

# SOME EXTREMAL PROBLEMS FOR FUNCTIONS UNIVALENT IN AN ANNULUS

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## 1. Introduction.

Many extremal problems for functions univalent in an annulus have been solved (see, for example, [1] through [9], [12], [13]), and most extremal functions obtained so far are simple: the omitted continuum is either a line segment or a circular arc. P. L. Duren [1] obtained a more complicated extremal function when he considered the problem of maximizing the distortion at a fixed point in a certain class of univalent functions: the omitted continuum starts as a line segment and then sprouts a fork. In this paper, we shall encounter extremal functions whose omitted continua rarely are parts of well known curves.

Let  $R$  denote the annulus  $\{z: 0 < r_0 < |z| < 1\}$ , and let  $F$  denote the class of functions analytic and univalent in  $R$  and satisfying the following conditions:

- (1)  $|f(z)| < 1$  for  $z \in R$ ,  $|f(z)| = 1$  for  $|z| = 1$ ,
- (2)  $f(z) \neq 0$  for  $z \in R$ ,
- (3)  $f(1) = 1$ .

Using a variational method of P. L. Duren and M. Schiffer [2], we investigate the maxima of the quantities  $\arg[f(z)/z]$  and  $\arg f'(z)$ , where  $z$  is a fixed point in  $R$  and where  $f$  ranges over the class  $F$ . The variational method yields a differential equation for the continuum inside the unit disk that is omitted by an extremal function. For both rotation problems, the omitted continuum is a curve that starts at the origin and spirals without branching. We use a special parametrization of the omitted curve (a method first employed by Schiffer [13]) to obtain a differential equation for the extremal function. However, some of the parameters occurring in the differential equation can only be determined implicitly.

Let  $F_0$  denote the class of functions analytic and univalent in  $R$  and satisfying conditions (1) and (2). We use the variational method of Duren and Schiffer [2] to answer questions concerning the spherical derivative

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Received July 11, 1969; in revised form October 29, 1969.

of functions in  $F_0$ , and we raise some questions concerning the curvature, convexity, and starlikeness of the images of a circle  $|z|=r$ ,  $r_0 < r < 1$ , under functions in  $F_0$ .

Some results of this paper are contained in the author's dissertation, written at the University of Michigan under the direction of Professor Peter L. Duren.

## 2. The basic tool.

Duren and Schiffer [2] showed that if  $f$  belongs to  $F$ , then for all sufficiently small positive values of  $\rho$ ,  $V_\rho \circ f$  belongs to  $F$ , where

$$V_\rho(w) = w \left[ 1 + \frac{a\rho^2(1-w)}{(w-w_0)(1-w_0)w_0} + \frac{\bar{a}\rho^2(1-w)}{(1-\bar{w}_0w)(1-\bar{w}_0)\bar{w}_0} \right] + O(\rho^3);$$

and if  $f$  belongs to  $F_0$ , then for all sufficiently small positive values of  $\rho$ ,  $V_\rho^{(0)} \circ f$  belongs to  $F_0$ , where

$$V_\rho^{(0)}(w) = w \left[ 1 + \frac{a\rho^2}{(w-w_0)w_0} - \frac{\bar{a}\rho^2w}{(1-\bar{w}_0w)\bar{w}_0} \right] + O(\rho^3).$$

Here  $a$  is a complex number ( $|a| < 1$ ) depending on  $\rho$ , and  $w_0$ ,  $0 < |w_0| < 1$ , is a point in the continuum omitted by  $f$ .

Clearly, the classes  $F$  and  $F_0$  are compact. Therefore extremal functions exist, and we can compare an extremal function  $g$  with its "neighbors"  $V_\rho \circ g$ , respectively,  $V_\rho^{(0)} \circ g$ . If this comparison yields an inequality of the type

$$\operatorname{Re}[a\rho^2s(w_0) + O(\rho^3)] \leq 0$$

for all sufficiently small values of  $\rho$  ( $s$  is analytic at  $w_0$ ), then Schiffer's lemma [13] implies that the continuum omitted by the extremal function  $g$  is an analytic curve satisfying the differential equation

$$w'(t)^2 s(w(t)) > 0.$$

The study of extremal problems thus leads us to quadratic differentials. Concerning quadratic differentials, we use the terminology of [10].

## 3. A rotation problem.

Let  $z_0$  be a fixed point in the annulus  $R$ , and choose the branch of the logarithm for which  $\operatorname{Im} \log 1 = 0$ . Then the problem

$$(4) \quad \max_{f \in F} \arg[f(z_0)/z_0] = \max_{f \in F} \operatorname{Im} \log[f(z_0)/z_0]$$

is meaningful. Let  $g$  be an extremal function for this problem. Then

$$\operatorname{Im} \log [g(z_0)/z_0] \geq \operatorname{Im} \log [V_e(g(z_0))/z_0],$$

which implies that

$$\operatorname{Re} \left\{ a e^2 \left[ \frac{i(1-\bar{c})}{(1-w_0\bar{c})(1-w_0)w_0} - \frac{i(1-c)}{(c-w_0)(1-w_0)w_0} \right] + O(e^3) \right\} \leq 0,$$

where  $c=g(z_0)$ . Hence the continuum omitted by an extremal function for problem (4) satisfies the differential equation  $w'(t)^2 s(w(t)) > 0$ , where

$$(5) \quad s(w) = i \frac{2c-1-|c|^2+w(2\bar{c}-1-|c|^2)}{w(1-w)(c-w)(1-\bar{c}w)}.$$

Note that the solution curves for this differential equation are symmetric with respect to the unit circle.

In the open unit disk,  $s(w)$  has no zeros and only simple poles at  $w=0$  and  $w=c$ . Therefore one trajectory terminates at  $w=0$ , one trajectory terminates at  $w=c$ , and these are the only points in the unit disk where a trajectory can terminate. In order to find the limiting tangential direction of the trajectory terminating at the origin, we set  $w=\omega^2$ . The differential equation  $w'(t)^2 s(w(t)) > 0$  becomes

$$\left(\frac{d\omega}{dt}\right)^2 i \frac{2c-1-|c|^2+w(2\bar{c}-1-|c|^2)}{(1-w)(c-w)(1-\bar{c}w)} > 0;$$

hence

$$\omega'(t)^2 i(2c-1-|c|^2)c^{-1} > 0 \quad \text{for } \omega=0.$$

It follows that the limiting tangential direction at the origin in the  $w$ -plane is that of the number

$$i[c(1+|c|^2)-2|c|^2].$$

In particular, if  $c$  is positive, a trajectory leaves the origin in the direction of the positive imaginary axis. Similarly, we find that the limiting tangential direction of the trajectory terminating at  $w=c$  is that of the number  $-ic$ .

A look at the direction field of the differential equation  $w'(t)^2 s(w(t)) > 0$  reveals that the continuum omitted by an extremal function for problem (4) is an arc (its length is determined by the modulus of  $R$ ) that starts at the origin and spirals outward without branching.

Let  $\Gamma$  denote the continuum omitted by the extremal function  $g$ . Using a technique first employed by Schiffer [13, pp. 444–446], we shall obtain a differential equation for  $g$  from the differential equation for  $\Gamma$ .

Note first that according to the symmetry principle, every function  $f \in F$ , defined for  $r_0 < |z| \leq 1$ , can be extended to a function (call it  $f$  also) analytic and univalent in  $r_0 < |z| < 1/r_0$ .

It is easy to prove that  $w(t) = g(r_0 e^{it})$  is a parametrization of the curve  $\Gamma$  and that  $w'(t) = i r_0 e^{it} g'(r_0 e^{it})$ . With this parametrization and the abbreviation  $z = r_0 e^{it}$ , the differential equation for  $\Gamma$  becomes

$$(6) \quad -z^2 g'(z)^2 s(g(z)) \geq 0.$$

The left-hand side of (6) is a function of  $z$ , defined for  $r_0 \leq |z| \leq 1/r_0$ ; we abbreviate it by  $H(z)$ . Thus

$$H(z) = -z^2 g'(z)^2 s(g(z))$$

is meromorphic and satisfies the conditions

$$H(1/\bar{z}) = \overline{H(z)}$$

and

$$H(z) \geq 0 \quad \text{for } |z| = r_0 \text{ and } |z| = 1/r_0.$$

Moreover,  $H(z)$  has simple poles at  $z=1$ ,  $z=z_0$ , and  $z=1/\bar{z}_0$ . At the point on  $|z|=r_0$  corresponding to the origin in the  $w$ -plane,  $H(z)$  has a removable singularity, since  $g(z)$  and  $g'(z)$  both vanish.

It is convenient to look at  $H(z)$  in the  $u$ -plane, where  $u = \log z$ . To this end, we set

$$G(u) = H(e^u).$$

The principal branch of the logarithm maps the annulus  $r_0 \leq |z| \leq 1/r_0$  onto the rectangle

$$\log r_0 \leq \operatorname{Re} u \leq -\log r_0, \quad 0 \leq \operatorname{Im} u < 2\pi.$$

Clearly, we can extend  $G(u)$  to the entire strip  $\log r_0 \leq \operatorname{Re} u \leq -\log r_0$  by the rule  $G(u) = G(u + 2\pi i)$ . Note that

$$G(-\bar{u}) = H(e^{-\bar{u}}) = \overline{H(e^u)} = \overline{G(u)}.$$

Since  $G(u)$  takes only nonnegative values on the lines  $\operatorname{Re} u = \log r_0$  and  $\operatorname{Re} u = -\log r_0$ , we may apply the symmetry principle repeatedly and extend the domain of  $G$  to the entire  $u$ -plane.

The function  $G$  is now meromorphic and doubly periodic in the  $u$ -plane with periods  $2\omega_1 = 2\pi i$  and  $2\omega_2 = -2 \log r_0$ . In each period parallelogram,  $G$  has three simple poles. Computations show that the residue of  $G$  at  $u=0$  is  $2i g'(1)$ , the residue of  $G$  at  $u = \log z_0$  is  $-i z_0 b c^{-1}$ , and the residue of  $G$  at  $u = -\log \bar{z}_0$  is  $-i \bar{z}_0 \bar{b} \bar{c}^{-1}$ , where  $b = g'(z_0)$ . But an elliptic function

whose periods and principal parts are known has a representation in terms of the Weierstrass  $\zeta$ -function and its derivatives [11, p. 182, Theorem 5.13]. We find that

$$G(u) = K + 2ig'(1)\zeta(u) - iz_0bc^{-1}\zeta(u - \log z_0) - i\bar{z}_0\bar{b}\bar{c}^{-1}\zeta(u + \log \bar{z}_0) ,$$

where  $K$  is a constant and  $\zeta(u)$  is the Weierstrass  $\zeta$ -function constructed from the periods  $2m\pi i - 2n \log r_0$ . We now have the following differential equation for  $g$ :

$$(7) \quad g'(z)^2 \frac{2c - 1 - |c|^2 + g(z)[2\bar{c} - 1 - |c|^2]}{g(z)[1 - g(z)][c - g(z)][1 - \bar{c}g(z)]} = iz^{-2}[K + 2ig'(1)\zeta(\log z) - iz_0bc^{-1}\zeta(\log [z/z_0]) - i\bar{z}_0\bar{b}\bar{c}^{-1}\zeta(\log z\bar{z}_0)] .$$

The differential equation (7) contains the parameters  $c$ ,  $z_0bc^{-1}$ ,  $g'(1)$ , and  $K$ . It is easy to show that  $K$  is real and that  $\text{Re}(z_0bc^{-1}) = g'(1)$ . Sufficiently many relations involving the remaining parameters are readily available, but an explicit determination does not seem possible.

**4. Another rotation problem.**

We now turn to finding the maximum of the quantity

$$\arg f'(z_0) = \text{Im} \log f'(z_0) ,$$

for a fixed  $z_0$  in  $R$ . Because of the well known identity

$$\lim_{z \rightarrow z_1} \arg [f(z) - f(z_1)] - \lim_{z \rightarrow z_1} \arg [z - z_1] = \arg f'(z_1) ,$$

the argument of  $f'(z_1)$  is the difference of the arguments of the tangent vectors to a curve in the  $z$ -plane and its image in the  $w$ -plane. Since each  $f \in F$  maps the circle  $|z| = 1$  onto the circle  $|w| = 1$  such that  $f(1) = 1$ , we have that  $\arg f'(1) \equiv 0 \pmod{2\pi}$  for each  $f \in F$ . (Implicit here is an extension of  $f$ , by reflection, to  $r_0 < |z| < 1/r_0$ .) Thus we can choose the branch of the logarithm for which  $\text{Im} \log f'(1) = 0$ , and the problem

$$(8) \quad \max_{f \in F} \text{Im} \log f'(z_0)$$

is meaningful.

Let  $g$  be an extremal function for problem (8). Then

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Im} \log g'(z_0) &\geq \text{Im} \log (V_\rho \circ g)'(z_0) \\ &= \text{Im} \log V'_\rho(g(z_0)) + \text{Im} \log g'(z_0) . \end{aligned}$$

Setting  $g(z_0) = c$ , we obtain the inequality

$$\operatorname{Re}[a\rho^2s(w_0) + O(\rho^3)] \leq 0,$$

where

$$s(w) = i \frac{1}{w(1-w)(c-w)^2(1-\bar{c}w)^2} P(w)$$

and

$$P(w) = a_0 + a_1w + \bar{a}_1w^2 + \bar{a}_0w^3$$

with  $a_0 = 2c(c - |c|^2)$ ,  $a_1 = 1 + 4|c|^2 + |c|^4 - 4c - 2c|c|^2$ . Hence the continuum  $\Gamma$  omitted by the extremal function  $g$  satisfies the differential equation  $w'(t)^2s(w(t)) > 0$ . Note that the solution curves of this differential equation are symmetric with respect to the unit circle.

In the open unit disk,  $s(w)$  has a simple pole at  $w=0$  and a pole of order 2 at  $w=c$ . The method used in Section 3 shows that the trajectory terminating at the origin has as limiting tangential direction that of the number  $-i(1-c)$  (observe that  $-i(1-c)$  always lies in the lower half-plane). It follows from [10, p. 32, Theorem 3.4] that at  $w=c$ , the trajectories of  $w'(t)^2s(w(t)) > 0$  behave locally like logarithmic spirals. Because the polynomial  $P$  satisfies the condition  $\overline{P(1/\bar{w})} = w^{-3}P(w)$ , it has either no root or exactly one root in  $|w| < 1$ . Apparently both possibilities actually occur. We plotted the direction field of  $w'(t)^2s(w(t)) > 0$  for several choices of the parameter  $c$ . In each case, the omitted curve  $\Gamma$  bent from the origin toward  $w=c$  in such a way that the argument of the tangent vectors changed monotonically.

As in Section 3, the parametrization  $w(t) = g(r_0e^{it})$  yields a differential equation for  $g$ , namely

$$\begin{aligned} g'(z)^2 \frac{P(g(z))}{g(z)[1-g(z)][c-g(z)]^2[1-\bar{c}g(z)]^2} \\ = iz^{-2}[K + 2ig'(1)\zeta(\log z) - i(1+z_0db^{-1})\zeta(\log[z/z_0]) - \\ - i(\overline{1+z_0db^{-1}})\zeta(\log z\bar{z}_0) - i\wp(\log[z/z_0]) + i\wp(\log z\bar{z}_0)], \end{aligned}$$

where  $b = g'(z_0)$ ,  $d = g''(z_0)$ , and  $K$  is a constant.  $\zeta$  and  $\wp$  denote the Weierstrass  $\zeta$ - and  $\wp$ -functions, constructed from the periods  $2m\pi i + 2n \log r_0$ . It is easy to see that  $K$  is real and that  $\operatorname{Re}(1+z_0db^{-1}) = g'(1)$ . Relations involving the remaining parameters can be obtained easily, but in this general setting, it does not seem possible to determine these parameters explicitly.

### 5. The spherical derivative.

In this section, we ask for the maximum and minimum of the spherical derivatives  $|f'(z_0)|/(1+|f(z_0)|^2)$ ,  $f \in F_0$ , at a fixed point  $z_0 \in R$ . Note

that the spherical derivative of a function  $f$  is unchanged if we replace  $f$  by some rotation  $e^{i\theta}f$ . Thus we may assume, without loss of generality, that  $z_0=r>0$  and that  $f(r)>0$ .

Let  $g$  be an extremal function for the minimum problem, that is,

$$\frac{|g'(r)|}{1+|g(r)|^2} = \min_{f \in F_0} \frac{|f'(r)|}{1+|f(r)|^2}.$$

A comparison of  $g$  with the functions  $V_e^{(0)} \circ g$  leads to the following differential equation for the continuum  $\Gamma$  omitted by  $g$ :

$$(9) \quad w'(t)^2 \frac{1+aw(t)+w(t)^2}{w(t)[c-w(t)]^2[1-cw(t)]^2} > 0,$$

where  $c=g(r)>0$  and  $a=(1+c^2)(1-6c^2+c^4)/4c^3$ . (When Duren [1] asked for the maximal and minimal distortion of functions in  $F_0$ , he obtained a differential equation similar to (9). In his case, the constant  $a$  has the value  $(1-4c^2-c^4)/2c^3$ .)

It is easy to check that  $w(t)=ct, 0<t<1$ , is a trajectory of (9). Hence the spherical derivative attains its minimal value at a fixed point for a radial slit mapping.

If we reverse the inequality sign in (9), we obtain the differential equation for the continuum  $\Gamma$  omitted by an extremal function  $g$  for the maximum problem.

The coefficient  $a$  in the numerator of (9) is a monotone decreasing function of  $c$ , and  $a$  can assume values in the interval  $(-2, \infty)$ . Let  $c_0$  denote the value of  $c$  for which  $a=2$ . (The number  $c_0$  is the smallest positive root of the equation

$$c^4 - 2c^3 - 2c^2 - 2c + 1 = 0,$$

and one can show that  $1/3 < c_0 < 7/20$ .) We distinguish three cases.

i)  $c=c_0$ . The entire negative real axis and the entire unit circle, except for the point  $w=-1$ , are trajectories.

ii)  $c_0 < c < 1$ . The entire negative real axis and a portion of the unit circle, symmetric with respect to the real axis and containing  $w=1$ , are trajectories.

iii)  $0 < c < c_0$ . The entire unit circle is a trajectory, and the segment  $(w_1, 0)$  is a trajectory, where  $w_1 = \frac{1}{2}(-a + (a^2 - 4)^{1/2})$  (recall that  $a > 2$  in this case). At  $w_1$ , three trajectories terminate, and their limiting tangential directions are  $120^\circ$  apart. The solution curve to the differential equation is a forked curve, similar to the one obtained by Duren [1].

As in the case of the maximal distortion at a fixed point, the spherical derivative at a fixed point  $r$  attains its maximum for a function  $g$  that maps the annulus  $R$  onto the unit disk slit radially from 0 to  $-g(r)$ , provided  $r$  is sufficiently large (say,  $r \geq r_1$ ). For  $r_0 < r < r_1$ , the omitted line segment sprouts a fork.

Extremal functions maximizing the distortion at  $z=r$  and those maximizing the spherical derivative at  $z=r$  differ in the sense that a radial slit mapping yields a maximum for the spherical derivative "more often": if a radial slit map maximizes the distortion at  $r$  for  $r_2 \leq r < 1$ , then a radial slit map maximizes the spherical derivative at  $r$  for  $r_1 \leq r < 1$ , where  $r_1 < r_2$ .

## 6. Other extremal problems.

Each  $f \in F_0$  maps the circle  $|z|=1$  onto the circle  $|w|=1$  whose interior is a convex domain. One can ask whether there exists a number  $r_1$ ,  $r_0 \leq r_1 < 1$ , such that each  $f \in F_0$  maps each circle  $|z|=r$ ,  $r_1 < r < 1$ , onto a curve whose interior is convex. Similarly, one can ask whether there exists a number  $r_2$ ,  $r_0 \leq r_2 < 1$ , such that each  $f \in F_0$  maps each circle  $|z|=r$ ,  $r_2 < r < 1$ , onto a curve whose interior is starlike with respect to the origin.

The questions in the preceding paragraph lead to the consideration of the maximum and minimum of the quantities

$$(10) \quad \operatorname{Re}(zf'(z)/f(z)),$$

$$(11) \quad \operatorname{Re}(1 + zf''(z)/f'(z)),$$

where  $z$  is a fixed point in  $R$ . Expressions (10) and (11) remain unchanged if we replace  $f$  by some rotation  $e^{i\theta}f$ ; hence we may assume that  $z=r > 0$  and  $f(r) > 0$ .

Suppose the function  $g$ ,  $g \in F_0$ , maximizes (10). Set  $c=g(r)$  and  $b=g'(r)$ . The method of Section 2 shows that the continuum omitted by  $g$  satisfies the differential equation  $w'(t)^2 s(w(t)) < 0$ , where

$$(12) \quad s(w) = \frac{a_0 - 2a_1 w + \bar{a}_0 w^2}{w(c-w)^2(1-cw)^2}$$

with  $a_0 = b + \bar{b}c^2$  and  $a_1 = bc + \bar{b}c$ .

Since the roots of the polynomial  $a_0 - 2a_1 w + \bar{a}_0 w^2$  lie on the unit circle  $|w|=1$ , a trajectory in the open unit disk can terminate only at  $w=0$  or at  $w=c$ . The limiting tangential direction of the trajectory ter-



minating at the origin is that of the number  $-\bar{a}_0$ . In particular, if  $b$  is positive, the omitted continuum is a segment  $[-a, 0]$ .

If  $g$  minimizes (10), we only have to reverse the inequality sign in the differential equation. In particular, if  $b$  is positive, the omitted continuum is a segment  $[0, a]$ ,  $0 < a < c$ .

Suppose now that  $g$  maximizes (11), with  $z=r$ . Again we set  $c=g(r)$  and  $b=g'(r)$ . The method of Section 2 shows that the omitted continuum satisfies the differential equation  $w'(t)^2s(w(t)) > 0$ , where

$$(13) \quad s(w) = \frac{P(w)}{w(c-w)^3(1-cw)^3},$$

and

$$(14) \quad P(w) = a_0 + a_1w + a_2w^2 + \bar{a}_1w^3 + \bar{a}_0w^4$$

with  $a_0 = -\bar{b}c^3$ ,  $a_1 = b + 3\bar{b}c^2$ , and  $a_2 = -3c(b + \bar{b})$ . The limiting tangential direction of the trajectory terminating at the origin is that of the number  $-b$ . In particular, if  $b$  is positive, the omitted continuum is a segment  $[-a, 0]$ .

If  $g$  minimizes (11), we reverse the inequality sign in the differential equation. If  $b$  is positive, the omitted continuum either is a segment  $[0, a]$  ( $c$  must be large with respect to the modulus of  $R$ ), or it is a segment  $[0, a]$  with a fork at  $a$ .

Unfortunately, in none of the four cases above is it clear that an extremal function exists with the property that  $b=g'(r) > 0$ . For nonreal values of  $b$ , the solution curves of the differential equations are no longer easy to identify.

The curvature of the image of a circle  $|z|=r$  under the function  $f$  at  $f(z_0)$ ,  $|z_0|=r$ , is given by the expression

$$(15) \quad \frac{1}{|z_0f'(z_0)|} \operatorname{Re} \left( 1 + z_0 \frac{f''(z_0)}{f'(z_0)} \right).$$

It is reasonable to ask for functions in  $F_0$  that maximize or minimize (15). Again we may assume that  $z_0=r > 0$  and  $f(r) > 0$ .

If  $g$  is such an extremal function, the continuum omitted by  $g$  satisfies the differential equation  $w'(t)^2s(w(t)) > 0$  (if  $g$  maximizes (15)) or  $w'(t)^2s(w(t)) < 0$  (if  $g$  minimizes (15)). Here  $s(w)$  is determined by (13) and (14) with

$$\begin{aligned} a_0 &= 2c^3(dcb| - r\bar{b}), \\ a_1 &= dc|b|(1 - 6c^2 - 3c^4) + 2rb + 6r\bar{b}c^2, \\ a_2 &= d|b|(-1 + 3c^2 + 9c^4 + c^6) - 6rc(b + \bar{b}), \end{aligned}$$

and

$$c = g(r), \quad b = g'(r), \quad d = |b|^{-1} \operatorname{Re}(1 + rg''(r)/g'(r)).$$

As before, we find that the solution curve containing the origin is easy to identify, if  $b$  is positive. But we do not know whether such an extremal function exists.

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