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# A SINGULAR INTEGRAL EQUATION CONNECTED WITH QUASICONFORMAL MAPPINGS IN SPACE

by Lars V. AHLFORS <sup>1)</sup>

*Dedicated to Albert Pfluger for his seventieth birthday*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper continues the author's investigation of two differential operators,  $S$  and  $S^*$ , which arise naturally in the study of infinitesimal quasiconformal mappings in  $n$  dimensions (see References). If  $\Omega$  is open in  $\mathbf{R}^n$  the operator  $S$  acts on functions  $f: \Omega \rightarrow \mathbf{R}^n$  and has values  $Sf \in SM_n$  where  $SM_n$  is the space of symmetric  $n \times n$  matrices with zero trace. Definitions are in Sec. 2.

A key question is the solvability of the inhomogeneous equation  $Sf = v$ . For  $n = 2$ ,  $Sf$  can be identified with the complex derivative  $f_{\bar{z}}$  of a complex-valued function, and the problem is that of recovering  $f$  from  $f_{\bar{z}}$ . As well known, this problem has always a solution, and it is given by the generalized Cauchy formula, also known as Pompeiu's formula. For  $n > 2$  the right hand member  $v$ , an  $SM_n$ -valued function, must satisfy certain conditions, which are known in principle, as limiting cases of the Weyl-Schouten conditions of vanishing conformal curvature.

These conditions, although explicit, are quite intractable. It is therefore rather surprising that a necessary and sufficient condition for  $Sf = v$  to be solvable can be expressed as a singular homogeneous integral equation satisfied by  $v$ . This integral equation can be treated by the methods of Calderon and Zygmund.

## 2. DEFINITIONS AND NOTATIONS

A quasiconformal homeomorphism  $F: \Omega \rightarrow F(\Omega)$  is known to be differentiable almost everywhere. We denote its Jacobian matrix by  $DF$ . The normalized Jacobian is  $XF = (\det DF)^{-1/n} DF$ , and  $MF = {}^t XF \cdot XF$

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is the normalized and symmetrized Jacobian; it carries the quasiconformal data of the mapping.

The Riemannian metric  $ds^2 = {}^t dx (MF) dx$  is conformally flat, a condition expressed by the vanishing of the conformal curvature tensor. For  $n = 3$  this tensor is identically zero, but there is instead an integrability condition.

Let  $F(x, t)$  be a one-parameter family of homeomorphisms such that  $F(x, 0) = x$ ,  $\dot{F}(x, 0) = f(x)$ . Under suitable regularity conditions  $(DF)_0 = Df$ ,  $(XF)_0 = Df - \frac{1}{n} \text{tr } Df \cdot 1_n$ , and  $(MF)_0 = Df + {}^t Df - \frac{2}{n} \text{tr } Df \cdot 1_n$ . This motivates introducing the differential operator  $S$  defined by

$$(Sf)_{ij} = \frac{1}{2} (D_i f_j + D_j f_i) - \frac{1}{n} \delta_{ij} D_k f_k.$$

(The summation convention is in force in this paper). Note that  $Sf$  has values in  $SM_n$ .

There is a formal adjoint  $S^*$  which maps  $SM_n$ -valued functions on  $\mathbb{R}^n$ -valued functions. It is defined by

$$(S^* \varphi)_i = D_j \varphi_{ij},$$

and it satisfies

$$(1) \quad \int_{\Omega} Sf \cdot \varphi dx = - \int_{\Omega} f \cdot S^* \varphi dx$$

when either  $f$  or  $\varphi$  has compact support. ( $Sf \cdot \varphi$  and  $f \cdot S^* \varphi$  are the dot products  $Sf_{ij} \varphi_{ij}$  and  $f_i (S^* \varphi)_i$ , respectively;  $dx$  is the euclidean volume element.)

Equation (1) defines  $Sf$  and  $S^* \varphi$  as *distributions* even if  $f$  and  $\varphi$  are not differentiable. We are always assuming that  $f$  is continuous and  $\varphi$  locally integrable.

### 3. INVARIANCE PROPERTIES

In (1) we prefer to regard  $\varphi dx$  as a matrix-valued measure, so that the pairing

$$\langle Sf, \varphi dx \rangle = \int_{\Omega} Sf \cdot \varphi dx$$

is between a function and a measure. Similarly,  $S^*(\varphi dx) = (S^* \varphi) dx$  is a vector-valued measure.

Let  $A$  be a Möbius transformation. We define the *pull-backs* of vector- and  $SM_n$ -valued functions by

$$\begin{aligned}(A^* f)(x) &= (DA)^{-1} f(Ax) \\ (A^* \varphi)(x) &= (DA)^{-1} \varphi(Ax) DA\end{aligned}$$

and for the corresponding measures by

$$\begin{aligned}A^*(f dx) &= |\det A| {}^t D A f(Ax) dx \\ A^*(\varphi dx) &= |\det A| (DA)^{-1} \varphi(Ax) DA.\end{aligned}$$

These definitions are chosen so that the pairings are invariant:

$$\begin{aligned}\langle A^* f, A^* g dx \rangle &= \langle f, g dx \rangle \\ \langle A^* v, A^* \varphi dx \rangle &= \langle v, \varphi dx \rangle.\end{aligned}$$

There is a basic identity

$$(2) \quad S(A^* f)(x) = (DA)^{-1} S f(Ax) DA$$

which may be expressed as a commutativity relation  $SA^* = A^* S$ , applicable to functions, but not to measures. It implies the relation  $S^* A^* = A^* S^*$ , which is valid for measures in the sense that

$$(3) \quad S^*(A^* \varphi dx) = A^*(S^* \varphi dx),$$

but not for functions. It should be noted that (2) and (3) are true only because  $A$  is conformal.

A function is transformed into a measure by multiplication with a fixed invariant measure  $\rho dx$ . The invariance means that  $A^*(\rho dx) = \rho dx$ , or  $\rho(Ax) |\det DA| = \rho(x)$ ; we assume also that  $A$  leaves  $\Omega$  invariant. In these circumstances it makes sense to consider the operator  $S^* \rho S$  which takes  $f$  to  $S^* [\rho(Sf)dx]$  and commutes with  $A^* : (S^* \rho S) A^* = A^* (S^* \rho S)$ .

There are three classical cases in which  $\Omega$  is invariant under a transitive group  $G(\Omega)$  of Möbius transformations:

- (i)  $\Omega = \mathbf{R}^n$ .  $G(\Omega)$  is the group of euclidean motions, and  $\rho = 1$ .
- (ii)  $\Omega = B(1) = \{x : |x| < 1\}$ .  $G = G(B)$  is the group of non-euclidean motions, and  $\rho = (1 - |x|^2)^{-n}$ .
- (iii)  $\Omega$  is the one-point compactification of  $\mathbf{R}^n$ , identified with  $S^n$  in  $\mathbf{R}^{n+1}$ . The group is formed by the rotations of the sphere, and  $\rho = (1 + |x|^2)^{-n}$ .



#### 4. NON-EUCLIDEAN MOTIONS

The euclidean case was dealt with in [3]. In the present paper we undertake a more detailed study of the hyperbolic case. The unit ball in  $\mathbf{R}^n$  is denoted by  $B$ , and  $G$  is the full group of Möbius transformations mapping  $B$  on itself. The Poincaré metric  $ds = (1 - |x|^2)^{-1} |dx|$  and the non-euclidean volume element  $\rho dx = (1 - |x|^2)^{-n} dx$  are invariant under  $G$ .

For  $A \in G$  we prefer to denote the Jacobian by  $A'(x)$  rather than  $DA(x)$ . We use  $|A'(x)|$  for the linear rate of change, the same in all directions. This notation has the advantage of leading to formulas which are easily recognizable generalizations of the familiar formulas for  $n = 2$  in complex notation.  $|A'(x)|$  is also the square norm of the matrix  $A'(x)$ , and  $|\det A'(x)| = |A'(x)|^n$ .

Reflection in the unit sphere is denoted by  $x^* = x/|x|^2$ . Its Jacobian is  $Dx^* = |x|^{-2} (1_n - 2Q(x))$  with  $Q(x)_{ij} = x_i x_j / |x|^2$ ; note that  $(1_n - 2Q(x))^2 = 1_n$ .

For every  $y \in B$  there is a unique  $T_y \in G$  such that  $T_y y = 0$  and  $T'_y(y) = |T'_y(y)| \cdot 1_n$ . The most general  $A \in G$  is of the form  $A = UT_y$  with  $y = A^{-1}(0)$  and  $U \in O(n)$ .

For  $n = 2$ , in complex notation,

$$T_y x = \frac{x - y}{1 - \bar{y}x}$$

$$T'_y(x) = \frac{1 - |y|^2}{(1 - \bar{y}x)^2}.$$

The first formula can be rewritten as

$$T_y x = \frac{(x - y)(1 - |y|^2) - |x - y|^2 y}{|y|^2 |x - y^*|^2}.$$

In this form it makes sense for arbitrary  $n$  and is in fact the correct formula. The denominator  $|y|^2 |x - y^*|^2$  corresponds to  $|1 - \bar{y}x|^2$ , and it is equal to  $1 - 2(xy) + |x|^2 |y|^2$ , where  $(xy)$  is the inner product. To emphasize the symmetry we shall use the notation  $|y| |x - y^*| = |x| |y - x^*| = [x, y]$ .

The expression for  $T'_y(x)$  is

$$T'_y(x) = \frac{1 - |y|^2}{[x, y]^2} \Delta(x, y)$$

with

$$\Delta(x, y) = (1 - 2Q(y))(1 - 2Q(x - y^*)) = (1 - 2Q(y - x^*))(1 - 2Q(x)).$$

Observe that  $\Delta(x, y) = {}^t\Delta(y, x)$  and  $\Delta(x, y)^2 = 1_n$  so that  $\Delta(x, y) \in O(n)$ . The matrix  $\Delta(x, y)$  generalizes the angle  $\arg(1 - \bar{x}y)/(1 - \bar{y}x)$ .

It is useful to note that  $|Ax - Ay|^2 = |A'(x)| |A'(y)| |x - y|^2$  for any Möbius transformation  $A$ , and  $[Ax, Ay]^2 = |A'(x)| |A'(y)| [x, y]^2$  if  $A \in G$ . There is an important relation between  $T_yx$  and  $T_xy$  expressed by

$$(4) \quad T_yx = -\Delta(x, y) T_xy.$$

We refer to [2, 3, 4, 5] for the elementary proofs of these formulas.

## 5. FUNDAMENTAL SOLUTIONS

A continuous mapping  $f: B \rightarrow \mathbf{R}^n$  will be called a *deformation*. In this paper we shall assume, mainly for simplicity, that  $f$  is continuous on the boundary  $S(1)$ , and that  $x \cdot f(x) = 0$  on  $S(1)$ ; this means that  $f$  maps  $B$  on itself when regarded as an infinitesimal mapping.

A deformation is *trivial* if  $Sf = 0$ . There are very few trivial deformations: a complete list is given in [3].

It is customary to say that  $f$  is a *quasiconformal* deformation if  $\|Sf\| \in L^\infty(B)$ ; here  $\|Sf\|$  is the function whose value at  $x$  is the square norm of the matrix  $Sf(x)$ . More generally, we shall also consider functions with  $\|Sf\| \in L^p(B)$ ; we abbreviate to  $Sf \in L^p$ , and we denote the  $L^p$ -norm of the square norm by  $\|Sf\|_p$ . The same convention will prevail for all matrix-valued functions.

We shall say that  $f$  is *harmonic* if  $S^* \rho Sf = 0$ ,  $\rho = (1 - |x|^2)^{-n}$ . Because of the invariance, if  $f$  is harmonic and  $A \in G$ , then  $A^*f$  is also harmonic. Harmonicity in this sense is not the same as requiring the components to be harmonic with respect to the Poincaré metric.

There are  $n$  linearly independent solutions of the equation  $S^* \gamma = 0$  which are homogeneous of degree  $1 - n$ . We denote them by  $\gamma_{\dots, k}$ ,  $k = 1, \dots, n$ , the elements being

$$\gamma_{ij, k}(x) = |x|^{-n} (\delta_{ik} x_j + \delta_{jk} x_i - \delta_{ij} x_k) + (n - 2) |x|^{-n-2} x_i x_j x_k.$$

There is a unique vector-valued function  $g_{\dots, k}(x)$  with components  $g_{ik}(x)$  such that  $g_{\dots, k}(x) = 0$  for  $|x| = 1$  and  $\rho Sg_{\dots, k} = \gamma_{\dots, k}$  so that

$S^* \rho S g_{.k} = 0$ , or more precisely a Dirac distribution concentrated at 0. It is easy to see that  $g = g_{ik}$ , which we regard as a Green's matrix, will be of the form  $g_{ik}(x) = a(|x|) \delta_{ik} + b(|x|) x_i x_k$ ; the explicit expressions for  $a(r)$  and  $b(r)$  are unimportant, except that  $g$  is of order  $O((1-|x|^2)^{n+1})$  for  $|x| \rightarrow 1$  and  $O(|x|^{-n+2})$  for  $x \rightarrow 0$  (if  $n = 2$  the latter is replaced by  $O(\log 1/|x|)$ ).

If  $U \in O(n)$  it is immediate that  $g(Ux) = Ug(x)^t U$ . If we replace  $x$  by  $T_x y$  and  $U$  by  $-\Delta(x, y)$  it follows with the help of (4) that

$$(5) \quad \Delta(y, x) g(T_y x) = g(T_x y) \Delta(y, x).$$

We now define the Green's matrix with singularity at  $y$  by

*Definition 1.*

$$(6) \quad g_{.k}(x, y) = (1 - |y|^2) (T_y^* g_{.k})(x) = (1 - |y|^2) T_y'(x)^{-1} g(T_y x) \\ = [x, y]^2 \Delta(y, x) g(T_y x).$$

It is clear that  $(S^* \rho S)_1 g(x, y) = 0$  (the subscript indicates that the operator applies to the first variable). In view of (5) we can read off the symmetry property

$$\text{LEMMA 1. } g(x, y) = {}^t g(y, x).$$

This symmetry plays a prominent role in H. Weyl's classical paper [9] which has been a strong inspiration for this work.

If  $A \in G$  it is an easy consequence of (6) that

$$g(Ax, Ay) = A'(x) g(x, y) {}^t A'(y)$$

or, in a more suggestive form,

$$A_1^* A_2^* g(x, y) = g(x, y),$$

where  $A_1^*$  is  $A^*$  applied to the first variable and the first index, and similarly for  $A_2^*$ .

Next we define

*Definition 2.*

$$\gamma_{\dots, k}(x, y) = \rho(x) S_1 g_{.k}(x, y) = (1 - |y|^2) \rho(x) (S_1 T_y^* g_{.k})(x).$$

It is evident by invariance that  $S_1^* \gamma_{\dots, k}(x, y) = 0$ . When  $x$  and  $y$  are transformed by the same  $A \in G$  one finds

$$A_1^* A_2^* \gamma_{\dots, k}(x, y) dx = \gamma_{\dots, k}(x, y) dx$$

where  $A_1^*$  acts on  $x$  and the double index,  $A_2^*$  on  $y$  and the single index. For  $A = T_y$  this leads to the explicit formula

$$\gamma_{\dots,k}(x, y) = \frac{(1 - |y|^2)^{n+1}}{[x, y]^{2n}} \Delta(y, x) \gamma_{\dots,k}(T_y x) \Delta(x, y).$$

We note that  $\gamma_{\dots}(x, 0) = \gamma_{\dots}(x)$  and  $\gamma_{\dots}(0, y) = -(1 - |y|^2)^{n+1} \gamma_{\dots}(y)$ .

We shall need to apply  $S$  to either variable in  $\gamma_{\dots}(x, y)$ . For this purpose we introduce

*Definition 3.*  $\Gamma_{ij,hk}(x, y) = [S_2 \gamma_{ij,\cdot}(x, y)]_{hk}$ .

Because differentiations with respect to  $x$  and  $y$  commute it is clear that  $S_1^* \Gamma_{\dots,hk}(x, y) = 0$ . Moreover, starting from the relation  $g_{ik}(x, y) = g_{ki}(y, x)$  it is not difficult to derive the following symmetry property:

LEMMA 2.  $\rho(y) \Gamma_{ij,hk}(x, y) = \rho(x) \Gamma_{hk,ij}(y, x)$ .

It follows, in particular, that  $S_2^* \rho(y) \Gamma_{ij,\dots}(x, y) = 0$ .

It is also important to know the asymptotic behavior of  $\Gamma_{ij,hk}(x, y)$  when  $x - y \rightarrow 0$ . We observe first that

$$\begin{aligned} \rho(y) \Gamma_{ij,hk}(0, y) &= -(1 - |y|^2)^{-n} [S(1 - |y|^2)^{n+1} \gamma_{ij,\cdot}(y)]_{hk} \\ &= -S_{ij,hk}(y) + R_{ij,hk}(y) \end{aligned}$$

where  $S_{ij,hk}(y) = [S \gamma_{ij,\cdot}(y)]_{hk}$  is homogeneous of degree  $-n$  and  $R_{ij,hk}(y)$  is homogeneous of degree  $2 - n$ . The explicit expression for  $\Gamma_{ij,hk}(x, y)$  reads

$$\Gamma_{ij,\dots}(x, y) = \frac{(1 - |y|^2)^n}{[x, y]^{2n}} \Delta(x, y) \Gamma_{ij,\dots}(0, T_x y) \Delta(y, x).$$

Elementary estimates show that

$$(7) \quad |\Gamma_{ij,hk}(x, y) + S_{ij,hk}(x - y)| \leq C_n |x - y|^{1-n} [x, y]^{-1}$$

with constant  $C_n$ .

## 6. POTENTIALS

Given an  $SM_n$ -valued function  $v$  on  $B$  we define its *potential* as the vector-valued function  $Iv$  with components

$$Iv(y)_k = \int_B v_{ij}(x) \gamma_{ij,k}(x, y) dx.$$

The integral converges if  $v \in L^p(B)$  for some  $p$  with  $n < p \leq \infty$ . In fact, one proves that

$$|Iv(y)| \leq C_{n,p} \|v\|_p (1 - |y|)^{1-n/p}$$

if  $p < \infty$  and

$$|Iv(y)| \leq C_n \|v\|_\infty (1 - |y|)(1 + \log 1/(1 - |y|))$$

if  $p = \infty$ . In any event  $Iv(y)$  vanishes at a fixed rate for  $|y| \rightarrow 1$ .

The forming of the potential is an invariant operation in the sense that  $IA^*v = A^*Iv$  for every  $A \in G$ . The potential is harmonic outside the support of  $v$ , for  $(S^* \rho S)_2 \gamma_{ij..}(x, y) = 0$ .

The following theorem serves to recover  $f$  from  $Sf$  and its boundary values:

THEOREM 1. *If  $Sf \in L^p(B)$ ,  $p > n$ , then*

$$(8) \quad c_n f(y) = -ISf(y) + c_n Hf(y)$$

with

$$Hf(y) = \frac{1}{c_n} \int_{S(1)} \gamma_{ij..}(x, y) x_j f_i d\sigma(x).$$

Moreover,  $Hf$  is the unique harmonic function with the same boundary values as  $f$ , and if  $x \cdot f = 0$  on  $S(1)$  it can also be written in the form

$$Hf(y) = \frac{1}{c_n} \int_{S(1)} \frac{(1 - |y|^2)^{n+1}}{|x - y|^{2n}} \Delta(x, y) f(x) d\sigma(x).$$

*Remarks.*  $d\sigma$  refers to the  $(n-1)$ -dimensional measure on  $S(1)$ , and  $c_n = 2(n-1)\omega_n/n$  where  $\omega_n$  is the total measure of  $S(1)$ . We are assuming that  $f$  has a continuous extension to  $S(1)$ . Actually, this is automatically true if we assume the side condition in the form  $x \cdot f(x) \rightarrow 0$  as  $|x| \rightarrow 1$ , for it can be shown that  $Sf \in L^p$  forces  $f$  to satisfy a uniform Hölder condition.

The proof is a straight-forward application of Stokes' formula. The passage from the differentiable to the distributional case is elementary. The fact that a harmonic function is uniquely determined by its boundary values can be demonstrated as follows: Suppose that  $f$  is harmonic and zero on  $S(1)$ . It is readily shown that

$$\int_{S(r)} Sf(x)_{ij} \gamma_{ij,k}(x) d\sigma = 0$$

for all  $r$ . Therefore  $ISf(0) = 0$  and hence  $f(0) = 0$  by (8). If this result is applied to  $(T_y^{-1})^* f$  it follows that  $f(y) = 0$  for arbitrary  $y$ , so that  $f$  is indeed identically zero.

## 7. COMPUTATION OF $SIv$

It is easy to show that  $S_{ij,hk}(y) = [S\gamma_{ij,\cdot}(y)]_{hk}$  is a Calderon-Zygmund kernel for any choice of the indices; in other words, it is homogeneous of degree  $-n$ , and its mean-value over the unit sphere is 0. If  $v \in L^p$ ,  $1 < p < \infty$ , it follows by the Calderon-Zygmund theory that the principal value

$$\text{pr. v. } \int_B v_{ij}(x) S_{ij,hk}(x-y) dx$$

exists almost everywhere, and that it is the limit in  $L^p(B)$  of the corresponding truncated integrals. In view of (7) it follows that the integral

$$(9) \quad \Gamma v(y)_{hk} = \int_B v_{ij}(x) \Gamma_{ij,hk}(x, y) dx$$

will also exist as a principal value almost everywhere. One finds, however, that the remainder in (7) makes it possible to assert merely that the principal value is a limit in  $L^{p'}$  for any  $p' < p/n$ . In these circumstances it is natural to assume that  $v \in L^p(B)$  for all  $p \geq 1$ .

**THEOREM 2.** *If  $v \in L^p(B)$  with  $p > n$ , then  $SIv \in L^{p'}(B)$  for all  $1 \leq p' < p/n$ , and*

$$(10) \quad SIv = -b_n v + \Gamma v$$

where  $b_n = 4\omega_n/(n+2)$  and  $\Gamma v$  is defined by (9).

*Proof.* Let  $\varphi$  be an  $SM_n$ -valued test-function. The definition of  $SIv$  as a distribution leads to the following formal computation:

$$\begin{aligned} \int_B SIv(y)_{hk} \varphi(y)_{hk} dy &= - \int_B Iv(y)_k S^* \varphi(y)_k dy \\ &= - \int_B S^* \varphi(y)_k dy \int_B v_{ij}(x) \gamma_{ij,k}(x, y) dx \\ &= - \int_B v_{ij}(x) dx \int_B S^* \varphi(y)_k \gamma_{ij,k}(x, y) dy \\ &= - \int_B v_{ij}(x) dx [b_n \varphi_{ij}(x) - \int_B \varphi(y)_{hk} \Gamma_{ij,hk}(x, y) dy]. \end{aligned}$$

The justification, by means of the Zygmund-Calderon theory, is routine, and (10) follows.

Taken together, Theorems 1 and 2 lead to a very striking result:

**THEOREM 3.** *An  $SM_n$ -valued function  $v \in L^p(B)$ ,  $p > n$ , is of the form  $v = Sf$  with  $f = 0$  on  $S(1)$  if and only if it satisfies the homogeneous integral equation  $\Gamma v = -a_n v$  with  $a_n = c_n - b_n = 2(n-2)(n+1)\omega_n/n(n+2)$ .*

Indeed, if  $v$  is of this form, Theorem 1 implies  $c_n f = -Iv$ , hence  $c_n v = -SIv$ , and consequently  $\Gamma v = (b_n - c_n)v$  by Theorem 2. Conversely, if  $\Gamma v = -a_n v$  then  $SIv = -c_n v$  by (10), and  $f = Iv$  vanishes on  $S(1)$ .

The point of Theorem 3 is that the solvability of  $Sf = v$  (with an extra condition on  $f$ ) has been reduced to an integral equation.

**THEOREM 4.** *For any  $v \in L^p(B)$ ,  $p > n$ ,  $S^* \rho [\Gamma v + a_n v] = 0$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $f$  be a vector-valued test-function. Theorem 3 applies to  $Sf$ , and we obtain by use of Lemma 2

$$\begin{aligned} \int_B S^* \rho \Gamma v \cdot f dx &= - \int_B \rho(x) \Gamma v(x)_{ij} Sf(x)_{ij} dx \\ &= - \int_B \rho(x) Sf(x)_{ij} dx \int_B v(y)_{hk} \Gamma_{hk,ij}(y, x) dy \\ &= - \int_B \rho(y) v(y)_{hk} dy \int_B Sf(x)_{ij} \Gamma_{ij,hk}(x, y) dx \\ &= - \int_B \rho(y) v(y)_{hk} \Gamma Sf(y)_{hk} dy = a_n \int_B \rho(y) v(y)_{hk} Sf(y)_{hk} dy \\ &= - a_n \int_B S^* \rho v \cdot f dy \end{aligned}$$

and hence  $S^* \rho \Gamma v = -a_n S^* v$ .

**THEOREM 5.** *Every  $v$  which is in all  $L^p(B)$  has a unique representation in the form  $v = v' + v''$  where  $v'$  and  $v''$  are in all  $L^p(B)$  while  $v'$  is in the image of  $SI$  and  $v''$  is in the kernel of  $S^* \rho$ .*

As a consequence of Theorems 3 and 4 the representation is given by

$$c_n v = -SIv + (\Gamma v + a_n v).$$

It is unique, for if  $SI = \Gamma v + a_n v$ , then  $S^* \rho SIv = 0$  so that  $Iv$  is harmonic and 0 on  $S(1)$ , hence identically zero.

## 8. AUTOMORPHIC FUNCTIONS AND BELTRAMI DIFFERENTIALS

Although this aspect has not been emphasized it should be clear that the author is trying to develop a theory which is immediately applicable to the study of discrete subgroups of  $G$ . All the definitions have been chosen with this in mind, and the relevant theorems for subgroups follow effortlessly.

Let  $G^0$  be a discrete subgroup of  $G$ . A vector-valued function  $f$  is *automorphic* with respect to  $G^0$  if  $A^* f = f$ , or more explicitly  $A'(x)^{-1} f(Ax) = f(x)$  for all  $A \in G^0$ . Similarly, an  $SM_n$ -valued function  $v$  will be called a *Beltrami differential* for  $G^0$  if  $A^* v = v$ , or  $A'(x)^{-1} v(Ax) A'(x) = v(x)$ , for all  $A \in G^0$ . If  $v$  is a Beltrami differential, then  $A^*(\rho v dx) = \rho v dx$  for all  $A \in G^0$ , and  $\rho v dx$  is called an  $n$ th order differential. The terminology is borrowed from the corresponding notions for  $n = 2$ .

If  $v$  is Beltrami and in  $L^\infty$ , then it is also in  $L^p(B)$  for all  $p$ , and Theorems 2-5 are applicable. They gain added significance from the fact that  $Iv$  is automatically automorphic with respect to  $G^0$  (it is easy to show that  $A^* Iv = IA^* v$  for all  $v$  and  $A \in G$ ). As a consequence  $SIv$  is Beltrami, and by Theorem 2 the same is true of  $\Gamma v$ . It follows that Theorems 2-5 may be interpreted as referring to the quotient space  $G^0 \backslash B$ , provided that we start from the hypothesis  $v \in L^\infty$ . In the conclusion we know, for instance, that

$$\int_B \|SI \gamma\|^p dx = \int_{G^0 \backslash B} \|SI v\|^p \rho_0 dx < \infty$$

where, by a theorem of Godement,

$$\rho_0(x) = \sum_{A \in G^0} |A'(x)|^n$$

is known to converge.

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