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**APPROXIMATION BY RATIONAL MODULES ON BOUNDARY
SETS**

JAMES LI-MING WANG

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Let X be a compact subset of the complex plane. Let the module $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_m$ be the space of all functions of the form

$$r_0(z) + r_1(z)\bar{z} + \cdots + r_m(z)\bar{z}^m$$

where each r_i is a rational function with poles off X . We prove that $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_1$ is dense in $L^p(\partial X)$ for all $1 \leq p < \infty$.

1. Introduction. Let X be a compact subset of the complex plane. Let the module $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_m$ be the space $\mathcal{R} + \mathcal{R}\bar{z} + \cdots + \mathcal{R}\bar{z}^m$

$$= \{r_0(z) + r_1(z)\bar{z} + \cdots + r_m(z)\bar{z}^m\},$$

where each r_i is a rational function with poles off X .

The concept of rational modules arises in a natural fashion when one attempts to study rational approximation in Lipschitz norms. In [5] and [6], O'Farrell studied the relation of the problems of approximation by rational modules in different Lipschitz norms, and in the uniform norms, etc., to one another. Not long ago the author proved in [9] that $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_1$ is dense in $L^p(X)$ for all $1 \leq p < \infty$ and $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_2$ is dense in $C(X)$ if X has no interior.

It is apparent that if X has interior, then $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_m$ can not be dense in $C(X)$ or $L^p(X, dm)$, $1 \leq p < \infty$, where dm denotes the 2-dimensional Lebesgue measure. Also it is clear that if X has interior, the $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_m$ can not be dense in $C(\partial X)$, where ∂X is the topological boundary set of X . In this note, however, we prove that $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_1$ is dense in $L^p(\partial X, dm)$ for all $1 \leq p < \infty$.

2. Theorem and corollary. Throughout this note, $L^p(\partial X)$ stands for $L^p(\partial X, dm)$.

Let μ be a (finite Borel) measure on X . The Cauchy transform $\hat{\mu}$ is defined by

$$\hat{\mu}(z) = \int \frac{d\mu(\zeta)}{\zeta - z}.$$

Some basic properties for $\hat{\mu}$ can be found in [4]. If g is a function on X , we will write \hat{g} for \widehat{gdm} .

We use the symbol $\bar{\delta}$ for the operator $\partial/\partial x + i(\partial/\partial y)$ and write $g \perp V$ if $\int fgdm = 0$ for all f in V .

The following lemmas play important roles in this theory. Lemma 1 is a special case of the key lemma in [5], and Lemma 2 is used by the author in [9].

LEMMA 1. *Let μ be a measure on X . Then $\mu \perp \mathcal{R}(X)\bar{\mathcal{P}}_1$ if and only if $\hat{\mu} \perp \mathcal{R}(X)$.*

Proof. Because $\int f d\mu = -\pi^{-1} \int (\bar{\partial} f) \hat{\mu} dm$ for all f in $\mathcal{R}(X)\bar{\mathcal{P}}_1$ (cf. [4, p. 38]).

LEMMA 2. *If $g \in L^p(X)$, then \hat{g} is continuous when $p > 2$ and \hat{g} is continuous when $1 < p \leq 2$.*

Proof. The Cauchy transform is essentially the convolution of a function (or a measure) and the function ζ^{-1} which belongs to L^r_{loc} for all $1 \leq r < 2$. So Lemma 2 is classical when $p > 2$. An application of the Young's inequality [7, p. 271] takes care of the rest.

THEOREM. *Let X be a compact set. Then $\mathcal{R}(X)\bar{\mathcal{P}}_1$ is dense in $L^p(\partial X)$ for all $1 \leq p < \infty$.*

Proof. Let g be any function in $L^q(\partial X)$, $1 < q \leq \infty$, $p^{-1} + q^{-1} = 1$, such that $g \perp \mathcal{R}(X)\bar{\mathcal{P}}_1$. Lemma 1 implies $\hat{g} \perp \mathcal{R}(X)$ and therefore $\hat{g} = 0$ off X . Also \hat{g} is continuous by Lemma 2. It follows that $\hat{g} = 0$ everywhere on ∂X . Now $\hat{g} \in L^s$ for some $s > 2$, and so it follows from the theory of singular integrals [2] that \hat{g} is absolutely continuous on (almost) every line parallel to each of the coordinate axes and that the partial derivatives $\partial(\hat{g})/\partial x$ and $\partial(\hat{g})/\partial y$ exist almost everywhere (dm) in the usual sense. By a lemma of Schwartz [8] (I owe this idea to James Brennan, who has shown me his work in [1]) these derivatives coincide with the corresponding distribution derivatives and so

$$\hat{g} = -\pi^{-1} \bar{\partial}(\hat{g})$$

almost everywhere in the usual sense. By Fubini's theorem, almost every point of ∂X is a point of linear density (and hence a point of accumulation) for ∂X in the direction of both coordinate axes and so $\partial(\hat{g})/\partial x = \partial(\hat{g})/\partial y = 0$ almost everywhere on ∂X . It follows that $\hat{g} = 0$ almost everywhere on ∂X . Applying a similar argument to \hat{g} we conclude that $g = 0$ almost everywhere on ∂X and the theorem is proved.

As a corollary, we have the following results in [9].

COROLLARY. *Let X be a compact set with no interior. Then*

- (i) $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_1$ is dense in $L^p(X)$ for all $1 \leq p < \infty$.
- (ii) $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_2$ is dense in $C(X)$.
- (iii) $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_2$ is dense in $\text{lip}(\alpha, X)$ for all $0 < \alpha < 1$.
- (iv) $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_3$ is dense in $D^1(X)$.

Davie's theorem in [3] asserts that for any compact set Y with boundary $X = \partial Y$, we have

$$[\mathcal{R}(X) + A(Y)]_u = C(X),$$

where $A(Y)$ denotes the algebra of all continuous functions on Y which are analytic on $\overset{\circ}{Y}$ and $[\]_u$ denotes the uniform closure. Corollary obviously strengthens this result, since $\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_2$ and $\mathcal{R}(X) + (\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_1)^\wedge$ have the same closure on X , where $(\mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_1)^\wedge = \{(f|X)^\wedge : f \in \mathcal{R}(X)\overline{\mathcal{P}}_1\} \subseteq A(Y)$. For other extensions of Davie's theorem, we refer the reader to the paper of O'Farrell [5].

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Michael E. Adams and J. Sichler , Lattices with unique complementation	1
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Duncan Alan Buell, Philip A. Leonard and Kenneth S. Williams , Note on the quadratic character of a quadratic unit	35
Herbert Busemann and Bhalchandra B. Phadke , Two theorems on general symmetric spaces	39
Emeric Deutsch , Bounds for the Perron root of a nonnegative irreducible partitioned matrix	49
Charles F. Dunkl , A difference equation and Hahn polynomials in two variables	57
Gustave Adam Efroymsen , The Riemann mapping theorem for planar Nash rings	73
John Albert Fridy and Robert Ellis Powell , Tauberian theorems for matrices generated by analytic functions	79
Denton Elwood Hewgill, John Hamilton Reeder and Marvin Shinbrot , Some exact solutions of the nonlinear problem of water waves	87
Bessie Hershberger Kirkwood and Bernard Robert McDonald , The symplectic group over a ring with one in its stable range	111
Esther Portnoy , Transitive groups of isometries on H^n	127
Jerry Ridenhour , On the sign of Green's functions for multipoint boundary value problems	141
Nina M. Roy , An M -ideal characterization of G -spaces	151
Edward Barry Saff and Richard Steven Varga , On incomplete polynomials. II	161
Takeyoshi Satō , The equations $\Delta u = Pu$ ($P \geq 0$) on Riemann surfaces and isomorphisms between relative Hardy spaces	173
James Henry Schmerl , Correction to: "Peano models with many generic classes"	195
Charles Madison Stanton , On the closed ideals in $A(W)$	199
Viakalathur Shankar Sunder , Unitary equivalence to integral operators . . .	211
Pavel G. Todorov , New explicit formulas for the n th derivative of composite functions	217
James Li-Ming Wang , Approximation by rational modules on boundary sets	237
Kenneth S. Williams , The class number of $Q(\sqrt{p})$ modulo 4, for $p \equiv 5 \pmod{8}$ a prime	241