Fall 2019 Complex Analysis Preliminary Exam

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Where possible, computations have been also done using SageMath code available on GitHub at github.com/tekaysquared/prelims (feel free to make pull requests!)

2. Write the first three terms of the Laurent expansion of $f(z) = \dfrac{1}{z(z-1)(z-2)}$ centered at 0 and convergent in $|1| < z < |2|$

Proof. The core idea of the computation is to split the function into a product of power series. First, we observe that

$$\frac{1}{z-1} = \frac{1}{z(1-1/z)}$$

and see the geometric series

$$\frac{1}{1-1/z} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \left(\frac{1}{z}\right)^n,$$

which converges for $|1/z| < 1$, or equivalently $|z| > 1$. Similarly we see that

$$\frac{1}{z-2} = \frac{-1}{2(1-z/2)} = -\frac{1}{2}\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \left(\frac{z}{2}\right)^n$$

for $|z/2| < 1$, which is to say for $|z| < 2$. Thus we have

$$\begin{aligned} f(z) &= \frac{1}{z}\left(\frac{1}{z}\sum_{n=0}^{\infty}\left(\frac{1}{z}\right)^n\right)\left(\frac{-1}{2}\sum_{n=0}^{\infty}\left(\frac{z}{2}\right)^n\right) \\ &= \frac{-1}{2z}\left(\frac{1}{z}+\frac{1}{z^2}+\frac{1}{z^3}+\cdots\right)\left(1+\frac{z}{2}+\frac{z^2}{4}+\frac{z^3}{8}+\cdots\right). \end{aligned}$$

Note that the above product converges when each term converges, which is to say on the annulus $1 < |z| < 2$.

Now note that the coefficient of z^{-1} of the Laurent expansion is

$$\begin{aligned} -\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{1}{2}+\frac{1}{4}+\frac{1}{8}+\cdots\right) &= \frac{-1}{2}\left[\sum_{n\geq 0}(1/2)^n - 1\right] \\ &= -\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{1}{1-1/2}-1\right) \\ &= -\frac{1}{2}. \end{aligned}$$

The coefficient of z^0 is

$$-\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{1}{4}+\frac{1}{8}+\frac{1}{16}+\cdots\right) = -\frac{1}{2}\left(2-1-\frac{1}{2}\right) = -1/4$$

The coefficient of z^1 is

$$-\frac{1}{2}\left(\frac{1}{8}+\frac{1}{16}+\frac{1}{32}+\cdots\right) = -\frac{1}{2}\left(2-1-\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{4}\right)$$
$$= -\frac{1}{8}.$$

Therefore

$$f(z) = \cdots - \frac{1}{2z} - \frac{1}{4} - \frac{z}{8} + \cdots$$

$\square$

Note that there is also a Laurent series which converges for the annulus $0 < |z| < 1$. This can be found by using the geometric series expansion

$$\frac{1}{z-1} = \frac{-1}{1-z} = -\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} z^n$$

which of course converges for $|z| < 1$, and using the same expansion of $\frac{1}{z-2}$ as above. This is the one provided by SageMath. For another example of this, see this math StackExchange post.