

# Quantitative ergodic theory

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## Context:

- Ergodic theory,
- Representation theory,
- Operator algebras,
- Percolation theory (probabilities),
- Lattices in Lie groups...

# Orbit equivalence

## Definition (Isomorphism)

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- Any two ergodic pmp actions of  $\mathbb{Z}$  are OE (Dye 59).



# Amenable groups

## Definition

A countable group  $\Lambda$  is **amenable** if it admits a sequence of “almost-invariant finite subsets”  $A_n \subset \Lambda$ , i.e. such that for all  $\lambda \in \Lambda$ ,

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- stable under extension, subgroup, quotient...
- free groups  $F_k$  on  $k \geq 2$  generators **are not** amenable.

# A famous theorem of Ornstein-Weiss

## Theorem (Ornstein-Weiss 80)

*Let  $\Lambda$  and  $\Gamma$  be two (infinite) countable amenable groups. Then any pmp ergodic actions  $\Lambda \curvearrowright (X, \mu)$  and  $\Gamma \curvearrowright (Y, \nu)$  are OE.*

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**Problem:** Given generating sets  $S_\Lambda$  and  $S_\Gamma$ , quantify the “average distortion” of the “random” map  $\alpha(\cdot, x) : \Lambda \rightarrow \Gamma$ .

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# Quantifying orbit equivalence: other point of view

## Definition (Word distance on $X$ )

Let  $\Lambda$  be a group generated by a finite subset  $S$  and let assume  $\Lambda$  acts freely on  $(X, \mu)$ , then the **word distance on  $X$**  associated to  $S$  is

$$d_S(x, x') = \min\{n \in \mathbb{N} \mid x' = s_1^{\pm 1} \dots s_n^{\pm 1} \cdot x\},$$

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We use the measure  $\mu$  to **compare the word distances** associated to two distinct pmp actions as follows:

## Proposition ( $\varphi$ -integrable orbit equivalence)

Assume  $\Lambda, \Gamma \curvearrowright (X, \mu)$  with same orbits. The actions are  $(\varphi, \psi)$ -OE iff for all  $\lambda \in S_\Lambda$ ,

$$\int_X \varphi(d_{S_\Gamma}(x, \lambda \cdot x)) d\mu(x) < \infty,$$

and all  $\gamma \in S_\Gamma$ ,

$$\int_X \psi(d_{S_\Lambda}(x, \gamma \cdot x)) d\mu(x) < \infty,$$

# Growth function

Let  $\Lambda$  be a group generated by a finite subset  $S$ . Define the growth function of  $\Lambda$

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For instance  $\mathbb{H}(\mathbb{Z})$  and  $\mathbb{Z}^4$  are not  $L^1$ -OE, although they have same growth.

# Quantify amenability: Følner profile

## Definition

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$$Føl(n) = \min \left\{ |A| \mid \frac{|As \Delta A|}{|A|} \leq 1/n, \forall s \in S \right\}$$

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- For lamplighter groups (Erschler 06):  $F \wr \mathbb{Z}^d = \bigoplus_{\mathbb{Z}^d} F \rtimes \mathbb{Z}^d$ ,  $F\phi l(n) \approx e^{n^d}$ .

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Theorem (Delabie-Koivisto-Le Maître-Tessera 20)

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## Corollary (No quantitative version of OW's theorem)

For all  $\Lambda$  amenable, and all increasing unbounded  $\varphi$ , there exists another amenable group  $\Gamma$  that is **not**  $\varphi$ -OE to  $\Lambda$ .

Based on constructions of Brioussell-Zheng (2021).

# What about a converse?

The previous results are nearly optimal in a number of situations. For instance

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The  $d$ -odometer is the action of  $\mathbb{Z}$  by translation on  $\mathbb{Z}_d$  (the ring of  $d$ -adic numbers).

# Constructing an OE between $\mathbb{Z}$ and $\mathbb{Z}^2$

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Example: if  $x = (0, 1, 1, \dots)$ ,  $y = (1, 0, 1, \dots)$ , then

$$F(x, y) = (0 + 2, 1 + 0, 1 + 2, \dots) = (2, 1, 3, \dots).$$