Visualizing the arithmetic of imaginary quadratic fields

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Part I: Apollonian Circle Packings



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A Descartes quadruple is any collection of four circles which are pairwise mutually tangent, with disjoint interiors.



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Given any three mutually tangent circles, there are exactly two ways to complete the triple to a Descartes quadruple.



Beginning with any three mutually tangent circles...



Beginning with any three mutually tangent circles, add in both new circles which would complete the triple to a Descartes quadruple.



Repeat: for every triple of mutually tangent circles in the collection, add the two 'completions.'



Repeating ad infinitum, we obtain an Apollonian circle packing.



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Repeating ad infinitum, we obtain an Apollonian circle packing.



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The outer circle has curvature -6 (its interior is outside).

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The Descartes Rule

The curvatures (inverse radii) in a Descartes configuration satisfy

$$2(a^2 + b^2 + c^2 + d^2) = (a + b + c + d)^2.$$

If a, b, c are fixed, there are two solutions d, d', where

$$d+d'=2(a+b+c).$$

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Hence an **integer** Descartes quadruple generates an Apollonian packing of **integer curvatures**.

Local-Global Conjecture

Conjecture (Graham–Lagarias–Mallows–Wilks–Yan, Fuchs–Sanden)

 \mathcal{P} a primitive, integral ACP. Let S be the set of residues of curvatures modulo 24. Then any sufficiently large integer with a residue in S occurs as a curvature.

• Bourgain, Fuchs: Curvatures have positive density in \mathbb{Z} .

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• Bourgain, Kontorovich: Density one occur.

Apollonian group



$$\mathcal{A} = \left\langle S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4 : S_i^2 = 1 \right\rangle$$

Image from Graham, Lagarias, Mallows, Wilks, Yan

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The 'Superpacking'



Graham, Lagarias, Mallows, Wilks, Yan, Apollonian Circle Packings: Geometry and Group Theory II. Super-Apollonian Group and Integral Packings, Discrete and Computational Geometry, 2006.

Super-Apollonian group



Images from Graham, Lagarias, Mallows, Wilks, Yan, and the second s

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Super-Apollonian group



$$\left\langle S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4, S_1^{\perp}, S_2^{\perp}, S_3^{\perp}, S_4^{\perp} : S_i^2 = (S_i^{\perp})^2 = (S_i S_j^{\perp})^2 = (S_j^{\perp} S_i)^2 = 1 \right\rangle$$

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Apollonian generalizations

Guettler, Mallows, *A generalization of Apollonian packing of circles*, J. of Comb., 2010.

4 Gerhard Guettler and Colin Mallows



Figure 3: Another generalized Apollonian packing.

Butler, Graham, Guettler, Mallows, *Irreducible Apollonian Configurations and Packings*, Disc. Comp. Geom., 2010.



Fig. 2 Different representations of an Apollonian packing

Apollonian lattices



Thank you to David Wilson and Lionel Levine.



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An arborist's view of $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{Z})$

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An arborist's view of $\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{Z})$



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The address of $\boldsymbol{\alpha}$

Real number α



Infinite path through tree:

$$L^{a_0}R^{a_1}L^{a_2}R^{a_3}\cdots$$

Matrix product:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ a_0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & a_1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ a_2 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & a_3 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \cdots$$

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The Farey subdivision: Continued fractions / Euclidean algorithm



$$\begin{pmatrix} p_n \\ q_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & a_0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & a_1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & a_2 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & a_3 \end{pmatrix} \cdots \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & a_n \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$
$$= \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ a_0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & a_1 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ a_2 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & a_3 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \cdots \begin{pmatrix} 1 & a_n \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

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Farey subdivision: frothy version



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image from Allen Hatcher's Topology of Numbers

Farey subdivision: frothy version



image from Allen Hatcher's Topology of Numbers

Continued fractions as geodesics



Image from Caroline Series' The Geometry of Markoff Numbers

Farey Tesselation



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Part III: From Integers to Gaussian Integers



- Asmus Schmidt, Diophantine Approximation of Complex Numbers, Acta Arithmetica, 1975.
- Continued fractions for ℤ[*i*], ℤ[√−2] etc.

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Schmidt Arrangement of $\mathbb{Q}(i)$



Schmidt Arrangement of $\mathbb{Q}(i)$



Part IV: Quadratic Imaginary Fields

The *Schmidt arrangement* of a imaginary quadratic field *K* is the orbit of $\widehat{\mathbb{R}}$ under the Möbius transformations given by the *Bianchi group*

$$\mathsf{PSL}_2(\mathcal{O}_K) = \left\{ \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \gamma \\ \beta & \delta \end{pmatrix} : \alpha, \beta, \delta, \gamma \in \mathcal{O}_K, \ \alpha \delta - \beta \gamma = \mathbf{1} \right\} / \pm I$$

That is,

$$\begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \gamma \\ \beta & \delta \end{pmatrix} \leftrightarrow \left(z \mapsto \frac{\alpha z + \gamma}{\beta z + \delta} \right).$$

Each individual image $M(\widehat{\mathbb{R}})$ is called a *K*-Bianchi circle.

$$\mathcal{S}_{\mathcal{K}} = \{ \mathcal{K} \text{-Bianchi circles} \}$$

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Schmidt Arrangement of $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-6})$



Schmidt Arrangement of $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-15})$



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Schmidt Arrangement of $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$



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Basic properties of S_K

 $\Delta = \mathsf{Disc}(K)$

Proposition (S.)

The curvatures in $S_{\mathcal{K}}$ lie in $\sqrt{-\Delta}\mathbb{Z}$.

Proposition (S.)

K-Bianchi circles intersect at points in *K*, at angles θ such that $e^{i\theta}$ is a unit in *K*.



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Circles are ideal classes



Theorem (S.) $\begin{cases} \text{oriented} \\ \text{circles} \end{cases} / \begin{cases} \text{translations by } \mathcal{O}_{K} \text{ and} \\ \text{rotations by 'unit angles'} \end{cases} \qquad M(\widehat{\mathbb{R}}) \qquad f = \text{curvature} \\ & \downarrow \qquad & \downarrow \qquad \\ & \downarrow \qquad & \downarrow \qquad \\ \end{cases} \\ \begin{cases} \text{invertible} \\ \text{ideal classes} \\ a \subset \mathcal{O}_{f} \end{cases} \quad f \in \mathbb{Z}^{>0}, a \mathcal{O}_{K} \sim \mathcal{O}_{K} \end{cases} \qquad \beta \mathbb{Z} + \delta \mathbb{Z} \quad f = \text{covolume} \end{cases}$ $\texttt{Corollary: Number of circles of curvature } f \text{ (up to equivalence)} \\ \text{is } h_{f}/h_{K}. \text{ (GLMWY for } \mathbb{Q}(i)) \end{cases}$

Euclideanity and $\mathcal{S}_{\mathcal{K}}$

The *tangency graph* G_K of S_K is:

 $\left\{\begin{array}{ll} \textit{vertices} = \textit{circles} \\ \textit{edges} = \textit{tangencies} \end{array}\right\}.$

Proposition (S.)

 G_K is connected if and only if \mathcal{O}_K is Euclidean.

Proof.

- 1. Connected component of $\widehat{\mathbb{R}}$ is all circles reachable by combinations of elementary matrices.
- 2. Thm of P.M. Cohn: $\mathcal{O}_{\mathcal{K}}$ is Euclidean if and only if $SL_2(\mathcal{O}_{\mathcal{K}})$ is generated by elementary matrices.

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Euclideanity and $\mathcal{S}_{\mathcal{K}}$



Theorem (S.)

 S_K is connected if and only if \mathcal{O}_K is Euclidean.

The *ghost circle* is the circle orthogonal to the unit circle having center

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{ll} \frac{1}{2} + \frac{\sqrt{\Delta}}{4} & \Delta \equiv 0 \pmod{4} \\ \frac{1}{2} + \frac{-\Delta - 1}{4\sqrt{\Delta}} & \Delta \equiv 1 \pmod{4} \end{array} \right.$$

It exists only when $\mathcal{O}_{\mathcal{K}}$ is non-Euclidean.

Schmidt Arrangement of $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-15})$ with Ghost Circles





Definition

 $\mathcal{P} \subset \mathcal{S}'_{\mathcal{K}}$, $\mathcal{C}, \mathcal{C}_1, \mathcal{C}_2 \in \mathcal{S}'_{\mathcal{K}}$.

- 1. \mathcal{P} straddles C if it intersects the interior and exterior of C
- 2. C_1 and C_2 are *immediately tangent* if they are externally tangent such that their union straddles no circle of S'_{K}

K-Apollonian Packings



Theorem (S.)

The following are equivalent:

- 1. \mathcal{P} is a minimal non-empty set of circles that is closed under immediate tangency.
- 2. \mathcal{P} is a maximal tangency-connected set of circles with disjoint interiors and straddling no circle of $S'_{\mathcal{K}}$

K-Apollonian Packings



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K-Apollonian Packings



Theorem (S.)

The Schmidt arrangement is the disjoint union of all K-Apollonian circle packings (where circles are oriented).

The exceptional isomorphism

$$\rho: \mathsf{PGL}_2(\mathbb{C}) \to \mathsf{SO}^+_{1,3}(\mathbb{R}).$$

SO⁺_{1,3}(R) acts on the 4D real vector space of Hermitian matrices,

$$\begin{pmatrix} b' & x + iy \\ x - iy & b \end{pmatrix}$$

preserving the determinant, which is a form of signature 3, 1.

- $\operatorname{PGL}_2(\mathbb{C})$ acts by conjugation $\gamma \cdot M = \gamma^{\dagger} M \gamma$.
- Hermitian forms of determinant 1 (say) 'are' circles (take the zero set in Ĉ). This is a hyperboloid in Minkowski space, a model of ℍ³.

The Apollonian Group $(\mathbb{Z}[i])$

Idea: act on Descartes quadruples instead of circles, coded as a 4×4 matrix

$$W_D = \begin{pmatrix} | & | & | & | & | \\ C_1 & C_2 & C_3 & C_4 \\ | & | & | & | & | \end{pmatrix}$$

Theorem (GLMWY)

 C_1, C_2, C_3, C_4 form a Descartes configuration if and only if

Codify swaps of Descartes quadruples as a matrix action:

$$W_D \mapsto W_D S_i, \quad i=1,2,3,4$$

The Apollonian group is $(S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4) \subset O_{3,1}(\mathbb{R})$.



Apollonian group:

$$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 2 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 2 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 2 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 2 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 2 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & 2 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix} .$$
$$\langle r, s, t, u : r^2 = s^2 = t^2 = u^2 = 1 \rangle$$

The Apollonian Group

Codify swaps of Descartes quadruples as a matrix action:

$$W_D \mapsto W_D S_i, \quad i = 1, 2, 3, 4$$

The Apollonian group is $\langle S_1, S_2, S_3, S_4 \rangle$.

- 1. Freely generated by these four generators of order two.
- 2. *Thin*, i.e. infinite index in its Zariski closure $O_{3,1}(\mathbb{R})$.
- 3. Acts freely and transitively on the quadruples in a packing (so packing is orbit of 4 circles).
- 4. Limit set:
- 5. Main tool in results on curvatures.

K-Apollonian groups

Theorem (S.)

For each imaginary quadratic $K \neq \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$, there is a Kleinian group $\mathcal{A} < M\ddot{o}b$ such that

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- 1. Its limit set is the K-Apollonian strip packing.
- 2. It acts freely and transitively on the clusters of any *K*-Apollonian packing (suitably defined).
- 3. It is finitely generated (with a simple presentation).
- 4. It is thin.

Cheat Sheet for $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-2})$



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Apollonian group:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} -2 & 0 & 0 & -1 \\ 3 & 0 & 1 & 2 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & -1 \\ 3 & 0 & 0 & 2 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} 0 & -1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 2 & 3 & 0 \\ 1 & 2 & 3 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$
$$\langle r, s, t : r^2 = s^2 = t^2 = 1 \rangle$$

Cheat Sheet for $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-11})$





v₆ v₇

V₃

v₈

$v_1 + v_9, v_3 + v_9$

Apollonian group:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 3 & 3 & 3 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 3 & 1 & 3 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 3 & 3 & 1 & 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -1 \end{pmatrix}, \begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & -1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & -1 & 0 \\ 3 & 3 & 3 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$
$$\langle r, s, t, u : r^2 = s^2 = t^2 = u^2 = 1 \rangle$$

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Cheat Sheet for $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{\Delta})$, $\Delta < -11$



Generalized Local-Global Conjecture

Conjecture (S.)

 \mathcal{P} a primitive, integral K-ACP for $K \neq \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$ with discriminant Δ . Let S_M be the set of residues of curvatures modulo M. Then, for some $M \mid 24$, any sufficiently large integer with a residue in S_M occurs as a curvature. A sufficient M is given by

$$v_2(M) = \begin{cases} 3 & \Delta \equiv 28 \pmod{32} \\ 2 & \Delta \equiv 8, 12, 20, 24 \pmod{32} \\ 1 & \Delta \equiv 0, 4, 16 \pmod{32} \\ 0 & otherwise \end{cases},$$

$$v_3(M) = \begin{cases} 1 & \Delta \equiv 5,8 \pmod{12} \\ 0 & otherwise \end{cases}$$

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Circle Summer: Congruence Subgroups Joint w/ Andrew Jensen, Cherry Ng, Evan Oliver, Tyler Schrock

