

Bruhat–Tits building

Xiaoxiang Zhou

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

January 22, 2026

Figures of Bruhat–Tits building

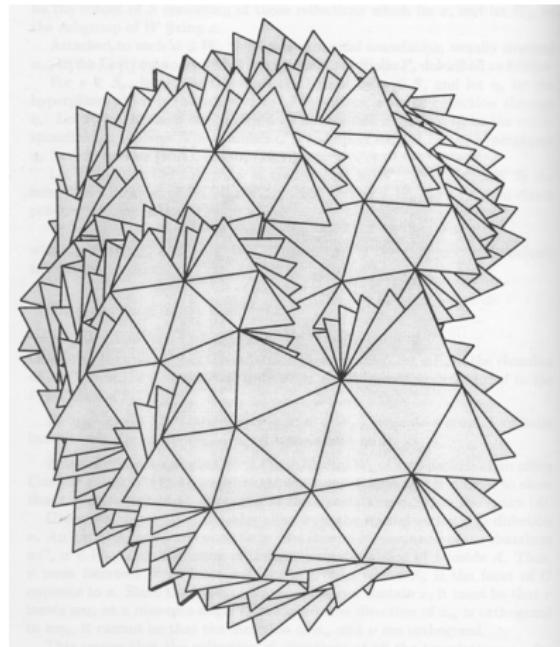


Figure: $\mathcal{B}_{\mathrm{SL}_3(\mathbb{Q}_p)}$, from Annette Werner's talk

Figures of Bruhat–Tits building

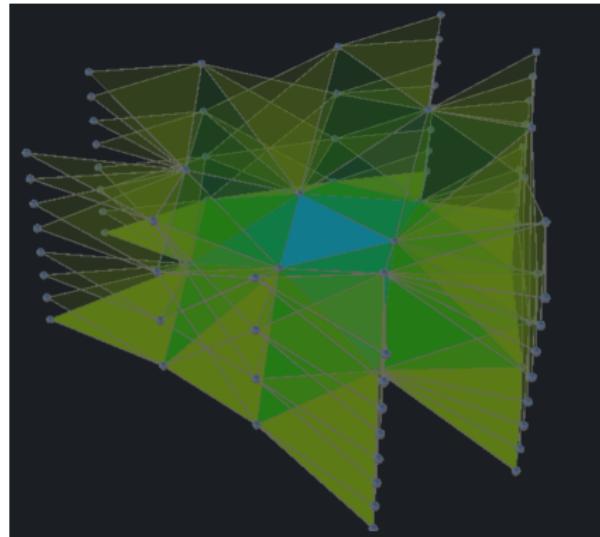


Figure: $\mathcal{B}_{\mathrm{SL}_3(\mathbb{Q}_p)}$, from buildings.gallery

Figures of Bruhat–Tits building

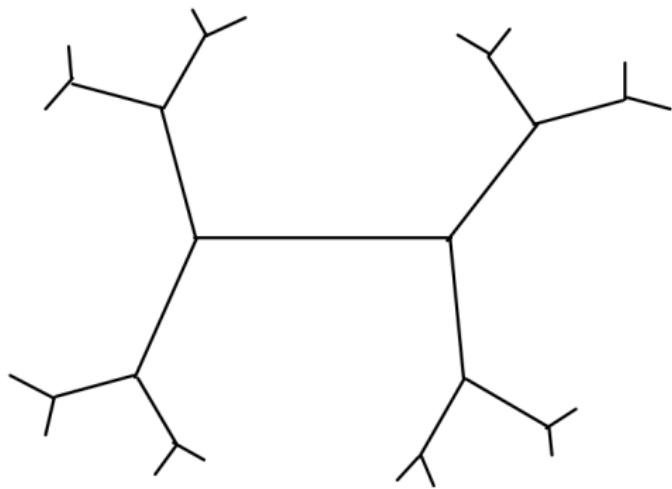


Figure: $\mathcal{B}_{\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Q}_2)}$

Figures of Bruhat–Tits building

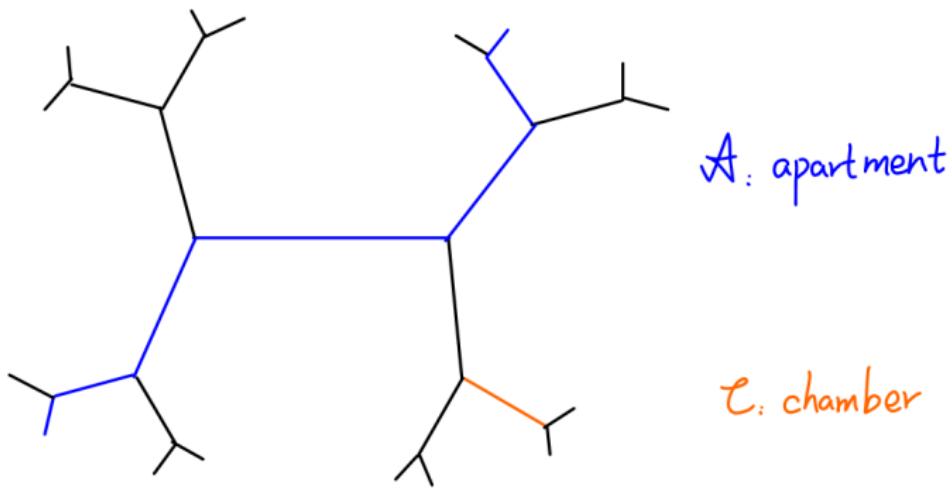


Figure: $\mathcal{B}_{\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Q}_2)}$

Recap: standard Lie theory

Restrict to **complex** representations, we have a nice theory:

- Any representation can be written as a direct sum of **irreducible representation**;
- We can extract information of irreducible representations from the **character table**:

$$\#\{\text{irreducible representations}\} = \#\{\text{conjugation classes}\}$$

$$\sum_{\chi:\text{irr}} (\dim \chi)^2 = \#G$$

However, in general,

- NO standard way finding an **explicit construction** of all irreducible representations;
- NO **one-to-one correspondence** between irreducible representations and conjugation classes.

Standard subgroups

$$B = \begin{pmatrix} * & * & * \\ & * & * \\ & & * \end{pmatrix} \quad \rightsquigarrow \quad \begin{aligned} \mathrm{GL}_n(\kappa)/B &= \{ \text{flags of } \kappa^n \} \\ &= \{V_1 \subset \cdots \subset V_n = \kappa^n \mid \dim V_i = i\} \end{aligned}$$

$$P = \begin{pmatrix} * & & * \\ \cdots & \vdash & \\ | & & * \end{pmatrix} \quad \rightsquigarrow \quad \begin{aligned} \mathrm{GL}_n(\kappa)/P &= \mathrm{Gr}(r, n) \\ &= \{V \subset \kappa^n \mid \dim V = r\} \end{aligned}$$

$$T = \begin{pmatrix} * & & & \\ & \ddots & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & * \end{pmatrix} \quad \rightsquigarrow \quad \mathrm{GL}_n(\kappa)/T = \{\kappa^n = W_1 \oplus \cdots \oplus W_n \mid \dim W_i = 1\}$$

T is comm, so every rep decomposes as direct sum of 1-dim reps.

$$X^*(T) =: \mathrm{Hom}(T, \mathbb{G}_m) \cong \mathbb{Z}^n \quad \text{characters (1-dim reps)}$$

$$X_*(T) =: \mathrm{Hom}(\mathbb{G}_m, T) \cong \mathbb{Z}^n \quad \text{cocharacters (1-parameter subgps)}$$

Weyl group

Definition (Weyl group)

$$W := N_G(T)/T.$$

Example

When $G = \mathrm{GL}_n(\kappa)$,

$$N_G(T) = \{ \text{monoidal matrixes} \}$$

$$N_G(T)/T \cong S_n \quad \text{Weyl group of type } A$$

Remark

We have Bruhat decomposition proved by Gauss elimination

$$G = \bigsqcup_{\omega \in W} B\omega B.$$

So the Weyl group is the “heart” of the reductive group.

Weyl group

Remark

We have Bruhat decomposition proved by Gauss elimination

$$G = \bigsqcup_{\omega \in W} B\omega B.$$

So the Weyl group is the “heart” of the reductive group.

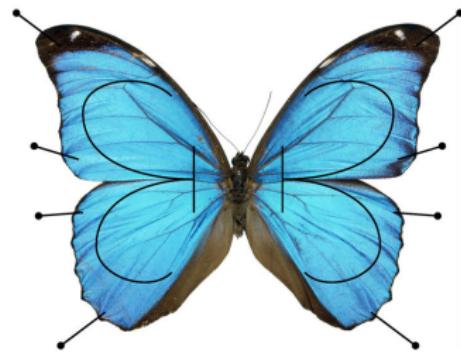
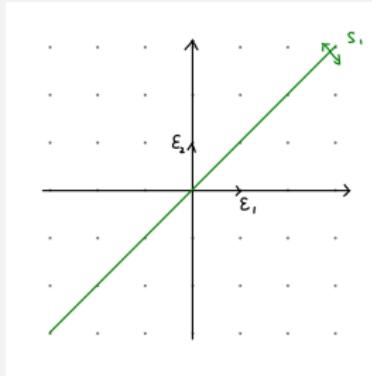


Figure: Pinned butterfly

Weyl group action on cocharacter lattices

When $G = \mathrm{GL}_2(\kappa)$, $T = \begin{pmatrix} a & \\ & b \end{pmatrix}$, $X_*(T) = \mathbb{Z}\varepsilon_1 \oplus \mathbb{Z}\varepsilon_2$, where

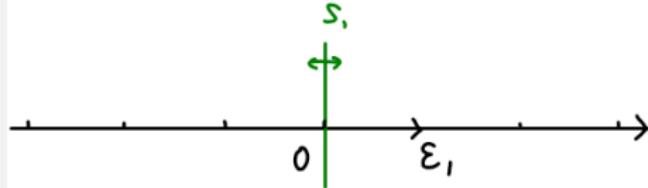


$$\begin{aligned}\varepsilon_1 : \mathbb{G}_m &\longrightarrow T \\ x &\longmapsto \begin{pmatrix} x & \\ & 1 \end{pmatrix}\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\varepsilon_2 : \mathbb{G}_m &\longrightarrow T \\ x &\longmapsto \begin{pmatrix} 1 & \\ & x \end{pmatrix}\end{aligned}$$

$$W = S_2 = \{\mathrm{Id}, s_1\}$$

When $G = \mathrm{SL}_2(\kappa)$, $T = \begin{pmatrix} a & \\ & a^{-1} \end{pmatrix}$, $X_*(T) = \mathbb{Z}\varepsilon$, where

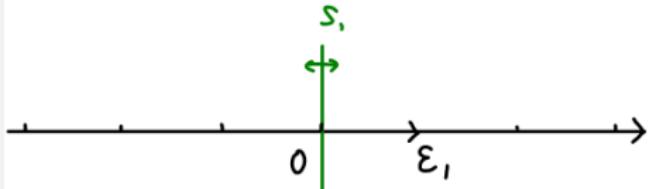


$$\begin{aligned}s : \mathbb{G}_m &\longrightarrow T \\ x &\longmapsto \begin{pmatrix} x & \\ & x^{-1} \end{pmatrix}\end{aligned}$$

$$W = S_2 = \{\mathrm{Id}, s_1\}$$

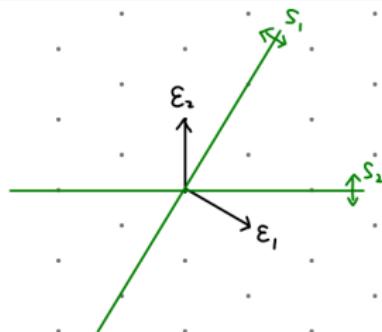
Weyl group action on cocharacter lattices

When $G = \mathrm{SL}_2(\kappa)$, $T = \begin{pmatrix} a & \\ & a^{-1} \end{pmatrix}$, $X_*(T) = \mathbb{Z}\varepsilon$, where



$$\begin{aligned}\varepsilon : \mathbb{G}_m &\longrightarrow T \\ x &\longmapsto \begin{pmatrix} x & \\ & x^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \\ W = S_2 &= \{\mathrm{Id}, s_1\}\end{aligned}$$

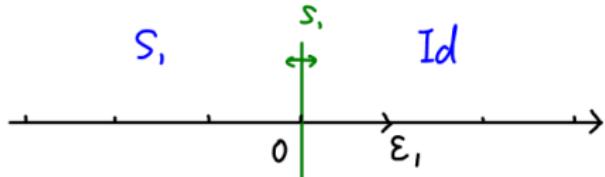
When $G = \mathrm{SL}_3(\kappa)$, $T = \begin{pmatrix} a & \\ & b \end{pmatrix}$, $X_*(T) = \mathbb{Z}\varepsilon_1 \oplus \mathbb{Z}\varepsilon_2$, where



$$\begin{aligned}\varepsilon_1 : \mathbb{G}_m &\longrightarrow T \\ x &\longmapsto \begin{pmatrix} x & \\ & x^{-1} & 1 \end{pmatrix} \\ \varepsilon_2 : \mathbb{G}_m &\longrightarrow T \\ x &\longmapsto \begin{pmatrix} 1 & \\ x & x^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \\ W = S_3 &= \langle s_1, s_2 \rangle\end{aligned}$$

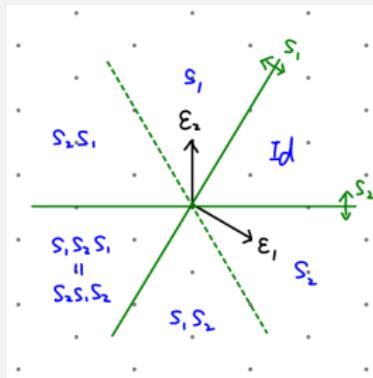
Weyl group action on cocharacter lattices

When $G = \mathrm{SL}_2(\kappa)$, $T = \begin{pmatrix} a & \\ & a^{-1} \end{pmatrix}$, $X_*(T) = \mathbb{Z}\varepsilon$, where



$$\begin{aligned}\varepsilon : \mathbb{G}_m &\longrightarrow T \\ x &\longmapsto \begin{pmatrix} x & \\ & x^{-1} \end{pmatrix} \\ W = S_2 &= \{\mathrm{Id}, s_1\}\end{aligned}$$

When $G = \mathrm{SL}_3(\kappa)$, $T = \begin{pmatrix} a & \\ & b \end{pmatrix}$, $X_*(T) = \mathbb{Z}\varepsilon_1 \oplus \mathbb{Z}\varepsilon_2$, where



$$\begin{aligned}\varepsilon_1 : \mathbb{G}_m &\longrightarrow T \\ x &\longmapsto \begin{pmatrix} x & & \\ & x^{-1} & \\ & & 1 \end{pmatrix}\end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}\varepsilon_2 : \mathbb{G}_m &\longrightarrow T \\ x &\longmapsto \begin{pmatrix} 1 & & \\ & x & \\ & & x^{-1} \end{pmatrix}\end{aligned}$$

$$W = S_3 = \langle s_1, s_2 \rangle$$

Non-standard subgroups

The subgroup $T = \begin{pmatrix} * & & \\ & \ddots & \\ & & * \end{pmatrix}$ is not the only maximal torus.

Fact

*All non-standard subgroups are conjugated to standard subgroups.
Therefore,*

$$\{ \text{Borel subgroups} \} = \{ gBg^{-1} \} \cong G/B$$

$$\{ \text{parabolic subgroups} \} = \{ gPg^{-1} \} \cong G/P$$

$$\{ \text{maximal tori} \} = \{ gTg^{-1} \} \cong G/N_G(T)$$

Non-standard subgroups

Fact

All non-standard subgroups are conjugated to standard subgroups.

Therefore,

$$\{ \text{Borel subgroups} \} = \{ gBg^{-1} \} \cong G/B$$

$$\{ \text{parabolic subgroups} \} = \{ gPg^{-1} \} \cong G/P$$

$$\{ \text{maximal tori} \} = \{ gTg^{-1} \} \cong G/N_G(T)$$

$$\{ (B, T) \mid B \supset T \} = \{ (gB_0g^{-1}, gT_0g^{-1}) \} \cong G/T_0$$

Definition (chamber, apartment and building)

Given a maximal torus T , the apartment is

$$\mathcal{A}_T := X_*(T)_{\mathbb{R}} = \bigcup_{B \supset T} \mathcal{C}_B,$$

and the building is

$$\mathcal{B} := \left(\bigsqcup_T \mathcal{A}_T \right) / \sim = \bigcup_B \mathcal{C}_B.$$

Example of spherical building

When $G = \mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{F}_2)$, the building \mathcal{B} has 3 apartments and 3 chambers.

When $G = \mathrm{SL}_3(\mathbb{F}_2)$, the building \mathcal{B} has 28 apartments and 21 chambers.

Remark

\mathcal{B} inherits the metric structure from $\mathcal{A}_T = X_*(T)_{\mathbb{R}}$.

\mathcal{B} has also polysimplicial complex structure.

When $\kappa = \mathbb{F}_p$, \mathcal{B} is finite.

Proposition

- *Two chambers lie in one apartment.*
- *There is a unique geodesic passing any two points $p_1, p_2 \in \mathcal{B}$.*

p-adic notation

symbol	name	example
F	local field	\mathbb{Q}_p
$\mathcal{O} = \mathcal{O}_F$	integral ring	\mathbb{Z}_p
$\mathfrak{p} = \mathfrak{p}_F$	maximal ideal	$p\mathbb{Z}_p$
$\kappa = \mathcal{O}/\mathfrak{p}$	residue field	\mathbb{F}_p
$\pi \in \mathfrak{p} \setminus \mathfrak{p}^2$	uniformizer	p
$v : F^* \longrightarrow \mathbb{Z}$	valuation	$v\left(\frac{a}{b}p^k\right) = k$

standard subgroups in p-adic world

$$\pi : \mathrm{GL}_n(\mathcal{O}) \longrightarrow \mathrm{GL}_n(\kappa)$$

$$I = \pi^{-1}(B) = \begin{pmatrix} \mathcal{O} & \mathcal{O} & \mathcal{O} \\ \mathfrak{p} & \mathcal{O} & \mathcal{O} \\ \mathfrak{p} & \mathfrak{p} & \mathcal{O} \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{Iwahori subgroup}$$

$$\tilde{P} = \pi^{-1}(P) = \left(\begin{array}{c|c} \mathcal{O} & \mathcal{O} \\ \hline \mathfrak{p} & \mathcal{O} \end{array} \right) \quad \text{Parahoric subgroup}$$

Remark

They also have moduli interpretations. For example,

$$\begin{aligned} \mathrm{GL}_n(F)/I &\cong \{L = L_0 \subset L_1 \subset \cdots \subset L_n = \mathfrak{p}L \mid L_{i+1}/L_i \cong \kappa\} \\ &= \{\mathcal{O}\text{-lattice chains in } F^n\} \end{aligned}$$

Extended Weyl group

To get the Iwahori decompositionn

$$G(F) = \bigsqcup_{\varpi \in W_{\text{ext}}} I\varpi I,$$

we define the extended Weyl group as

$$W_{\text{ext}} := N_G(T(\mathcal{O}))/T(\mathcal{O}) \cong X_*(T) \rtimes W_f.$$

Example

When $G = \text{GL}_n(F)$,

$$W_{\text{ext}} = \{ \text{monoidal matrixes} \} \Big/ \begin{pmatrix} \mathcal{O}^* & & \\ & \ddots & \\ & & \mathcal{O}^* \end{pmatrix} \cong \mathbb{Z}^n \rtimes S_n.$$

Extended Weyl group action

W_{ext} acts on $X_*(T)$ by “twisted conjugation”:

$$W_{\text{ext}} \times X_*(T) \longrightarrow X_*(T) \quad (\mu \rtimes u, \lambda) \longmapsto \mu + u\lambda u^{-1}$$

Non-standard subgroups in p-adic world

...

p-adic building

Definition (chamber, apartment and building)

Given a maximal torus T over \mathcal{O} , the apartment is

$$\mathcal{A}_T := X_*(T)_{\mathbb{R}} = \bigcup_{I \supset T} \mathcal{C}_I,$$

and the p-adic building is

$$\mathcal{B} := \left(\bigsqcup_T \mathcal{A}_T \right) / \sim = \bigcup_I \mathcal{C}_I.$$

Remark

Similarly, two chambers lie in one apartment,
and there is a unique geodesic passing $p_1, p_2 \in \mathcal{B}$.

Gromov-Schoen theorem

Theorem

Let F be a local field, (M, g) be a cpt conn Riemannian manifold with the universal covering space \widetilde{M} .

For any reductive map

$$\rho : \pi_1(M) \longrightarrow \mathrm{GL}_n(F),$$

there exists a $\pi_1(M)$ -equivariant Lipschitz continuous regular harmonic map

$$h_\rho : \widetilde{M} \longrightarrow \mathcal{B}_{\mathrm{GL}_n(F)}$$

regularity

Definition

h_ρ is regular at $x \in \widetilde{M}$ if
a neighbourhood of x is contained in an apartment of \mathcal{A} .

h_ρ is regular if

$$\text{codim}_{\widetilde{M}} \left\{ x \in \widetilde{M} \mid h_\rho \text{ is not regular at } x \right\} \geq 2.$$

Example

The map

$$f : \mathbb{R}^2 \longrightarrow \left\{ y^2 = x^2 \right\} \quad (a, b) \longmapsto (a|b|, b|a|)$$

is regular.

test

...