrum, equivalent to knowledge of trace spectrum.

Theorem (Takeuchi)

A closed hyperbolic surface $\Gamma \backslash \mathbb{H}$ is arithmetic and derived from a quaternion algebra if and only if

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