

Random walks on weakly hyperbolic groups

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Random and Arithmetic Structures in Topology
MSRI - Fall 2020

Random walks on weakly hyperbolic groups - Summary

- ▶ **Lecture 1** (Aug 31, 10.30): Introduction to random walks on groups

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Random walks, WPD actions, and the Cremona group

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Answer. It depends on the topography (geometry) of the city.

Recurrent random walks

Example 1: Squareville

Recurrent random walks

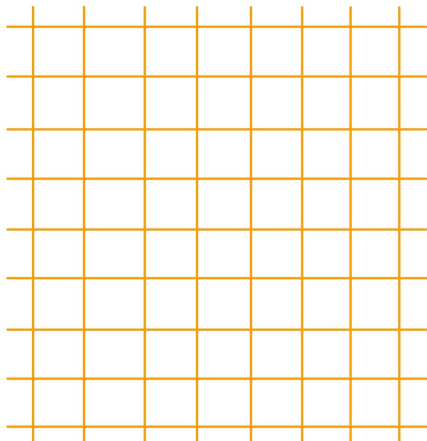
Example 1: Squareville

In Squareville, blocks form a square grid.

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What is the probability of coming back to where you started?

Recurrence

Definition

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Exercise. Prove the Lemma.

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\therefore our RW is **recurrent**.

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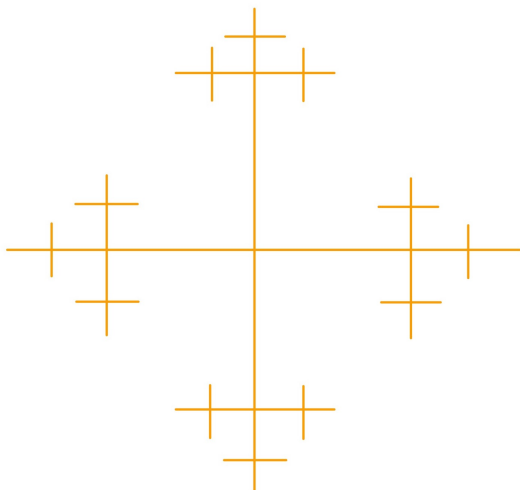
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Exercise. Prove Polya's theorem for $d = 3$. Moreover, for the simple random walk on \mathbb{Z}^d , show that $p^{2n}(0,0) \approx n^{-\frac{d}{2}}$.

Transient random walks

Example 2: Tree City

In Tree City, the map has the shape of a 4-valent tree.



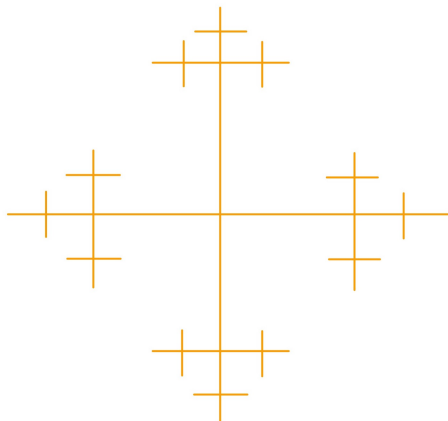
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(do we know $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{d_n}{n}$ exist?)

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If you fix a basepoint $x \in X$ you can look at the sequence $(w_n \cdot x) \subseteq X$.

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Moreover, we define the **word metric** or **word distance** between $g, h \in G$ as

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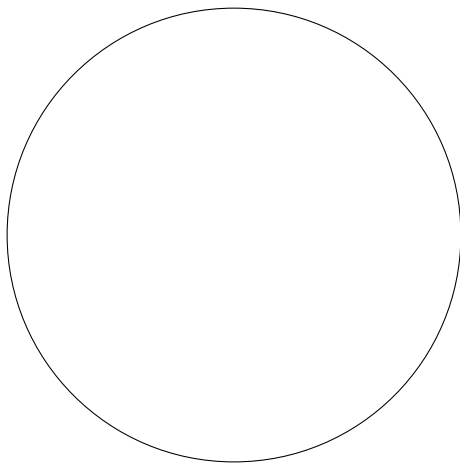
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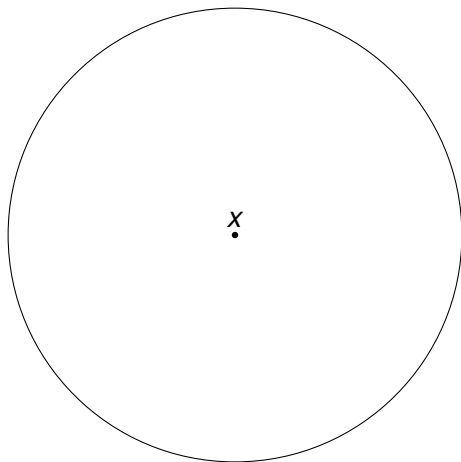
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The disc has a natural topological **boundary**, i.e. the circle. This RW converges a.s. to the boundary (Furstenberg).

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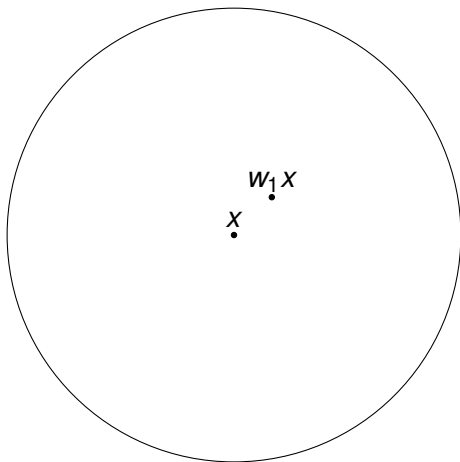
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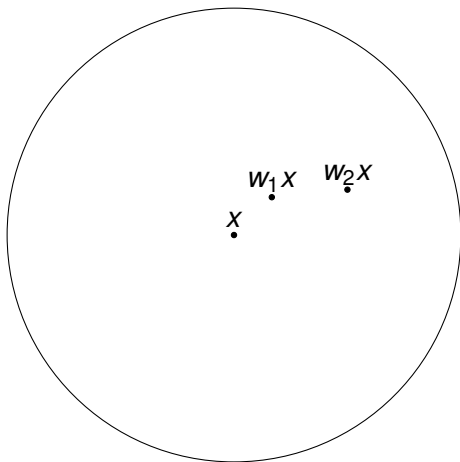
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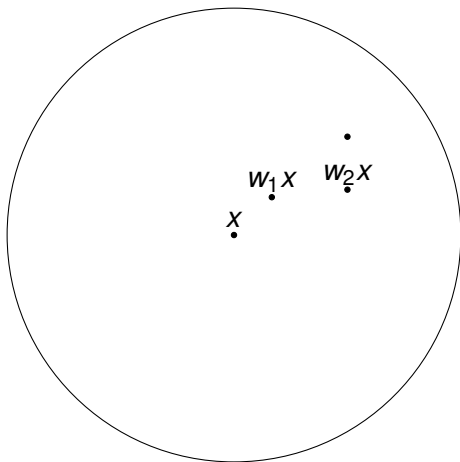
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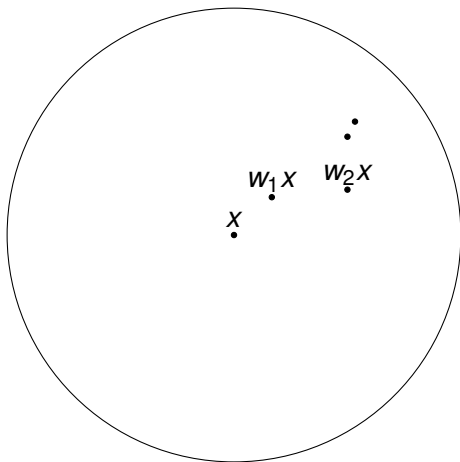
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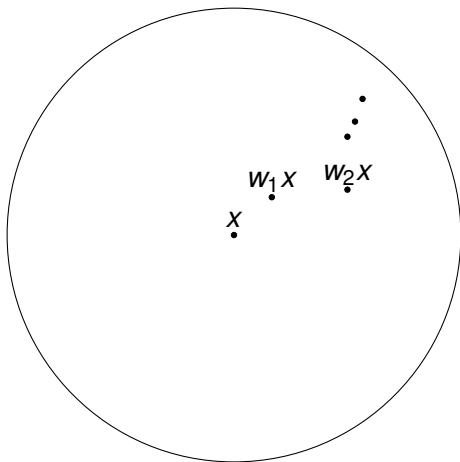
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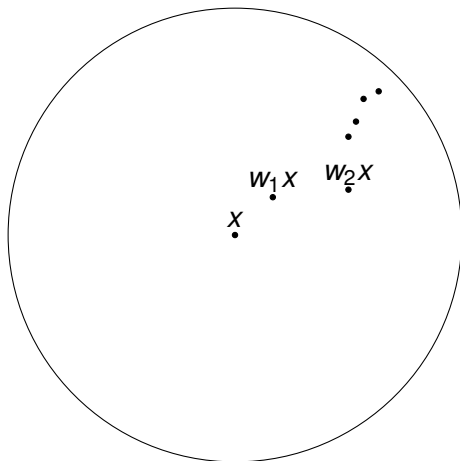
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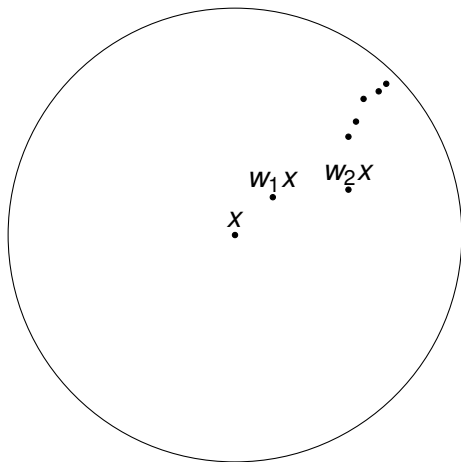
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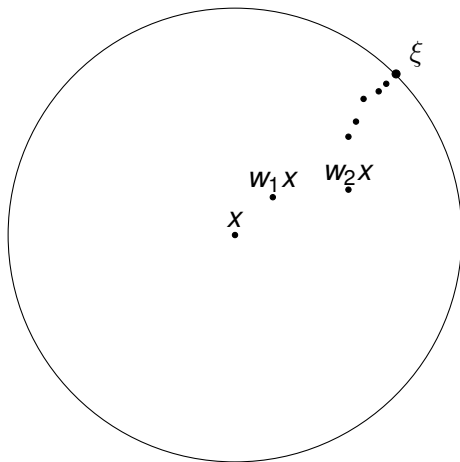
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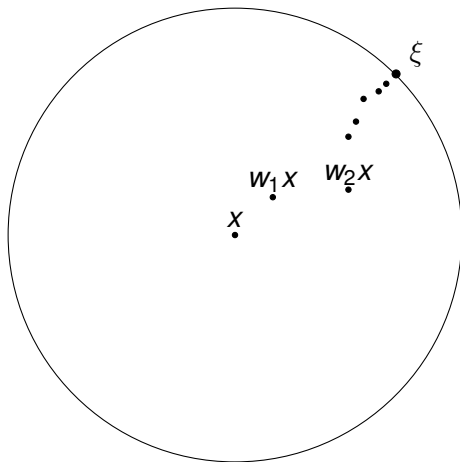
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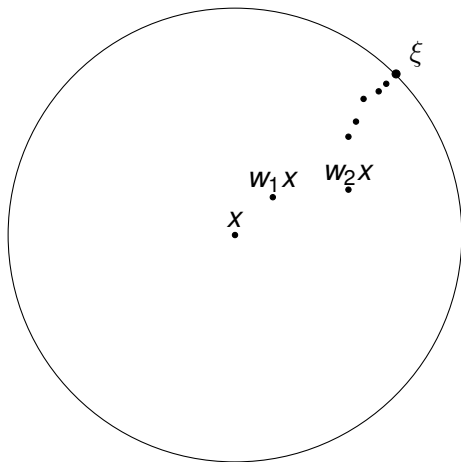
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Lemma

If μ has finite first moment, then there exists a constant $L \in \mathbb{R}$ such that for a.e. sample path

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \frac{d(w_n x, x)}{n} = L.$$

Proof.

For any $x \in X$, the function $a(n, \omega) := d(x, w_n(\omega)x)$ is a subadditive cocycle, because

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where T is the shift on the space of increments, hence the claim follows by Kingman's subadditive ergodic theorem. □

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If so, define the **hitting measure** ν on ∂X as

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6. Is $(\partial X, \nu)$ a model for the **Poisson boundary** of (G, μ) ? That is, do you have a **representation formula** for bounded harmonic functions?

Hyperbolic metric spaces

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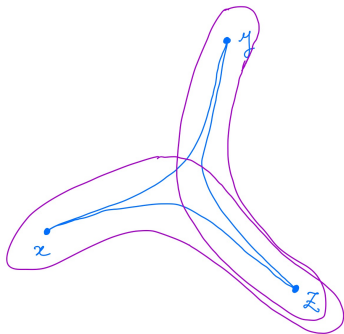
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Recall a space is **proper** if metric balls $\{z \in X : d(x, z) \leq R\}$ are compact.

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Statement of results

3. (Growth of translation length) For any $\epsilon > 0$ we have

$$\mathbb{P}(\tau(w_n) \geq n(L - \epsilon)) \rightarrow 1$$

as $n \rightarrow \infty$.

Corollary.

$$\mathbb{P}(w_n \text{ is loxodromic}) \rightarrow 1$$

4. (Poisson boundary) If the action is weakly properly discontinuous (WPD), and the measure has finite logarithmic moment and finite entropy, then the Gromov boundary $(\partial X, \nu)$ is a model for the Poisson boundary of (G, μ) .