Geometric spaces at finite resolution

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Lorentz in October 1910

H.A. Lorentz by Jan Veth

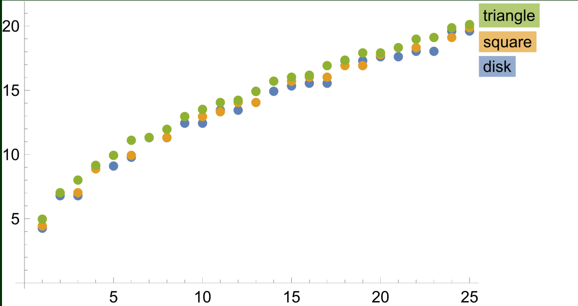
Origins of spectral geometry:

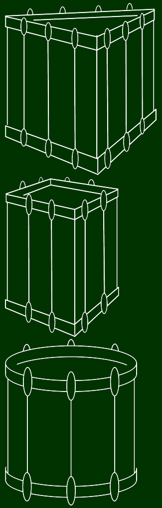
"Hierbei entseht das mathematische Problem, zu beweisen, dass die Anzahl der genügend hohen Obertöne zwischen n und $n + dn$ unabhängig von der Gestalt der Hülle und nur ihrem Volumen proportional ist."

Weyl in February 1911

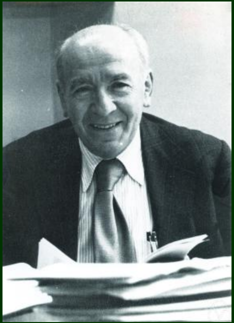
$$N(\Lambda) = \#\text{wave numbers} \leq \Lambda$$
$$\sim \frac{\Omega_d \mathrm{Vol}(M)}{d(2\pi)^d}\Lambda^d$$

Evidence by the parabolic shapes ($\sqrt{\Lambda}$):

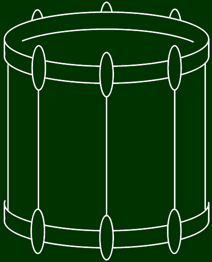




Mark Kac in 1966



"Can one hear the shape of a drum?"

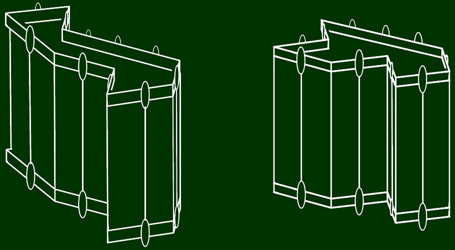


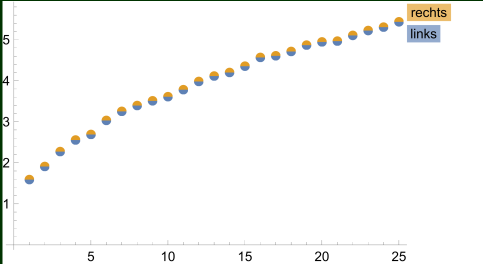
Or, more precisely, given a Riemannian manifold M, does the spectrum of wave numbers k in the Helmholtz equation

$$\boxed{\Delta_M u = k^2 u}$$

determine the geometry of M?

Isospectral drums!



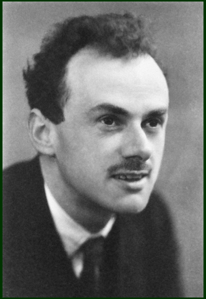


… so the answer to Kac's question is **no**
and more information is needed…

Analysis: Dirac operator

Recall that k^2 is an eigenvalue of the Laplacian in the Helmholtz equation.

- The Dirac operator is a 'square-root' of the Laplacian, so that its spectrum give the wave numbers k.
- First found by Paul Dirac in flat space, but exists on any Riemannian spin manifold M.



The circle

- The Laplacian on the circle $\mathbb{S}^1$ is given by

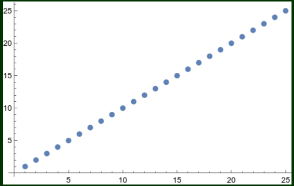
$$\Delta_{\mathbb{S}^1} = -\frac{d^2}{dt^2}; \qquad (t \in [0, 2\pi))$$

- The Dirac operator on the circle is

$$D_{\mathbb{S}^1} = -i\frac{d}{dt}$$

  with square $\Delta_{\mathbb{S}^1}$.
- The eigenfunctions of $D_{\mathbb{S}^1}$ in $L^2(S^1)$ are the complex exponential functions

$$e^{int} = \cos nt + i \sin nt; \qquad (n \in \mathbb{Z})$$



  and $[D_{S^1}, f] = \frac{df}{dt}$, a bounded operator on $L^2(S^1)$ for smooth f.

The 2-dimensional torus

- Consider the two-dimensional torus $\mathbb{T}^2$ parametrized by two angles $t_1, t_2 \in [0, 2\pi)$.
- The Laplacian reads

$$\Delta_{\mathbb{T}^2} = -\frac{\partial^2}{\partial t_1^2} - \frac{\partial^2}{\partial t_2^2}.$$

- Dirac suggested to consider operators of the form $D_{\mathbb{T}^2} = a\frac{\partial}{\partial t_1} + b\frac{\partial}{\partial t_2}$ with complex *matrices* as coefficients:

$$a = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ -1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}; \qquad b = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & i \\ i & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

then $a^2 = b^2 = -1$ and $ab + ba = 0$

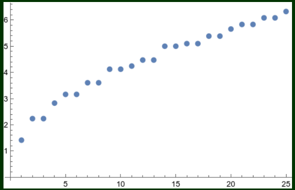
- The Dirac operator on the torus is

$$D_{\mathbb{T}^2} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \frac{\partial}{\partial t_1} + i\frac{\partial}{\partial t_2} \\ -\frac{\partial}{\partial t_1} + i\frac{\partial}{\partial t_2} & 0 \end{pmatrix},$$

which satisfies $(D_{\mathbb{T}^2})^2 = -\frac{\partial^2}{\partial t_1^2} - \frac{\partial^2}{\partial t_2^2}$.

- The spectrum of the Dirac operator $D_{\mathbb{T}^2}$ is

$$\left\{ \pm\sqrt{n_1^2 + n_2^2} : n_1, n_2 \in \mathbb{Z} \right\};$$



and $\|[D_{\mathbb{T}^2}, f]\| = \|f\|_{\mathrm{Lip}}$.

More generally, a Dirac operator exists on spin manifolds as a differential operator acting in $L^2(S_M)$ and square $D_M^2 = \Delta_M + \frac{1}{4}\kappa$ for which furthermore

$$\|[D_M, f]\| = \|f\|_{\mathrm{Lip}}$$

Spectral description of geometry: distance

Noncommutative geometry (Alain Connes)

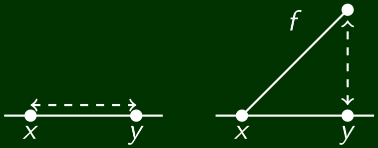
- Distance $d(x, y)$ between two points is usually defined as

  the **smallest** *of the arclengths (computed using the metric) of curves connecting x and y.*

- But it can also be defined as

  the **largest** *of differences $|f(x) - f(y)|$ for functions f with gradient $|\nabla f| \leq 1$.*

$$d(x, y) = \sup_{\|[D_M, f]\| \leq 1} |\delta_x(f) - \delta_y(f)|$$



Combination $(C^\infty(M), L^2(S_M), D_M)$
allows for reconstruction of geometry

Spectral triples

More generally, we consider a triple $(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{H}, D)$

- a unital $*$-algebra $\mathcal{A}$
- a self-adjoint operator D with compact resolvent and bounded commutators $[D, a]$ for $a \in \mathcal{A}$
- both acting (boundedly, resp. unboundedly) on Hilbert space $\mathcal{H}$

Generalized distance function:

- States are positive linear functionals $\phi : \mathcal{A} \to \mathbb{C}$ of norm 1
- Distance function on state space $S(\mathcal{A})$ of $\mathcal{A}$:

$$d_D(\phi, \psi) = \sup_{a \in \mathcal{A}} \{ |\phi(a) - \psi(a)| : \|[D, a]\| \leq 1 \}$$

These notions continue to make sense when we replace $\mathcal{A}$ by any self-adjoint vector space $\mathcal{E}$ of bounded operators on $\mathcal{H}$ that contains the unit, a so-called *operator system*.

Spectral data: $(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{H}, D)$

- The mathematical reformulation of geometry in terms of spectral data (global analysis) requires the knowledge of the full Dirac operator.
- From a physical standpoint this is not very realistic: detectors have limited energy ranges and resolution.
- We aim for the underlying mathematical formalism for doing (noncommutative) geometry with only part of the spectrum and/or with finite resolution.

This is in line with [D'Andrea–Lizzi–Martinetti 2014], [Glaser–Stern 2019] and based on [Connes–vS] (CMP, Szeged)

Operator systems

(I) Given $(A, \mathcal{H}, D)$ we project onto part of the spectrum of D:

- $\mathcal{H} \mapsto P\mathcal{H}$, projection onto closed Hilbert subspace
- $D \mapsto PDP$, still a self-adjoint operator
- $A \mapsto PAP$, this is not an algebra any more (unless $P \in A$)

Instead, PAP is an operator system: $(PaP)^* = Pa^*P$.

(II) Another approach would be to consider metric spaces up to a finite resolution :

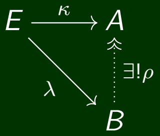
- Consider integral operators associated to the tolerance relation R_ϵ given by $d(x, y) < \epsilon$

C^*-envelope of a unital operator system

[Arveson, 1969; Hamana, 1979]

A C^*-extension $\kappa : E \to A$ of a unital operator system E is given by a complete order isomorphism onto $\kappa(E) \subseteq A$ such that $C^*(\kappa(E)) = A$.

A C^*-envelope of a unital operator system is a C^*-extension $\kappa : E \to A$ with the following universal property:



Example: operator system $C_{\text{harm}}(\overline{\mathbb{D}})$ of continuous harmonic functions with C^*-envelope $C(S^1)$.

How far is an operator system from a C^*-algebra?

One lets $E^{\circ n}$ be the norm closure of the linear span of products of $\leq n$ elements of E.

Definition

The propagation number $\mathrm{prop}(E)$ *of* E *is defined as the smallest integer* n *such that* $(\imath_E(E))^{\circ n} \subseteq C^*_{env}(E)$ *is a* C^**-algebra.*

Returning to the harmonic functions in the disk we have $\mathrm{prop}(C_{\mathrm{harm}}(\overline{\mathbb{D}})) = 1$.

Proposition (Connes-vS, 2020; Pawlowska, 2024)

The propagation number is invariant under complete order isomorphisms, as well as under stable=Morita equivalence [EKT, 2019]:

$$prop(E) = prop(E \otimes_{min} \mathcal{K})$$

More generally [Koot, 2021], we have

$$prop(E \otimes_{\mathrm{min}} F) = \max\{prop(E), prop(F)\}$$

Example: spectral truncation of the circle [Connes-vS, 2020]

- Eigenvectors of D_{S^1} are Fourier modes $e_k(t) = e^{ikt}$ for $k \in \mathbb{Z}$
- Orthogonal projection $P = P_n$ onto $\text{span}_{\mathbb{C}}\{e_1, e_2, \ldots, e_n\}$
- The space $C(S^1)^{(n)} := PC(S^1)P$ is an operator system
- Any $T = PfP$ in $C(S^1)^{(n)}$ can be written as a Toeplitz matrix

$$PfP \sim \left(t_{k-l}\right)_{kl} = \begin{pmatrix} t_0 & t_{-1} & \cdots & t_{-n+2} & t_{-n+1} \\ t_1 & t_0 & t_{-1} & & t_{-n+2} \\ \vdots & t_1 & t_0 & \ddots & \vdots \\ t_{n-2} & & \ddots & \ddots & t_{-1} \\ t_{n-1} & t_{n-2} & \cdots & t_1 & t_0 \end{pmatrix}$$

- States are defined as unital positive linear functionals.

We have: $C^*_{\text{env}}(C(S^1)^{(n)}) \cong M_n(\mathbb{C})$ and $\text{prop}(C(S^1)^{(n)}) = 2$ (for any n).

Dual operator system: Fejér–Riesz

We introduce the Fejér–Riesz operator system $C^*(\mathbb{Z})_{(n)}$:

- functions on S^1 with a finite number of non-zero Fourier coefficients:

$$a = (\ldots, 0, a_{-n+1}, a_{-n+2}, \ldots, a_{-1}, a_0, a_1, \ldots, a_{n-2}, a_{n-1}, 0, \ldots)$$

- an element a is positive iff $\sum_k a_k e^{ikx}$ is a positive function on S^1.
- The C^*-envelope of $C^*(\mathbb{Z})_{(n)}$ is given by $C^*(\mathbb{Z}) \cong C(S^1)$; propagation number ∞

Proposition

1. *The extreme rays in $(C^*(\mathbb{Z})_{(n)})_+$ are given by the elements $a = (a_k)$ for which the Laurent series $\sum_k a_k z^k$ has all its zeroes on S^1.*
2. *The pure states of $C^*(\mathbb{Z})_{(n)}$ are given by $a \mapsto \sum_k a_k \lambda^k$ ($\lambda \in S^1$).*

Pure states on the Toeplitz matrices

Duality of $C(S^1)^{(n)}$ and $C^*(\mathbb{Z})_{(n)}$ [Connes–vS 2020] and [Farenick 2021]:

$$C(S^1)^{(n)} \times C^*(\mathbb{Z})_{(n)} \to \mathbb{C}$$
$$(T = (t_{k-l})_{k,l}, a = (a_k)) \mapsto \sum_k a_k t_{-k}$$

Proposition

1. *The extreme rays in* $C(S^1)^{(n)}_+$ *are* $\gamma(\lambda) = |f_\lambda\rangle\langle f_\lambda|$ *for any* $\lambda \in S^1$.
2. *The pure state space* $\mathcal{P}(C(S^1)^{(n+1)}) \cong \mathbb{T}^n/S_n$.

Curiosities on Toeplitz matrices

Theorem (Carathéodory)

Let T be an $n \times n$ Toeplitz matrix. Then $T \geq 0$ iff $T = V\Delta V^*$ with

$$\Delta = \begin{pmatrix} d_1 & & & \\ & d_2 & & \\ & & \ddots & \\ & & & d_n \end{pmatrix}; \qquad V = \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 1 & \cdots & 1 \\ \lambda_1 & \lambda_2 & \cdots & \lambda_n \\ \vdots & & & \vdots \\ \lambda_1^{n-1} & \lambda_2^{n-1} & \cdots & \lambda_n^{n-1} \end{pmatrix},$$

for some $d_1, \ldots, d_n \geq 0$ and $\lambda_1, \ldots, \lambda_n \in S^1$.

Gromov–Hausdorff convergence

Recall Gromov–Hausdorff distance between two metric spaces:

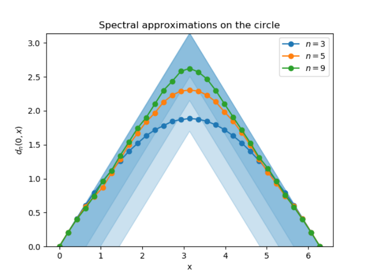
$$d_{\mathrm{GH}}(X, Y) = \inf\{d_H(f(X), g(Y)) \mid f : X \to Z, g : Y \to Z \text{ isometric}\}$$

and

$$d_H(X, Y) = \inf\{\epsilon \geq 0; X \subseteq Y_\epsilon, Y \subseteq X_\epsilon\}$$

Rieffel extends this to quantum metric spaces (essentially operator systems equipped with a Lip-norm).

Distance function for spectral truncations of the circle



Proposition (vS21, Hekkelman 2021)

The sequence of state spaces $\{(\mathcal{S}(P_n C(S^1) P_n), d_n)\}$ *converges to* $(\mathcal{S}(C(S^1)), d_{S^1})$ *in Gromov–Hausdorff distance.*

And more examples include (quantum) fuzzy spheres, Fourier truncations, truncations of tori, Peter–Weyl truncations (Leimbach, RU) ...