

Dynamical Commensurator Groups

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Let \mathfrak{M} be a compact, connected metric space (a continuum).

$\text{Homeo}(\mathfrak{M})$ denotes the homeomorphisms of \mathfrak{M} .

$\text{Homeo}_0(\mathfrak{M})$ denotes the closed subgroup of $\text{Homeo}(\mathfrak{M})$ which are isotopic to the identity map, a contractible space.

Definitions:

- [Mapping Class Group] $\text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}) \equiv \text{Homeo}(\mathfrak{M})/\text{Homeo}_0(\mathfrak{M})$
- [Pointed Mapping Class Group:] $\hat{x} \in \mathfrak{M}$, set

$$\text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}, \hat{x}) \equiv \text{Homeo}(\mathfrak{M}, \hat{x})/\text{Homeo}_0(\mathfrak{M}, \hat{x})$$

Problem: Calculate $\text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}, \hat{x})$ for \mathfrak{M} a *solenoidal manifold*.

Strategy: Find algebraic model for $\text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}, \hat{x})$

- Let M be a compact connected manifold without boundary.
- Let $\Gamma = \pi_1(M, x)$ for choice of $x \in M$
- Let $\mathcal{G} = \{\Gamma = \Gamma_0 \supset \Gamma_1 \supset \Gamma_2 \supset \dots\}$ be a descending chain of subgroups of finite index. The chain \mathcal{G} and basepoint $x \in M$ determine a tower of finite index coverings by closed manifolds:

$$\mathcal{P}_{\mathcal{G}} \equiv \{M_0 \xleftarrow{p_1} M_1 \xleftarrow{p_2} M_2 \xleftarrow{p_3} \dots\}$$

where $q_\ell = p_\ell \circ \dots \circ p_1: M_\ell \rightarrow M_0$ induces the map

$$(q_\ell)_\# : \pi_1(M_\ell, x_\ell) \rightarrow \Gamma_\ell \subset \pi_1(M_0, x) = \Gamma_0$$

$$\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}} = \lim_{\leftarrow} \{p_{\ell+1}: M_{\ell+1} \rightarrow M_\ell\} \subset \prod_{\ell \geq 0} M_\ell$$

Definition: $\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ is a *weak solenoid* (McCord, 1965) or a *solenoidal manifold* (Sullivan, 2014)

- A point $\widehat{x} \in \mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ is a sequence $\widehat{x} = (x_0, x_1, x_2, \dots)$ where $x_\ell \in M_\ell$ and $p_\ell(x_{\ell+1}) = x_\ell$ for $\ell \geq 0$.
- The map $\pi_k(x_0, x_1, x_2, \dots) = (x_k, x_{k+1}, \dots)$ is a homeomorphism.
- $\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ is a compact connected foliated (laminated) space. The leaves are the connected components of $\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$
- $\widehat{q}_0: \mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}} \rightarrow M_\ell$ defined by $\widehat{q}_\ell(\widehat{x}) = x_\ell$ is a fibration.
- Each fiber $\mathfrak{X}_\ell = \widehat{q}_\ell^{-1}(x_\ell)$ a Cantor space.

Theorem: A pointed homeomorphism $h: \mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}} \rightarrow \mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ is ϵ -homotopic to a map induced from a pointed zigzag map, for increasing sequence $k_j \geq j$,

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 M_0 & \longleftarrow & M_{k_0} & \longleftarrow & M_{k_1} & \longleftarrow & M_{k_2} & \longleftarrow & \dots \\
 & & \searrow & & \searrow & & \searrow & & \\
 & & \psi_{i_0} & & \psi_{i_1} & & \psi_{i_2} & & \\
 & & \swarrow & & \swarrow & & \swarrow & & \\
 M_0 & \longleftarrow & M_1 & \longleftarrow & M_2 & \longleftarrow & M_3 & \longleftarrow & \dots
 \end{array}$$

Corollary: Let $h: \mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}} \rightarrow \mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ be a homeomorphism preserving a basepoint $\hat{x} \in \mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$. Then h induces an injection $h_{\#}: \Gamma_{k_i} \rightarrow \Gamma_j$ whose image has finite index in Γ .

★ Rogers & Tollefson, *Homeomorphisms homotopic to induced homeomorphisms of weak solenoidal spaces*, **Colloq. Math.** 25:81–87, 1972.

Let Γ be a countable group.

A *commensurator* of Γ is a pair of finite-index subgroups $H, K \subset \Gamma$ and an isomorphism $\phi: H \rightarrow K$.

Two commensurators $\phi_1: H_1 \rightarrow K_1$ and $\phi_2: H_2 \rightarrow K_2$ are equivalent, $\phi_1 \sim \phi_2$, if there exists a finite index subgroup $H_3 \subset H_1 \cap H_2$ such that $\phi_1|_{H_3} = \phi_2|_{H_3}$.

Definition: The *abstract commensurator group* $\text{Comm}(\Gamma)$ is the collection of commensurators $\phi: H \rightarrow K$, modulo \sim .

Remark: Let $\Gamma' \subset \Gamma$ be a finite index subgroup. Given a commensurator $\phi: H \rightarrow K$ in $\text{Comm}(\Gamma)$, observe that $\phi: H \cap \Gamma' \rightarrow K \cap \Gamma'$ is a commensurator in $\text{Comm}(\Gamma')$. The converse clearly holds, hence $\text{Comm}(\Gamma') \cong \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$.

$\text{Comm}(\Gamma)$ can be intuitively viewed as the group of “germs” of isomorphisms between finite-index subgroups of G .

For Γ finitely-generated, it may happen that $\text{Comm}(\Gamma)$ is not finitely generated, as for $\Gamma = \mathbb{Z}$. Or it may happen that $\text{Comm}(\Gamma) = \Gamma$, as for the Mapping Class Group $\Gamma = \text{Mod}(\Sigma_g)$.

★ D. Studenmund, *Abstract commensurators: a survey of constructions and computations*, in “Geometric methods in group theory: papers dedicated to Ruth Charney” , 243–260, Sémin. Congr., 34, Soc. Math. France, Paris. 2024

Rogers & Tollefson Theorem yields:

Theorem: $\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ a solenoid with base manifold M , $\Gamma = \pi_1(M, x)$.
Then there is a natural map $\chi: \text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}, \widehat{x}) \rightarrow \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$.

Example: $\text{Comm}(\mathbb{Z}) = \mathbf{GL}(\mathbb{Q}) = \mathbb{Q}^*$ the non-zero rationals

Let $\widehat{S^1}$ denote the universal solenoid over S^1 . That is, the inverse limit of all finite coverings of S^1 .

Given $m/n \in \mathbb{Q}^*$ relatively prime, let $H = n \cdot \mathbb{Z} \subset \mathbb{Z}$ and $K = m \cdot \mathbb{Z}$. Then $\phi_{m/n}: H \rightarrow K$ is an isomorphism.

The map $\phi_{m/n}$ induces a map of the n -fold covering $S^1 = \mathbb{R}/n\mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}/\mathbb{Z}$ to the m -fold covering $S^1 = \mathbb{R}/m\mathbb{Z} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}/\mathbb{Z}$.
Thus, $\phi_{m/n}$ induces a homeomorphism of $\widehat{S^1}$, and we obtain:

Theorem: $\chi: \text{Mod}(\widehat{S^1}, \widehat{x}) \cong \text{Comm}(\mathbb{Z}) \cong \mathbb{Q}^*$

Example: Let Σ be a surface of genus $g \geq 2$, and $x \in \Sigma$.

Let $\widehat{\Gamma}$ denote the profinite completion of $\Gamma = \pi_1(\Sigma_g, x)$.

Let $\Gamma = \pi_1(\Sigma, x)$ then $\phi \in \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$ is represented by an isomorphism $\phi: H \rightarrow K$ where $H, K \subset \Gamma$ have finite-index.

Let $\Sigma_H \rightarrow \Sigma$ be the covering defined by the subgroup H , and likewise for Σ_K . Then ϕ induces a pointed homeomorphism $h_\phi: \Sigma_H \rightarrow \Sigma_K$ with $h_\phi(x_H) = x_K$.

Let $\widehat{\Sigma}_g$ be the *universal hyperbolic solenoid*. $\widehat{\Sigma}_g$ is the solenoidal manifold defined by the collection of all finite coverings of Σ_g .

Theorem: $\chi: \text{Mod}(\widehat{\Sigma}_g, \widehat{x}) \cong \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$

★ Odden, *The baseleaf preserving mapping class group of the universal hyperbolic solenoid*, **Trans. Amer. Math. Soc.**, 357:1829–1858, 2005.

Example: Let M be a closed aspherical manifold, $\hat{x} \in M$
Let $\hat{\Gamma}$ denote the profinite completion of $\Gamma = \pi_1(\Sigma_g, x)$.
Let \hat{M} denote the universal solenoid over M .
Let $\mathcal{E}(\hat{M}, \hat{x})$ be the pointed homotopy self-equivalences of \hat{M} .

Theorem: $\chi: \mathcal{E}(\hat{M}, \hat{x}) \cong \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$

★ Bering & Studenmund, *Topological models of abstract commensurators*,
Groups Geom. Dyn., 18:1403–1425, 2024.

Question: What about $\text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}, \hat{x})$ for a general solenoid $\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$?

- The map χ need not be onto, as ϕ_h must preserve $\mathcal{G}_{\mathcal{P}}$
- The map χ need not be injective.

We introduce methods from dynamical systems to study χ .

Let $\mathcal{G} = \{\Gamma = \Gamma_0 \supset \Gamma_1 \supset \Gamma_2 \supset \dots\}$ be a group chain in Γ .

For $\ell \geq 0$ let $X_\ell = \Gamma/\Gamma_\ell$ as a left Γ -space.

- Γ acts transitively on finite set $X_\ell = \Gamma/\Gamma_\ell$

$$X_{\mathcal{G}} \equiv \varprojlim \{p_{\ell+1}: X_{\ell+1} \rightarrow X_\ell \mid \ell \geq 0\} \subset \prod_{\ell \geq 0} X_\ell$$

$$x = (x_0, x_1, \dots) \in X_{\mathcal{G}} \iff p_{\ell+1}(x_{\ell+1}) = x_\ell \text{ for all } \ell \geq 0$$

Basic open sets are defined by fixing finite number of entries.

Γ acts on $X_{\mathcal{G}}$ by acting on each factor X_ℓ .

The action $\Phi: \Gamma \times X_{\mathcal{G}} \rightarrow X_{\mathcal{G}}$ is a (generalized) *odometer*. That is, it is a minimal equicontinuous action on a Cantor space.

A clopen set $U \subset X_G$ is *adapted* if $U \neq \emptyset$, and for all $\gamma \in \Gamma$, if $\gamma \cdot U \cap U \neq \emptyset$ then $\gamma \cdot U = U$.

$\Gamma_U = \{\gamma \in \Gamma \mid \gamma \cdot U = U\}$ is a subgroup of finite index in Γ .

Definition. Odometers $\Phi: \Gamma \times \mathfrak{X} \rightarrow \mathfrak{X}$ and $\Phi': \Gamma' \times \mathfrak{X}' \rightarrow \mathfrak{X}'$ are *return equivalent* if there exists adapted sets $U \subset \mathfrak{X}$ and $U' \subset \mathfrak{X}'$ and homeomorphism $h_U: U \rightarrow U'$ that conjugates the subgroups

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{H}_U &= \text{Image}\{\Phi_U: \Gamma_U \rightarrow \text{Homeo}(U)\} \\ \mathcal{H}'_{U'} &= \text{Image}\{\Phi'_{U'}: \Gamma'_{U'} \rightarrow \text{Homeo}(U')\}\end{aligned}$$

The map $\Phi_U: \Gamma_U \rightarrow \mathcal{H}_U$ may have kernel, and likewise for $\Phi'_{U'}$.

Thus, a homeomorphism $h_U: U \rightarrow U'$ which conjugates \mathcal{H}_U with $\mathcal{H}'_{U'}$, need not induce an isomorphism $\phi_U: \Gamma_U \rightarrow \Gamma'_{U'}$.

Definition: Let $(\mathfrak{X}, \Gamma, \Phi)$ be an odometer action, and $x \in \mathfrak{X}$.

- A *dynamical commensurator* is a homeomorphism $h_U: U \rightarrow V$, where U and V are adapted subsets with $x \in U \cap V$, such that $h_U(x) = x$, and h_U induces an isomorphism $\Theta_U: \mathcal{H}_U \rightarrow \mathcal{H}_V$.
- Commensurators $h_U: U \rightarrow V$ and $h_{U'}: U' \rightarrow V'$ are equivalent if there exists an adapted set U'' with $x \in U'' \subset U \cap U'$ such that $h_U|_{U''} = h'_{U'}|_{U''}$. We write $(h_U, U, V) \stackrel{\sim}{\sim} (h'_{U'}, U', V')$.

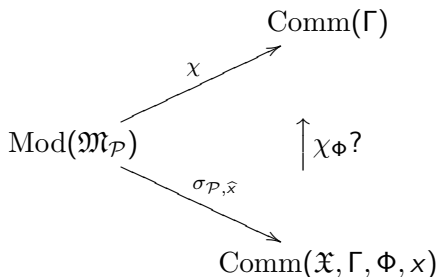
Definition: The *dynamical commensurator group* of $(\mathfrak{X}, \Gamma, \Phi)$ at x is the set of germs of dynamical commensurators,

$$\text{Comm}(\mathfrak{X}, \Gamma, \Phi, x) = \{h: U \rightarrow V \mid x \in U \cap V\} / \sim$$

Theorem. Suppose that $\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ and $\mathfrak{M}'_{\mathcal{P}'}$ are weak solenoids. If $\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ and $\mathfrak{M}'_{\mathcal{P}'}$ are homeomorphic, then their monodromy odometers $\Phi: \Gamma \times X_{\mathcal{P}} \rightarrow X_{\mathcal{P}}$ and $\Phi': \Gamma' \times X'_{\mathcal{P}'} \rightarrow X'_{\mathcal{P}'}$ are *return equivalent*.

★ Clark, Hurder & Lukina, *Classifying matchbox manifolds*, *Geom. Topol.*, 23(1):1–27, 2019.

Theorem: Let $\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ be a solenoidal manifold, with monodromy action $(\mathfrak{X}, \Gamma, \Phi)$. For $\hat{x} \in \mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$, there there are well-defined maps



Problem: How is $\text{Comm}(\mathfrak{X}, \Gamma, \Phi, x)$ related to $\text{Comm}(\Gamma)$?

The action $\Phi: \Gamma \times X_G \rightarrow X_G$ is *effective* if the action map $\Phi: \Gamma \rightarrow \text{Homeo}(X)$ has trivial kernel.

Consider the commensurator group relative to $\text{Homeo}(X)$:

$$\text{Comm}_{\text{Homeo}(X)}(\Gamma) = \{h \in \text{Homeo}(X) \mid h: \Phi(\Gamma) \cong \Phi(K); H, K \subset_f \Gamma\}$$

So we have

$$\text{Comm}(\mathfrak{X}, \Gamma, \Phi, x), \text{Comm}_{\text{Homeo}(X)}(\Gamma), \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$$

For an effective action Φ , clearly $\text{Comm}_{\text{Homeo}(X)}(\Gamma) \subset \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$.

The distinction between $\text{Comm}(\mathfrak{X}, \Gamma, \Phi, x)$ and $\text{Comm}_{\text{Homeo}(X)}(\Gamma)$ is in the domains of the conjugating maps.

Let $\Phi: \Gamma \times \mathfrak{X} \rightarrow \mathfrak{X}$ be an odometer. The action is:

- *quasi-analytic* if for each clopen set $U \subset \mathfrak{X}$, if the action of $g \in \Gamma$ satisfies $\Phi(g)(U) = U$ and the restriction $\Phi(g)|_U$ is the identity map on U , then $\Phi(g)$ acts as the identity on \mathfrak{X} .

(The dynamical analog of the *Unique Root Property*.)

- *locally quasi-analytic* if there exists $\epsilon > 0$ such that for any non-empty open set $U \subset \mathfrak{X}$ with $\text{diam}(U) < \epsilon$, and for any non-empty open subset $V \subset U$, if the action of $g \in \Gamma$ satisfies $\Phi(g)(V) = V$ and the restriction $\Phi(g)|_V$ is the identity map on V , then $\Phi(g)$ acts as the identity on U .

(A localized *Unique Root Property*.)

- An odometer $(\mathfrak{X}, \Gamma, \Phi)$ is *coherent* if for every adapted set $U \subset \mathfrak{X}$, the restricted holonomy action map $\Phi_U: \Gamma_U \rightarrow \text{Homeo}(U)$ has finite kernel.

Example: If Γ is virtually nilpotent, that is, Γ contains a nilpotent subgroup $\Gamma' \subset \Gamma$ with finite index, then an effective odometer action of Γ is coherent and locally quasi-analytic.

Example: If Γ is a weakly branch group, and \mathfrak{X} is the boundary of the tree on which the group acts, then the odometer action of Γ on \mathfrak{X} is inherently not coherent, and not locally quasi-analytic.

Theorem: Let $\Phi: \Gamma \times \mathfrak{X} \rightarrow \mathfrak{X}$ be an effective, coherent and locally quasi-analytic odometer. Let $x \in \mathfrak{X}$. Then there exists an injection

$$\chi_\Phi: \text{Comm}(\mathfrak{X}, \Gamma, \Phi, x) \rightarrow \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$$

For the self-homeomorphisms of $\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ we obtain:

Theorem: Let \mathcal{P} be a presentation such that the associated odometer $(X_{\mathcal{P}}, \Gamma, \Phi)$ is effective, coherent and locally quasi-analytic. Then for $\hat{x} \in \mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}$ we have the composition

$$\text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}, \hat{x}) \xrightarrow{\sigma_{\mathcal{P}, \hat{x}}} \text{Comm}(X_{\mathcal{P}}, \Gamma, \Phi, \hat{x}) \xrightarrow{\chi_{\Phi}} \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$$

where χ_{Φ} is injective.

Problem: Give conditions for $\sigma_{\mathcal{P}, \hat{x}}$ to be surjective, injective.

- If $\sigma_{\mathcal{P}, \hat{x}}$ is an isomorphism, then calculating $\text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}, \hat{x})$ is reduced to the algebraic problem of calculating the image of χ_{Φ} .

Example 1: Let \mathcal{P} be coverings of \mathbb{S}^1 defined by the chain

$$\Gamma = \mathbb{Z} \supset \Gamma_1 = m_1 \cdot \mathbb{Z} \supset \Gamma_2 = m_1 m_2 \cdot \mathbb{Z} \supset \Gamma_3 = m_1 m_2 m_3 \cdot \mathbb{Z} \supset \dots$$

where each $m_i > 1$. Set $\vec{m} = \{m_1, m_2, m_3, \dots\}$, $X_{\vec{m}} = X_{\mathcal{P}}$.

The odometer $(X_{\vec{m}}, \mathbb{Z}, \Phi)$ is free, and $X_{\vec{m}}$ is a profinite completion of \mathbb{Z} . Then for any $\hat{x} \in X_{\vec{m}}$:

- $\sigma_{\mathcal{P}, \hat{x}}: \text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}_{\vec{m}}, \hat{x}) \rightarrow \text{Comm}(X_{\vec{m}}, \mathbb{Z}, \Phi, \hat{x})$ is an isomorphism
- $\chi_{\Phi}: \text{Comm}(X_{\vec{m}}, \mathbb{Z}, \Phi, \hat{x}) \rightarrow \text{Comm}(\mathbb{Z})$ is an inclusion.

Almost everything to say about these solenoids is well-known:

★ Kwapisz, *Homotopy and dynamics for homeomorphisms of solenoids and Knaster continua*, **Fund. Math.**, 168(3):251–278, 2001

★ Lind & Ward, *Automorphisms of solenoids and p -adic entropy*, **Ergodic Theory Dynam. Systems**, 8:411–419, 1988.

Example 2: Assume that M is a closed manifold, $\Gamma = \pi_1(M, x)$, and \mathcal{G} is a group chain in Γ such that the associated odometer $(X_{\mathcal{G}}, \Gamma, \Phi)$ is effective, coherent and locally quasi-analytic.

Assume also that M is either:

- an infra-nilmanifold, or
- a Riemannian manifold M with negative sectional curvatures, or
- a Riemannian manifold M of dimension $n \neq 3, 4$ with non-positive sectional curvatures.

Then for any $\hat{x} \in X_{\mathcal{P}}$:

- $\sigma_{\mathcal{P}, \hat{x}}: \text{Mod}(\mathfrak{M}_{\mathcal{P}}, \hat{x}) \rightarrow \text{Comm}(X_{\mathcal{P}}, \Gamma, \Phi, \hat{x})$ is an isomorphism
- $\chi_{\Phi}: \text{Comm}(X_{\mathcal{G}}, \Gamma, \Phi, \hat{x}) \rightarrow \text{Comm}(\Gamma)$ is an inclusion.

★ H & Lukina, *Mapping class groups of solenoidal manifolds*, in preparation.

★ Davis and Hillman, *The Borel Conjecture for manifolds with boundary*, arXiv:2501.12509v1.

Example 3: The integer Heisenberg group:

$$\Gamma_{\mathbb{Z}} = \left\{ \begin{bmatrix} 1 & a & c \\ 0 & 1 & b \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} \mid a, b, c \in \mathbb{Z} \right\}.$$

We denote a 3×3 matrix in $\Gamma_{\mathbb{Z}}$ by the coordinates as (a, b, c) . Let \mathcal{H} denote the real Heisenberg group, a, b, c are real numbers.

For distinct primes $p, q \geq 2$, define the self-embedding $\varphi_{p,q}: \Gamma \rightarrow \Gamma$ by $\varphi(a, b, c) = (pa, qb, pqc)$. Define

$$\Gamma_{\ell} = \varphi_{p,q}^{\ell}(\Gamma) = \{(p^{\ell}a, q^{\ell}b, (pq)^{\ell}c) \mid a, b, c \in \mathbb{Z}\}$$

which yields a group chain $\mathcal{G}_{p,q}$ in $\Gamma_{\mathbb{Z}}$. The subgroups Γ_{ℓ} are not normal, and the limit Cantor space $X_{p,q}$ is not a group. The order of the subgroups generated by a and b are invariants.

Let $\mathcal{H}_{p,q}$ be the solenoidal manifold defined by the tower of coverings \mathcal{H}/Γ_ℓ of $\mathcal{H}/\Gamma_{\mathbb{Z}}$. Then:

$$\text{Mod}(\mathcal{H}_{p,q}, \hat{x}) \cong \mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{Z} \times \{\pm 1\} \times \{\pm 1\}$$

Many more examples of nilpotent odometer actions are in:

- ★ H & Lukina, *Type invariants for non-abelian odometers*, **Ergodic Theory Dynamical Systems**, to appear, 2025.
- ★ H & Lukina, *Prime spectrum and dynamics for nilpotent Cantor actions*, **Pacific J. Math.**, 327:107–128, 2023.