

Enumeration of coverings

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1. Introduction

[EXA] The map $p : \mathbb{C} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ defined by $p(z) = z^n$ can be extended to a map $\tilde{p} : S^2 = \mathbb{C} \cup \{\infty\} \rightarrow S^2$ which is n to 1 except 0 and ∞ .

[DEF] $\mathbb{S}, \tilde{\mathbb{S}}$: surfaces, $B \subset \mathbb{S}$ with $|B| < \infty$.

- $f : \tilde{\mathbb{S}} \rightarrow \mathbb{S}$ is a (n -fold) *branched covering*
if $f|_{\tilde{\mathbb{S}} - f^{-1}(B)} : \tilde{\mathbb{S}} - f^{-1}(B) \rightarrow \mathbb{S} - B$ is a (n -fold covering.)
- The smallest set B with this property = *branch set*.

[DEF] $f_1 : \tilde{\mathbb{S}} \rightarrow \mathbb{S}$, $f_2 : \tilde{\tilde{\mathbb{S}}} \rightarrow \mathbb{S}$: two branched coverings f_1 and f_2 are equivalent if $\exists H : \text{homeo.}$ such that

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \tilde{\mathbb{S}} & \xrightarrow{H} & \tilde{\tilde{\mathbb{S}}} \\ & \searrow f_1 & \swarrow f_2 \\ & \mathbb{S} & \end{array}$$

- A branched covering $f : \tilde{\mathbb{S}} \rightarrow \mathbb{S}$ is *regular* if $\exists \mathcal{A} : \text{finite group}$ and $\exists H : \text{homeo.}$ such that

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \tilde{\mathbb{S}} & \xrightarrow{H} & \tilde{\mathbb{S}}/\mathcal{A} \\ & \searrow f & \swarrow /\mathcal{A} \\ & \mathbb{S} & \end{array}$$

We call it branched \mathcal{A} -covering.

- Every branched double covering is regular

[DEF]

$$\mathbb{S} = \begin{cases} S_k & \text{if } \mathbb{S} \text{ orientable surface of genus } k \\ N_h & \text{if } \mathbb{S} \text{ nonorientable surface of genus } h. \end{cases}$$

[FACT] (Alexander) Every orientable surface is a branched double covering surface of the sphere S_0 .

[Note] The orientable surface S_k is a branched double covering of the sphere with $(2k + 2)$ branch points & given such a branch set, the branched covering structure is unique up to equivalence.

[Question]

- Given surface \mathbb{S} , how many branched coverings are there?
- In how many different ways can a given surface be a branched covering of another given surface?

[Notations]

- $\forall \mathbb{S}, \mathbf{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, B; n), \mathbf{Isoc}^R(\mathbb{S}, B; n), \mathbf{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, B; \mathcal{A})$
- $\forall h > 0, \mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; n), \mathbf{Isoc}^{OR}(N_h, B; n), \mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; \mathcal{A})$
- $\forall \mathbb{S}, \forall \tilde{\mathbb{S}}, \mathbf{Iso}(\mathbb{S}, B; \tilde{\mathbb{S}}; n), \mathbf{Iso}^R(\mathbb{S}, B; \tilde{\mathbb{S}}; n), \mathbf{Iso}(\mathbb{S}, B; \tilde{\mathbb{S}}; \mathcal{A})$

[Note]

1. $\text{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, \emptyset; n) = \#\{\text{conj. classes of subgps of index } n \text{ in } \pi_1(\mathbb{S}, *)\}$
2. $\text{Isoc}^R(\mathbb{S}, \emptyset; n) = \#\{\text{normal subgroups of index } n \text{ in } \pi_1(\mathbb{S}, *)\}$
3. $\text{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, \emptyset; \mathcal{A}) = \#\{\text{normal subgroup } \mathcal{H} \text{ of } \pi_1(\mathbb{S}, *) \text{ s.t.}$
 $\pi_1(\mathbb{S}, *)/\mathcal{H} \cong \mathcal{A}\}$
4. $\text{Iso}(\mathbb{S}, B; \tilde{\mathbb{S}}; n) : (\text{Generalized Hurwitz number})$

2. Number of branched coverings

Given $\tilde{\mathbb{S}}$
 \downarrow f : branched covering with branch set B .
 \mathbb{S}

Let $* \in \mathbb{S} - B$ and $c \in B$. Let α_c be a counter clockwise oriented simple closed curve in $\mathbb{S} - B$ based at $*$, which is contractible in \mathbb{S} and does not enclose any point in B except c . Then the n liftings of α_c induces a bijection $\tilde{\alpha}_c$ on the preimage of the base point $*$.

$\implies \mathcal{H}_f : \pi_1(\mathbb{S} - B, *) \rightarrow S_n : \text{gp. homo. s.t. } \tilde{\alpha}_c \neq 1,$
 $\forall \text{ branch pt. } c \text{ (**Hurwitz system**)}$

Conversely, $h : \pi_1(\mathbb{S} - B, *) \rightarrow S_n : \text{Hurwitz system},$
 $\exists f_h : \tilde{\mathbb{S}} \rightarrow \mathbb{S} : \text{branched covering s.t. } \mathcal{H}_{f_h} = h.$

(I) Base is Orientable

$$\pi_1(S_k - B, *) = \left\{ a_i, b_i, c_j \mid \prod_{i=1}^k a_i b_i a_i^{-1} b_i^{-1} \prod_{j=1}^{|B|} c_j = 1 \right\}$$

$$\mathcal{H}_{S_k}(B, n) : (\sigma_1, \tau_1, \dots, \sigma_k, \tau_k, \mu_1 \dots, \mu_{|B|}) \in (S_n)^{2k+|B|} \text{ s.t.}$$

(1) $\langle \sigma_1, \tau_1, \dots, \sigma_k, \tau_k, \mu_1 \dots, \mu_{|B|} \rangle$ acts transitively on $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$

$$(2) \sigma_1 \tau_1 \sigma_1^{-1} \tau_1^{-1} \dots \sigma_k \tau_k \sigma_k^{-1} \tau_k^{-1} \mu_1 \dots \mu_{|B|} = 1$$

$$(3) \mu_\ell \neq 1 \quad \forall \ell = 1, \dots, |B|.$$

(II) Base is nonorientable

$$\pi_1(N_h - B, *) = \left\{ a_i, c_j \mid \prod_{i=1}^h a_i^2 \prod_{j=1}^{|B|} c_j = 1 \right\}$$

$\mathcal{H}_{N_h}(B, n) : (\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_h, \mu_1, \dots, \mu_{|B|}) \in (S_n)^{h+|B|}$ s.t.

(1) $\langle \sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_h, \mu_1, \dots, \mu_{|B|} \rangle$ acts transitively on $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$

(2) $\sigma_1^2 \cdots \sigma_h^2 \mu_1 \cdots \mu_{|B|} = 1$

(3) $\mu_\ell \neq 1, \forall \ell = 1, \dots, |B|$.

Similarly, we can define $\mathcal{H}_{\mathbb{S}}(B, \mathcal{A}), \forall \mathbb{S}$.

[THM]

1. $\mathbf{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, B; n) = |\mathcal{H}_{\mathbb{S}}(B, n)/S_n|$
coordinatewise conjugacy action.

2. $\mathbf{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, B; \mathcal{A}) = |\mathcal{H}_{\mathbb{S}}(B, \mathcal{A})/\text{Aut}(\mathcal{A})|$
coordinatewise action.

3. $\mathbf{Isoc}^R(\mathbb{S}, B; n) = \sum_{\mathcal{A}} \mathbf{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, B; \mathcal{A})$

[Note] $\text{Isoc}(S_k, \emptyset; n) (\forall k \geq 0)$ was computed by Mednykh(1979)

$\text{Isoc}(N_h, \emptyset; n) (\forall h > 0)$ was computed by
Mednykh & Pozdnyakova(1986)

Method; Burnside's Lemma & character theory on S_n

In general, Mednykh(2006) found a counting formula for the number of conjugacy classes of subgroups of given index in a finitely generated group.

THM] (Mednykh, Kwak, Lee : 2003)

$$\mathbf{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, B; n) = (-1)^b \mathbf{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, \emptyset; n) + \sum_{t=0}^{b-1} (-1)^t \binom{b}{t} \mathbf{Isoc}(\mathfrak{B}_{\alpha_{\mathbb{S}}+b-t-1}; n),$$

$$\mathbf{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, B; \mathcal{A}) = (-1)^b \mathbf{Isoc}(\mathbb{S}, \emptyset; \mathcal{A}) + \sum_{t=0}^{b-1} (-1)^t \binom{b}{t} \mathbf{Isoc}(\mathfrak{B}_{\alpha_{\mathbb{S}}+b-t-1}; \mathcal{A}),$$

where $b = |B|$, $\alpha_{\mathbb{S}} = 2k$, $\forall \mathbb{S} = S_k$ and $\alpha_{\mathbb{S}} = h$, $\forall \mathbb{S} = N_h$.

Pf. Principle of inclusion & exclusion

[Note] $\text{Isoc}(G; n)$ was computed by many authors:

Hofmeister, Kwak & Lee, Liskovets, Mednykh, ...

[Exa] $\forall k, \text{Isoc}(S_k, B; 3) = 6^{2k-2}(5^b + (-1)^b) + 3^{2k-2}(2^b + (-1)^b)3 - 2^{2k-2}(1 + (-1)^b)$

[THM] (Jones(1999) + GKL(2004))

$$\mathbf{Isoc}(S_k, B; \mathcal{A}) = \sum_{K \leq \mathcal{A}} \frac{\mu(K)|K|^{2k-1}}{|\mathbf{Aut}(\mathcal{A})|} \left((|K| - 1)^b + (-1)^b \sum_{\xi \neq Pr} \xi(1)^{2-2k} \right)$$

$$\mathbf{Isoc}(N_h, B; \mathcal{A}) = \sum_{K \leq \mathcal{A}} \frac{\mu(K)|K|^{h-1}}{|\mathbf{Aut}(\mathcal{A})|} \left((|K| - 1)^b + (-1)^b \sum_{\xi \neq Pr} c_\xi^h \xi(1)^{2-h} \right),$$

where μ is the set theoretical Möbius mu-function and $c_\xi = 1, -1, 0$ if ρ is real, ξ is real but ρ is not real, ξ is not real.

[Note] From this, we can have an explicit formula for $\mathbf{Isoc}^R(\mathbb{S}, B; n)$ when $n = p, 2p, p^2$.

3. Number of orientable branched coverings

[Note] $\forall k \geq 0, \text{Isoc}^O(S_k, B; n) = \text{Isoc}(S_k, B; n)$.

$\forall h > 0, \text{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; n) \neq 0 \implies n : \text{even}$

- $H_{N_h}^0(B; 2n); (\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_h, \mu_1, \dots, \mu_{|B|}) \in H_{N_h}(B; 2n)$ s.t.
 σ_s reverses parity and μ_t preserves parity.
- $H_{N_h}^0(B; \mathcal{A}); (\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_h, \mu_1, \dots, \mu_b) \in H_{H_h}(B; \mathcal{A})$ s.t.
 $\sigma_1, \dots, \sigma_h \in \mathcal{A} - S$ and $\mu_1, \dots, \mu_b \in S$ for some subgroup S of index 2 in \mathcal{A} .

[THM] Let $h > 0$. Then we have

$$\mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; n) = |H_{N_h}^O(B; 2n)/(P_{2n} \cup R_{2n})|,$$

coordinatewise conjugacy action.

$$\mathbf{Isoc}^{OR}(N_h, B; n) = \sum_{\mathcal{A}} \mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; \mathcal{A}) \text{ and}$$

$$\mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; \mathcal{A}) = |H_{N_h}^O(B; \mathcal{A})/\text{Aut}(\mathcal{A})|,$$

coordinatewise action.

THM] (Mednykh, Kwak, Lee : 2003)

$$\mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; n) = (-1)^b \mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, \emptyset; 2n) + \sum_{t=0}^{b-1} (-1)^t \binom{b}{t} \mathbf{Isoc}^B(\mathfrak{B}_{h+b-t-1}; 2n),$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; \mathcal{A}) &= (-1)^b \mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, \emptyset; \mathcal{A}) \\ &\quad + \sum_{t=0}^{b-1} (-1)^t \binom{b}{t} \mathbf{Isoc}^B(\mathfrak{B}_{h+b-t-1}; \mathcal{A}), \end{aligned}$$

[Note] $\mathbf{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; 2n)$ was computed by
Goulden, Kwak & Lee (2005)

For example: $\text{Isoc}^O(N_h, \emptyset; 2p) = \lceil \frac{p+3}{2} \rceil$. (p prime)

| | N_1 | N_2 | N_3 | N_4 |
|---------|-------|-------|-------|-----------|
| $n = 1$ | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| $n = 2$ | 0 | 3 | 9 | 39 |
| $n = 3$ | 0 | 3 | 57 | 1483 |
| $n = 4$ | 0 | 6 | 847 | 354009 |
| $n = 5$ | 0 | 4 | 15303 | 208211284 |

The number $\text{Isoc}^O(N_k, \emptyset; 2n)$

[Note] $\text{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; \mathcal{A})$ (\mathcal{A} : abelian) was computed by
Kwak, Lee & Shin (2004).

It does not involve character theory

$\text{Isoc}^{OR}(N_h, B; n)$ was computed by
Goulden, Kwak & Lee (2004)

(Method: character theory & Burnside's Lemma)

[THM] 1. $\forall k \geq 0, \text{Isoc}^O(S_k, B; \mathcal{A}) = \text{Isoc}(S_k, B; \mathcal{A})$

2. $\forall h > 0, \text{Isoc}^O(N_h, B; \mathcal{A})$ is equal to

$$\sum_{\mathcal{S}} \sum_{K \leq (\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{S})} \frac{\mu(K) |K|^{h-1}}{2^{h-1} |\text{Aut}(\mathcal{A}, \mathcal{S})|} \left(\left(\frac{|K|}{2} - 1 \right)^b + (-1)^b \sum_{\xi} d_{\xi}^h \xi(1)^{2-h} \right),$$

where $\mathcal{S} \in \{\mathcal{S} \mid [\mathcal{A} : \mathcal{S}] = 2\} / \sim$, $\xi \in \text{irr}(K \cap \mathcal{S}) - \{Pr\}$.

[EXA] $\text{Isoc}^{OR}(\mathbb{S}, B; 2p)$

$$= \begin{cases} \mathbf{Isoc}^R(S_k, B; 2p) & \text{if } \mathbb{S} = S_k, \\ \frac{2}{p-1} (p^{h-1} - 1) & \text{if } \mathbb{S} = N_h \text{ and } b = 0, \\ p^{h-2} \left((p-1)^{b-1} (p+1) + (-1)^b \right) & \text{if } \mathbb{S} = N_h \text{ and } b \neq 0. \end{cases}$$

4. Distribution of branched coverings

[Note]

- $\text{Iso}(S_i, B; S_j; n)$ was computed by Mednykh (1984)

Method: character theory on S_n and Buside's Lemma,
Riemann-Hurwite equation

(It is not explicit !!)

- $\text{Iso}^R(\mathbb{S}, B; \tilde{\mathbb{S}}; n) = \sum_{\mathcal{A}} \text{Iso}(\mathbb{S}, B; \tilde{\mathbb{S}}; \mathcal{A})$

- $\text{Iso}(S_i, B; S_j; \mathcal{A})$ was computed by Jones (1999).
- $\text{Iso}(N_h, B; S_k; \mathcal{A})$ and $\text{Iso}(N_h, B; N_k; \mathcal{A})$
was computed by Goulden, Kwak & Lee (2004)

(They are not explicit !!)

| n | $ B = 2$ | $ B = 3$ | $ B = 4$ |
|-----|---|---|--|
| 4 | $120 x^7 + 256 x^8$ | $768 x^9$ | $120 x^9 + 1536 x^{10} + 1024 x^{11}$ |
| 6 | $640 x^{10} + 1215 x^{11}$ $+1296 x^{12}$ | $8991 x^{13} + 3888 x^{14}$ | $640 x^{13} + 7776 x^{14} + 26973 x^{15}$ $+28512 x^{16} + 3888 x^{17}$ |
| 7 | $2401 x^{14}$ | $12005 x^{17}$ | $74431 x^{20}$ |
| 8 | $960 x^{13} + 1920 x^{15}$ $+4096 x^{16}$ | $5760 x^{17} + 12288 x^{18}$ $+24576 x^{19}$ | $960 x^{17} + 11520 x^{19} + 24576 x^{20}$ $+105984 x^{21} + 98304 x^{22}$ $+65536 x^{23}$ |
| 9 | $2160 x^{16} + 6561 x^{18}$ | $2160 x^{19} + 39366 x^{21}$ $+19683 x^{22}$ | $6480 x^{22} + 157464 x^{24}$ $+157464 x^{25} + 177147 x^{26}$ |
| 10 | $2496 x^{16} + 9375 x^{19}$ $+10000 x^{20}$ | $60000 x^{22} + 28125 x^{23}$ $+90000 x^{24}$ | $2496 x^{21} + 60000 x^{24} + 60000 x^{25}$ $+360000 x^{26} + 241875 x^{27}$ $+780000 x^{28} + 130000 x^{29}$ |
| 12 | $4800 x^{19} + 9720 x^{21}$ $+10240 x^{22} + 9720 x^{23}$ $+20736 x^{24}$ | $98760 x^{25} + 215784 x^{27}$ $+186624 x^{28} + 62208 x^{29}$ | $4800 x^{25} + 58320 x^{27} + 61440 x^{28}$ $+204120 x^{29} + 746496 x^{30}$ $+1498960 x^{31} + 1244160 x^{32}$ $+1522152 x^{33} + 705024 x^{34}$ $+248832 x^{35}$ |

$\text{Iso}(S_2, B; S_j; \mathbb{Z}_n)$ for small n and small $|B|$

| n | $ B = 2$ | $ B = 3$ | $ B = 4$ |
|-----|---|--|---|
| 4 | $4x^{-4}$ | $x^2 + 12x^{-6}$ | $24x^{-8} + 16x^{-10}$ |
| 6 | $2x^2 + 4x^{-4} + 4x^{-6}$ | $4x^4 + 6x^{-6} + 24x^{-8}$ $+24x^{-10}$ | $8x^6 + 32x^{-10} + 120x^{-12}$ $+128x^{-14} + 16x^{-16}$ |
| 7 | $6x^{-7}$ | $36x^{-13}$ | $216x^{-19}$ |
| 8 | $2x^2 + 8x^{-8}$ | $3x^4 + 4x^6 + 24x^{-12}$ $+48x^{-14}$ | $4x^6 + 16x^8 + 48x^{-16} + 192x^{-18}$ $+192x^{-20} + 128x^{-22}$ |
| 9 | $4x^{-7} + 6x^{-9}$ | $12x^{-13} + 36x^{-15}$ $+36x^{-17}$ | $32x^{-19} + 144x^{-21} + 288x^{-23}$ $+216x^{-25}$ |
| 10 | $4x^4 + 4x^{-6} + 8x^{-10}$ | $16x^8 + 6x^{-10}$ $+48x^{-14} + 96x^{-18}$ | $64x^{12} + 8x^{-16} + 48x^{-18}$ $+48x^{-20} + 384x^{-22} + 128x^{-24}$ $+768x^{-26} + 128x^{-28}$ |
| 12 | $2x^2 + 4x^4 + 8x^{-10}$ $+8x^{-12}$ | $9x^6 + 18x^8 + 4x^{10}$ $+36x^{-16} + 84x^{-18}$ $+96x^{-20} + 48x^{-22}$ | $4x^8 + 40x^{10} + 80x^{12} + 32x^{14}$ $+96x^{-22} + 336x^{-24} + 672x^{-26}$ $+880x^{-28} + 768x^{-30}$ $+448x^{-32} + 128x^{-34}$ |

$\text{Iso}(N_1, B; \mathbb{S}; \mathbb{Z}_n)$ for small n and small $|B|$

| \mathcal{A} | $\mathbb{Z}_2 \oplus \mathbb{Z}_2$ | \mathbb{Z}_4 | \mathbb{Z}_6 | $\mathbb{Z}_4 \oplus \mathbb{Z}_2$ | \mathbb{Z}_8 | \mathbb{D}_4 | the others | total |
|---------------|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|------------|-------|
| $ B = 0$ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| $ B = 1$ | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 9 |
| $ B = 2$ | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| $ B \geq 3$ | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| total | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 13 |

The number $\text{Iso}(N_2, B; S_3; \mathcal{A})$

$$\text{Iso}^R(N_2, B; S_3; n) = \begin{cases} 3 & \text{if } n = 6 \text{ and } |B| = 1, \\ 6 & \text{if } n = 8 \text{ and } |B| = 1, \\ 4 & \text{if } n = 4 \text{ and } |B| = 2, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

5. Conclusion

[Problem 1] Count various types of surface branched coverings.
(e.g., Simple ones, etc.)

[Problem 2] $\forall h, \forall k, \forall n \text{ Iso}(N_h, B; S_k; n) = ?$

[Problem 3] $f : \tilde{\mathbb{S}} \rightarrow \mathbb{S}, g : \tilde{\tilde{\mathbb{S}}} \rightarrow \mathbb{S}$: branched coverings

$$f \simeq_w g \iff \begin{array}{ccc} \tilde{\mathbb{S}} & \xrightarrow{\exists \text{Homeo.}} & \tilde{\tilde{\mathbb{S}}} \\ f \downarrow & & \downarrow g \\ \mathbb{S} & \xrightarrow{\exists \text{Homeo.}} & \mathbb{S} \end{array}$$

Count the weak equivalence classes of (regular) branched coverings over a given surface.

[FACT] \mathcal{A} : finite group, acts pseudofreely on \mathbb{S} if

$$|\{x \in \mathbb{S} : g \cdot x = x\}| < \infty$$

for any $g \in \mathcal{A}$.

\implies # weak equivalence classes of pseudofree actions on \mathbb{S} is

$$\sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \sum_{B \subset S_k} \mathbf{Isow}(S_k, B; \mathbb{S}; \mathcal{A}) + \sum_{h=1}^{\infty} \sum_{B \subset N_h} \mathbf{Isow}(N_h, B; \mathbb{S}; \mathcal{A}).$$

$\sum_{B \subset \mathbb{S}} \mathbf{Isow}(\mathbb{S}, B; \tilde{\mathbb{S}}; \mathcal{A}) =$ # of weak equivalence classes of pseud-

ofree actions on $\tilde{\mathbb{S}}$ such that $\tilde{\mathbb{S}}/\mathcal{A} \simeq \mathbb{S}$

[Note]

- $\text{Isow}(S^2, B; \mathbb{S}; \mathbb{Z}_p)$ was computed by Kwak & Lee (1996).
- $\text{Isow}(S^2, B; \mathbb{S}; \mathbb{Z}_p \times \mathbb{Z}_q)$ was computed by Lee & Kim (2002).

Thank you!