

Math 272y: Rational Lattices and their Theta Functions

25 November 2019: Lattices of level 3 and their theta functions

We briefly describe level-3 lattices and their theta functions, highlighting some differences and new phenomena compared with what we saw for level 2.

Let $L \subset \mathbf{R}^n$ be a lattice of level 3, that is, an even lattice such that $L' := (L^*)\langle 3 \rangle$ is also even. (As with level 2, we may allow either L or L' to be self-dual, and thus of level 1, though we have dealt with such lattices already.) Since 3 is odd and squarefree, it is enough to assume that $3L^* \subseteq L$: then if $v \in L^*$ then $3v \in L$ so $\langle v, v \rangle = \frac{1}{3}\langle 3v, v \rangle \in \frac{1}{3}\mathbf{Z}$, and also $\langle v, v \rangle = \frac{1}{9}\langle 3v, 3v \rangle \in \frac{1}{9}2\mathbf{Z}$, so $\langle v, v \rangle \in \frac{2}{3}\mathbf{Z}$; hence $(L^*)\langle 3 \rangle$ is an even lattices, as claimed.

Necessarily n is even because $\text{disc } L$ is odd. This time any even n may arise; we have seen already the example of A_2 , which yields a level-3 lattice $A_2^{n/2} \subset \mathbf{R}^n$ for all even n .

Next we describe the discriminant forms on the $(\mathbf{Z}/3\mathbf{Z})$ -vector spaces

$$D(L) = L^*/L, \quad D(L') = L'^*/L',$$

each of which carries a nondegenerate quadratic form $Q : [v] \mapsto (3\langle v, v \rangle) \pmod{3}$.

We recall the structure of quadratic forms over finite fields of odd characteristic. For a finite field k of odd order q , it is known that for each $r > 0$ there are two isomorphism classes of nondegenerate quadratic forms on r -dimensional vector spaces V/k , classified by the discriminant which is well-defined in k^*/k^{*2} . For r odd, we can scale a form in one class to the other, so there is only one orthogonal group. For r even, the isomorphism class is scaling invariant, and the two classes are also distinguished by their maximal isotropic spaces: if the discriminant is $(-1)^{r/2}$ times a square then V has isotropic subspaces of dimension $r/2$; otherwise the largest isotropic subspaces have dimension $(r/2) - 1$. (Ultimately the factor $(-1)^{r/2}$ arises because for $r = 2$ the split quadratic form $Q(x_1, x_2) = x_1^2 - x_2^2$ has discriminant -1 .) We use Q_+ for a quadratic form that has an $(r/2)$ -dimensional isotropic subspace, and Q_- for a form that does not; as we saw in characteristic 2, the orthogonal sum of two Q_+ forms or of two Q_- forms is of type Q_+ , while the sum of a Q_+ and a Q_- is of type Q_- .

Now for $q = 3$ the only nonzero square is 1, so quadratic forms have a well-defined discriminant in $\{\pm 1\}$. The quadratic forms on $D(A_2)$ and $D(E_6)$ have discriminants -1 and $+1$ respectively, while the form on $D(A_2^2)$ has type Q_- . We deduce:

Proposition. *Let $L \subset \mathbf{R}^n$ be a lattice of level 3 and discriminant 3^r . Then $r \equiv n/2 \pmod{2}$. If $n \equiv 2 \pmod{4}$ then the quadratic form on $D(L)$ has discriminant $(-1)^{(n/2)+r}$. If $4|n$ then the quadratic form on $D(L)$ is of type Q_+ or Q_- according as n is 0 or 4 mod 8.*

Proof: If r is even and the form has type Q_+ then the preimage of a maximal isotropic is an even unimodular lattice of rank n , so $8|n$. If the type is Q_- , the form on the rank $n + 4$ lattice $L \oplus A_2^2$ has type Q_+ , so $8 | n + 4$ and $n \equiv 4 \pmod{8}$. Conversely, if r is odd then $L \oplus A_2$ has rank $n + 2$ and level 3 with and discriminant 3^{r+1} , so $4 | n + 2$ and $n \equiv 2 \pmod{4}$. The discriminant is then deduced from the type of the quadratic form on $D(L \oplus A_2)$. \square

Now to the modular forms.

We have seen that the translation $T : z \mapsto z + 1$ and the involution $w_3 : z \mapsto -1/(3z)$ generate a hyperbolic triangle group, with a cusp at $i\infty$ (fixed by T) and elliptic points at $i/\sqrt{3}$ (fixed by w_3) and $(i/\sqrt{3} - 1)/2$ (fixed by w_3T , which has order 6). The index-2 subgroup $\Gamma_1(3)$ is also a triangle group, generated by T and $w_3Tw_3 : z \mapsto z/(1 - 3z)$, with cusps at 0 (fixed by w_3Tw_3) and $i\infty$, and an elliptic point at $(i/\sqrt{3} - 1)/2$ fixed by $(w_3T)^2 : z \mapsto -(z + 1)/(3z + 2)$. For $N = 3$ the congruence subgroup $\Gamma_1(N)$ no longer contains $-I_2$, but it still contains either g or $-g$ for every $g \in \Gamma_0(N)$. (This is also the case for $N = 4$ and $N = 6$, and for no larger N .) Thus if a holomorphic function $f : \mathcal{H} \rightarrow \mathbf{C}$ is weakly modular of some weight $k \in \mathbf{Z}$ for $\Gamma_1(3)$, then f is automatically modular of level 3, with trivial Nebentypus if k is even, and Nebentypus χ_3 (the nontrivial Dirichlet character mod 3) if k is odd.

For $k \in \mathbf{Z}$, let $M_k(\Gamma_1(3))$ be the vector space of modular forms of weight k for $\Gamma_1(3)$, and $S_k(\Gamma_1(3))$ its subspace of cusp forms. The involution w_3 acts on these spaces by

$$(w_3f)(z) = (3^{1/2}z/i)^{-k}f(-1/3z); \quad (1)$$

as we did for w_2 , we choose the factor $(3^{1/2}z/i)^{-k}$ so that it is positive on the imaginary axis, so in particular $w_3\theta_L = \theta_L$ if L is a level-3 lattice such as A_2 for which $L \cong L'$.

Theorem. *For any integer k ,*

- i) $M_k(\Gamma_1(3))$ has dimension $\max(\lfloor (k + 3)/3 \rfloor, 0)$;*
- ii) $S_k(\Gamma_1(3))$ has dimension $\dim M_{k-6}(\Gamma_1(3)) = \max(\lfloor (k + 3)/3 \rfloor - 2, 0)$;*
- iii) If $M_k(\Gamma_1(3))$ or $\dim S_k(\Gamma_1(3))$ has dimension d then the w_3 -invariant subspace has dimension $d/2$ or $(d + 1)/2$ according as d is even or odd.*

That is:

k	< 0	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	\dots
$\dim M_k(\Gamma_1(3))$	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	4	4	4	5	\dots
$\dim M_k(\Gamma_1(3))^{w_3}$	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	\dots
$\dim S_k(\Gamma_1(3))$	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	\dots
$\dim S_k(\Gamma_1(3))^{w_3}$	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	\dots

The proof starts as with the parallel theorems for $\Gamma_1(2)$ (and $\Gamma(1)$). We first show that all nonzero $f \in M_k(\Gamma_1(3))$ have the same number of zeros in a fundamental domain \mathcal{F}_3 for $\Gamma_1(3)$, counted with multiplicity. Here the final answer is $k/3$, coming from a contour integral over the third-circle $\{z \in \mathcal{H} : |z| = 1/\sqrt{3}, |\operatorname{Re}(z)| \leq 1/2\}$, and consistent with the count of $k/12$ for a $\Gamma(1)$ form because $\Gamma_1(3)$ has index 4 in $\operatorname{PSL}_2(\mathbf{Z})$. As before (*mutatis mutandis*), the cusp at $i\infty$ is counted as for Γ_1 (a nonzero multiple of $q^n + O(q^{n+1})$ has valuation n); an n -th order zero at an elliptic point in the orbit of $(i/\sqrt{3} - 1)/2$ is counted with multiplicity $n/3$; and at $z = 0$ the valuation of f is the valuation of w_3f at $z = i\infty$.

This lets us show that for each k the dimensions of $M_k(\Gamma_1(3))$ and $S_k(\Gamma_1(3))$ are no larger than claimed, so it is enough to produce enough modular forms. For $k = 1$, we use θ_{A_2} ; this also gives a generator $\theta_{A_2}^2$ of $M_2(\Gamma_1(3))$, and for $M_3(\Gamma_1(3))$ we use $\theta_{A_2}^3$ and θ_{E_6} . We can then construct a weight-6 cusp

form $\Delta_{(3)} = q + O(q^2)$ as a product of two nonzero linear combinations of $\theta_{A_2}^3$ and θ_{E_6} , one vanishing at $z = i\infty$ and the other at $z = 0$. Now for each k the weight- k monomials in θ_{A_2} and θ_{E_6} constitute a basis for $M_k(\Gamma_1(3))$, and their products with $\Delta_{(3)}$ constitute a basis for $S_{k+6}(\Gamma_1(3))$. This also yields the dimensions of the w_3 -invariant subspaces, once we check that θ_{A_2} and $\Delta_{(3)}$ are invariant under w_3 . These two forms generate $M_1(\Gamma_1(3))$ and $S_6(\Gamma_1(3))$ respectively, so must be in either the $+1$ or -1 eigenspace for w_3 , and if either of these forms were in the -1 eigenspace it would vanish at $i/\sqrt{3}$, which is not possible by the zero-counting formula.

By comparing zero multiplicities and leading terms, we see that the weight-24 form $\Delta_{(3)}^4$ equals $\Delta(z)\Delta(3z)$, whence

$$\Delta_{(3)}(z) = (\eta(z)\eta(3z))^6 = q \prod_{m=1}^{\infty} ((1 - q^m)(1 - q^{3m}))^6, \quad (2)$$

which expands to

$$\Delta_{(3)}(z) = q - 6q^2 + 9q^3 + 4q^4 + 6q^5 - 54q^6 - 40q^7 \dots \quad (3)$$

Likewise the weight-3 forms vanishing at a cusp are

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{54}(\theta_{E_6} - \theta_{A_2}^3) &= \eta(q^3)^9/\eta(q)^3 = q + 3q^2 + 9q^3 + 13q^4 + 24q^5 + 27q^6 + 50q^7 + \dots, \\ \frac{1}{2}(3\theta_{E_6}' - \theta_{A_2}^3) &= \eta(q)^9/\eta(q^3)^3 = 1 - 9q + 27q^2 - 9q^3 - 117q^4 + 216q^5 + 27q^6 \dots \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

If disc $L = 3^{n/2}$ then L and L' have the same discriminant, and it may happen that $L \cong L'$, as happens for $L = A_2$. For such lattices, θ_L is invariant under w_3 , so is a polynomial in θ_{A_2} and $\Delta_{(3)}$. As before, we deduce a lower bound on $N_{\min}(L)$, which is satisfied if and only if θ_L is extremal; here this bound is $2\lfloor n/12 \rfloor + 2$, and once more the extremal modular form has positive $q^{\lfloor n/12 \rfloor + 1}$ coefficient because the product formula (2) shows that the power series for $1/\Delta_{(3)}$ has positive coefficients. Extremal lattices of level 3 include at least two record sphere packings: A_2 for $n = 2$, and the *Coxeter-Todd lattice* K_{12} , which can be constructed as a 3-neighbor of A_2^6 : write A_2 as $\{(x, y, z) \in \mathbf{Z}^3 : x + y + z = 0\}$; form a lattice $(A_2^6)^{+3}$ generated by A_2^6 and the dual vector (v, v, v, v, v, v) where $v = (1/3, 1/3, -2/3) \in A_2^*$; then K_{12} is the index-3 sublattice $\{(\vec{x}, \vec{y}, \vec{z}) \in A_2^6 : \sum_{j=1}^6 x_j - y_j \equiv 0 \pmod{3}\}$. This lattice has theta series

$$\theta_{K_{12}} = \theta_{A_2}^6 - 36\Delta_{(3)} = 1 + 756q^2 + 4032q^3 + 20412q^4 + 60480q^5 + \dots \quad (5)$$

which can be used to show that K_{12} is the only extremal lattice of rank 12 and level 3.

The shells of an extremal lattice of rank n constitute spherical 5-designs if $n \equiv 0$ or $2 \pmod{12}$, 3-designs if $n \equiv 4$ or $6 \pmod{12}$, and 1-designs in the remaining cases $n \equiv 8$ or $10 \pmod{12}$. For example, the regular hexagon is the first shell of A_2 and is a circular 5-design, and each shell of K_{12} is a spherical 5-design. For a variation on this theme, the shells of E_6 are also 5-designs: since E_6' has no roots, any weighted theta function $\theta_{E_6, P}$ with $\deg P > 0$ is a $\Gamma_1(3)$ cusp form with a *double zero* at $z = 0$, so vanishes as long as $3 + \deg P < 9$. For each of A_2, E_6, K_{12} the 5-design property can also be deduced from the action of the automorphism group, but (as we saw in levels 1 and 2) these

spherical-design properties also persist for lattice in higher dimension whose symmetry groups have more invariants of degree < 6 .

Recall that for level-2 lattices we made use of linear combinations of Eisenstein series $E_k(z)$ and $E_k(2z)$ to give exact or approximate formulas for the representation numbers $N_{2n}(L)$. We can give some similar formulas here. For example, $M_2(\Gamma_1(3))$ is generated by

$$E_2(z) = \frac{1}{2}(3E_2(3z) - E_2(z)) = 1 + 12 \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \left(\frac{mq^m}{1-q^m} - \frac{3mq^{3m}}{1-q^{3m}} \right), \quad (6)$$

which must equal $\theta_{A_2}^2$, whence $N_{2n}(A_2^2) = 12\sigma_1(n) - 36\sigma_1(n/3)$ for every positive integer n ; and $M_4(\Gamma_1(3))$ is generated by $E_4(z)$ and $E_4(3z)$, so

$$\theta_{A_2^4}(z) = \frac{1}{10}(E_4(z) + 9E_4(3z)), \quad \theta_{A_2E_6}(z) = \frac{1}{40}(13E_4(z) + 27E_4(3z)), \quad (7)$$

and from $\theta_{A_2E_6}$ we also deduce the formula $\frac{1}{40}(E_4(z) + 39E_4(3z))$ for the lattice $(A_2E_6)' = A_2 \oplus E_6'$, and again recover formulas for $N_{2n}(A_2^4)$, $N_{2n}(A_2E_6)$, $N_{2n}(A_2 \oplus E_6')$ as sums over divisors of n , e.g.

$$N_{2n}(A_2^4) = 24(\sigma_3(n) + 9\sigma_3(n/3)), \quad N_{2n}(A_2E_6) = 6(13\sigma_3(n) + 27\sigma_3(n/3)). \quad (8)$$

The lattice A_2E_6 is characterized by its theta function (and even by its rank 8 and root number of 78); but for A_2^4 we find another lattice $(D_4 \oplus (D_4(3)))^{++}$ that has the same theta function, and thus yields our first example of isospectral tori in dimension as low as 8.

But in level 3 we also have lattices of rank $2k$ with k odd, and their theta functions cannot be obtained in the same way from $\Gamma(1)$ Eisenstein series. It is true that we can write formulas such as

$$\theta_{A_2}(z) = E_2(z)^{1/2} = 1 + 6q + 6q^3 + 6q^4 + 12q^7 + 6q^9 + 6q^{12} + 12q^{13} + 6q^{16} + \dots, \quad (9)$$

but this does not give us access to the representation numbers $N_{2n}(A_2)$. Still, there is a known formula for $N_{2n}(A_2)$ as a divisor sum, using the arithmetic of the cyclotomic number field $\mathbf{Q}(\sqrt{-3}) = \mathbf{Q}(e^{2\pi i/3})$ (because the norms of A_2 are the integers $2(x^2 - xy + y^2)$, and $x^2 - xy + y^2$ is also the algebraic norm of a general algebraic integer $x + ye^{2\pi i/3}$ in that cyclotomic field):

$$N_{2n}(A_2) = 6 \sum_{d|n} \chi_3(d), \quad (10)$$

where χ_3 is again the nontrivial Dirichlet character mod 3. The coefficients of θ_{E_6} suggest similar patterns; for example, when p is prime, $N_{2p}(E_6) = 72(p^2 + 1)$ for $p \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$ and $N_{2p}(E_6) = 90(p^2 - 1)$ for $p \equiv -1 \pmod{3}$ (and also for $p = 3$). This suggests that the construction of Eisenstein series might be modified to produce modular forms of odd weight for $\Gamma_1(3)$ whose coefficients are even-power divisor sums weighted by χ_3 , and more generally modular forms of level N whose coefficients are divisor sums weighted by the Nebentypus character. We next carry out such a construction.

Recall that for even k the Eisenstein series of weight k for $\Gamma(1)$ is proportional to $\sum_{m,n} (mz + n)^{-k}$, the sum ranging over all $(m, n) \neq (0, 0)$. We generalize as follows: fix a prime¹ $N > 1$, a nontrivial

¹The construction generalizes to non-prime levels N and characters of conductor N , but in that setting there are more cusps to check, especially when the level is not squarefree; for now we introduce the idea for prime N only.

Dirichlet character $\chi \bmod N$, and an integer $k > 2$ such that $(-1)^k = \chi(-1)$, define

$$G_k(z, \chi) = \sum_{\substack{m, n \in \mathbf{Z} \\ (m, n) \neq (0, 0)}} \bar{\chi}(n) (Nmz + n)^{-k}. \quad (11)$$

The sum converges absolutely because $k > 2$, and the parity condition $(-1)^k = \chi(-1)$ is needed to prevent the sum from simplifying to zero due to cancellation between the (m, n) and $(-m, -n)$ terms. For $g = \begin{smallmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{smallmatrix} \in \Gamma_1(n)$ we have

$$G_k(gz, \chi) = (cz + d)^k \sum_{\substack{m, n \in \mathbf{Z} \\ (m, n) \neq (0, 0)}} \bar{\chi}(n) ((Nam + cn)z + (Nbm + dn))^{-k}. \quad (12)$$

Since $N|c$, the coefficient $Nam + cn$ of z is a multiple of N ; combining this with $\det(g) = 1$, we see that as (m, n) ranges over all nonzero integer vectors in \mathbf{Z}^2 , so does

$$(m', n') := (Nam + cn, Nbm + dn).$$

But the constant coefficient $n' = Nbm + dn$ is congruent to $dn \bmod N$, so $\chi(n') = \chi(d)\chi(n)$. Therefore

$$G_k(gz, \chi) = \chi(d) (cz + d)^k \sum_{\substack{m', n' \in \mathbf{Z} \\ (m', n') \neq (0, 0)}} \bar{\chi}(n') (mz + n)^{-k} = \chi(d) (cz + d)^k G_k(z, \chi). \quad (13)$$

Thus $G_k(z, \chi)$ is at least weakly modular of level N with Nebentypus χ . In particular, $G_k(z, \chi) = G_k(z + 1, \chi)$ so $G_k(z, \chi)$ has an expansion in powers of $q = e^{2\pi iz}$. The constant coefficient is

$$G_k(i\infty, \chi) = 2 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \bar{\chi}(n) n^{-k} = 2L(k, \bar{\chi}), \quad (14)$$

which is known to be an algebraic multiple of π^k under our hypothesis that $(-1)^k = \chi(-1)$; for example,

$$L(3, \chi_3) = 4\pi^3/3^{9/2}, \quad L(5, \chi_3) = 4\pi^5/3^{13/2}, \quad L(7, \chi_3) = 56\pi^7/3^{19/2}, \quad (15)$$

and in general $L(k, \bar{\chi})$ is a rational multiple of $N^{1/2}\pi^k$ if χ is a real character. By (14) we have

$$\begin{aligned} G_k(z, \chi) &= 2L(k, \bar{\chi}) + 2 \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \sum_{n \in \mathbf{Z}} \bar{\chi}(n) (Nmz + n)^{-k} \\ &= 2L(k, \bar{\chi}) + 2 \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \sum_{n_0 \bmod N} \bar{\chi}(n_0) \sum_{n \equiv n_0 \bmod N} (Nmz + n)^{-k}. \end{aligned} \quad (16)$$

The innermost sum is

$$N^{-k} \sum_{n_1 \in \mathbf{Z}} (mz + (n_0/N) + n_1)^{-k} = \frac{(-2\pi i)^k}{(k-1)!N^k} \sum_{d=1}^{\infty} d^{k-1} e^{2\pi idn_0/N} q^{md} \quad (17)$$

where $q = e^{2\pi iz}$ (for the last step, see formula (32) on page 92 of Serre's *A Course in Arithmetic*). Multiplying this by $\bar{\chi}(n_0)$ and summing over n_0 yields

$$\frac{(-2\pi i)^k}{(k-1)!N^k} \sum_{d=1}^{\infty} d^{k-1} \tau_d(\bar{\chi}) q^{md}, \quad (18)$$

where $\tau_d(\bar{\chi})$ is the *Gauss sum*

$$\tau_d(\bar{\chi}) := \sum_{n_0 \bmod N} \bar{\chi}(n_0) e^{2\pi i d n_0 / N} = \chi(d) \tau_1(\bar{\chi}). \quad (19)$$

It is known that $\tau_1(\bar{\chi})$ is a complex number of absolute value $N^{1/2}$; for example,²

$$\tau_1(\chi_3) = e^{2\pi i/3} - e^{-2\pi i/3} = \sqrt{3}i. \quad (20)$$

Putting everything together, we find that

$$G_k(z, \chi) = 2L(k, \bar{\chi}) + 2 \frac{(-2\pi i)^k \tau_1(\bar{\chi})}{(k-1)!N^k} \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \sum_{d=1}^{\infty} \chi(d) d^{k-1} q^{md}. \quad (21)$$

For example,

$$G_3(z, \chi_3) = \frac{8\pi^3}{39/2} \left(1 - 9 \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \sum_{d=1}^{\infty} \chi_3(d) d^{k-1} q^{md} \right) = \frac{8\pi^3}{39/2} [1 - 9(q + 3q^2 - q^3 - 13q^4 \dots)]. \quad (22)$$

The bracketed series agrees with the linear combination $(3\theta_{A_2}^3 - \theta_{E_6})/2$ of our generators of $M_3(\Gamma_1(3))$.

We check the growth condition at the cusp $z = 0$, and obtain an independent modular form of weight k , by applying w_N , which takes $G_k(z, \chi)$ to a multiple of

$$z^{-k} G_k(-1/(Nz), \chi) = \sum_{\substack{m, n \in \mathbf{Z} \\ (m, n) \neq (0, 0)}} \bar{\chi}(n) (nz - m)^{-k}. \quad (23)$$

This is simpler: the constant term vanishes because $\bar{\chi}(n) = 0$ for $n = 0$, and the $n \neq 0$ terms are

$$2 \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \bar{\chi}(n) \sum_{m \in \mathbf{Z}} (nz - m)^k = 2 \frac{(-2\pi i)^k}{(k-1)!} \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \bar{\chi}(n) \sum_{d=1}^{\infty} d^{k-1} q^{nd}. \quad (24)$$

Removing the factor $2(-2\pi i)^k/(k-1)!$ leaves the series whose q^n coefficient is $\sum_{d|n} \bar{\chi}(n/d) d^{k-1}$. For example, $w_3 G_3(z, \chi)$ is a multiple of

$$q + 3q^2 + 9q^3 + 13q^4 + 24q^5 + 27q^6 + 50q^7 + \dots \quad (25)$$

Multiplying (25) by 9, 27, or 81 and adding to the series $1 - 9(q + 3q^2 - q^3 - 13q^4 \dots)$ of (22) recovers the theta functions of E'_6 , A_2^3 , E_6 respectively. For example, $N_{2n}(E'_6) = 9 \sum_{d|n} (\chi_3(n/d) - \chi_3(d))$, which includes the formula for $N_{2n}(E_6)$ (as $N_{6n}(E'_6)$) and vanishes as it should for $n \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$.

²In general if χ is a real character to prime modulus N then $\tau_1(N) = N^{1/2}$ or $N^{1/2}i$ according to whether $N \equiv +1$ or $-1 \pmod{4}$.