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Models for the Eremenko–Lyubich class

Christopher J. Bishop

Abstract

If f is in the Eremenko–Lyubich class $\mathcal{B}$ (transcendental entire functions with bounded singular set), then $\Omega = \{z : |f(z)| > R\}$ and $f|_\Omega$ must satisfy certain simple topological conditions when R is sufficiently large. A model (Ω, F) is an open set Ω and a holomorphic function F on Ω that satisfy these same conditions. We show that any model can be approximated by an Eremenko–Lyubich function in a precise sense. In many cases, this allows the construction of functions in $\mathcal{B}$ with a desired property to be reduced to the construction of a model with that property, and this is often much easier to do.

1. *Introduction*

The singular set of a entire function f is the closure of its critical values and finite asymptotic values and is denoted by $S(f)$. The Eremenko–Lyubich class $\mathcal{B}$ consists of functions such that $S(f)$ is a bounded set (such functions are also called bounded type). The Speiser class $\mathcal{S} \subset \mathcal{B}$ (also called finite type) is those functions for which $S(f)$ is a finite set.

In [9], Eremenko and Lyubich showed that if $S(f) \subset \mathbb{D}_R = \{z : |z| < R\}$, then $\Omega = \{z : |f(z)| > R\}$ is a disjoint union of analytic, unbounded, Jordan domains, and that f acts as a covering map $f : \Omega_j \to \{x : |z| > R\}$ on each component Ω_j of Ω. Building examples where Ω has a certain geometry is important for applications to dynamics. We would like to start with a model, that is, a choice of Ω and a covering map $f : \Omega \to \{|z| > 1\}$ and ask whether f can be approximated by an entire function F in $\mathcal{B}$ or $\mathcal{S}$. In this paper, we deal with approximation by functions in $\mathcal{B}$. It turns out that if Ω satisfies some obviously necessary topological conditions, then the approximation by Eremenko–Lyubich functions is always possible in a sense strong enough to imply that the functions f and F have the same dynamical behavior on their Julia sets. This allows us to build entire functions in $\mathcal{B}$ with certain behaviors by simply exhibiting a model with that behavior (this is often much easier to do). In [4], we deal with the analogous question for the Speiser class; again the approximation is always possible, but in a slightly weaker sense (dynamically, given any model we can build a function in the Speiser class that has the model's dynamics on some subset of its Julia set). In the next few paragraphs, we introduce some notation to make these remarks more precise.

Suppose that $\Omega = \bigcup_j \Omega_j$ is a disjoint union of unbounded simply connected domains satisfying the following conditions.

(1) Sequences of components of Ω accumulate only at infinity.
(2) The set $\partial\Omega_j$ is connected for each j (as a subset of $\mathbb{C}$).

Such an Ω will be called a model domain. If $\overline{\Omega} \cap \{|z| \leqslant 1\} = \emptyset$, then we say that the model domain is of disjoint type. The connected components $\{\Omega_j\}$ of Ω are called tracts. Given a model domain, suppose that $\tau : \Omega \to \mathbb{H}_r = \{x + iy : x > 0\}$ is holomorphic and that the following conditions hold.

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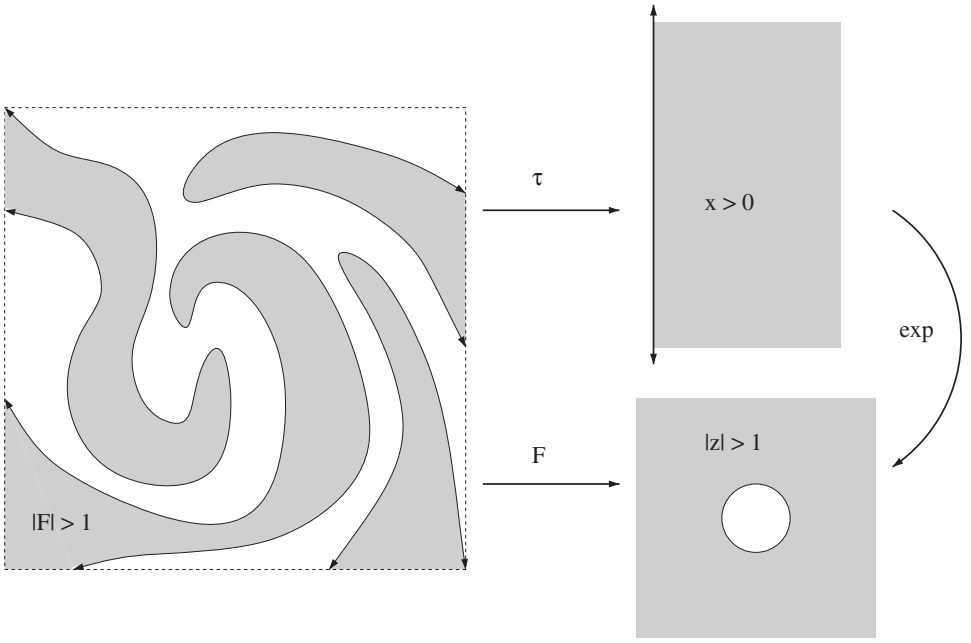

FIGURE 1. *A model consists of an open set Ω which may have a number of connected components called tracts. Each tract is mapped conformazlly by τ to the right half-plane and then by the exponential function to the exterior of the unit disk. The composition of these two maps is the model function F. In this paper, we are interested in knowing whether a holomorphic model function on Ω can be approximated by holomorphic function on the entire plane.*

(1) The restriction of τ to each Ω_j is a conformal map $\tau_j : \Omega_j \to \mathbb{H}_r$.
(2) If $\{z_n\} \subset \Omega$ and $\tau(z_n) \to \infty$, then $z_n \to \infty$.

Given such a $\tau : \Omega \to \mathbb{H}_r$, we call $F(z) = \exp(\tau(z))$ a model function.

The second condition on τ is a careful way of saying that the conformal map on each component sends ∞ to ∞. Even after making this condition, we still have a (real) two-dimensional family of conformal maps from each component of Ω to $\mathbb{H}_r$ determined by choosing where one base point in each component will map in $\mathbb{H}_r$. A choice of both a model domain Ω and a model function F on Ω will be called a model (Figure 1).

Given a model (Ω, F), we let

$$\Omega(\rho) = \{z \in \Omega : |F(z)| > e^{\rho}\} = \tau^{-1}(\{x + iy : x > \rho\})$$

and

$$\Omega(\delta, \rho) = \{z \in \Omega : e^{\delta} < |F(z)| < e^{\rho}\} = \tau^{-1}(\{x + iy : \delta < x < \rho\}).$$

If Ω has connected components $\{\Omega_j\}$, then we let $\Omega_j(\rho) = \Omega(\rho) \cap \Omega_j$ and similarly for $\Omega_j(\delta, \rho)$.

Moreover, a model has dynamics: we can iterate F as long as the iterates keep landing in Ω, and we define the Julia set of a model

$$\mathcal{J}(F) = \bigcap_{n \geqslant 0} \{z \in \Omega : F^n(z) \in \Omega\}.$$

Each function f in the Eremenko–Lyubich class that satisfies $S(f) \subset \mathbb{D}$ gives rise to a model by taking $\Omega = \{z : |f(z)| > 1\}$ and $\tau(z) = \log f(z)$. The log is well defined since each component of Ω is simply connected and f is non-vanishing on Ω. Eremenko and Lyubich proved in [9]

that τ defined in this way is a conformal map from each component of Ω to $\mathbb{H}_r$. We call a model arising in this way an Eremenko–Lyubich model. If f is in the Speiser class, then we call it a Speiser model.

An entire function f is called hyperbolic if $f \in \mathcal{B}$ and if there is a compact set K so that $f(K) \subset \text{int(K)}$ and $f : f^{-1}(\mathbb{C} \setminus K) \to \mathbb{C} \setminus K$ is a covering map. This is equivalent to saying that the singular set is bounded and every point of $S(f)$ iterates to an attracting periodic cycle in the Fatou set. If we can take K to be connected, then f is called disjoint type. This implies that the Fatou set of f (that is, the set where the iterates of f form a normal family) is connected (for example, see [16]). The assumption that $S(f) \subset \mathbb{D}$ and $\Omega = \{z : |f(z)| > 1\}$ implies that f is disjoint type. In this case, the usual Julia set of f (defined as the complement of the Fatou set) is the same set as the Julia set of the corresponding model

$$\mathcal{J}(f) = \bigcap_{n \geqslant 0} \{z : |f^n(z)| \geqslant 1\}.$$

Thus we can refer to $\mathcal{J}(f)$ where we think of f as either an entire function in $\mathcal{B}$ or as a model function on $\Omega = \{x : |f(z)| > 1\}$ without ambiguity. Basic facts about hyperbolic and disjoint-type functions are discussed in [2].

The question now arises of whether or not the Eremenko–Lyubich models are only a very special subclass of general models. There are at least two ways to make such a comparison: geometric and dynamical. We start with our geometric result.

A homeomorphism of the plane is called quasiconformal if it is absolutely continuous on almost all vertical and horizontal lines and the partial derivatives $f_z = f_x - if_y$ and $f_{\overline{z}} = f_x + if_y$ almost everywhere satisfy

$$|f_{\overline{z}}| \leqslant k|f_z|,$$

where $0 \leqslant k < 1$. Geometrically, the derivative of f exists almost everywhere and sends circles to ellipses of eccentricity at most $K = (1 + k)/(1 - k)$. This number K is called the quasiconstant of f. The ratio $\mu = f_{\overline{z}}/f_z$ is called the complex dilatation of f. The measurable Riemann mapping theorem (see, for example, [1, 14]) says that given any measurable μ with $|\mu| < k < 1$, there is a quasiconformal homeomorphism φ of the plane so that the complex dilatation of φ equal μ almost everywhere. We shall actually use the following consequence of this: if $\psi : \Omega \to \Omega'$ is a quasiconformal map between planar domains, then there is a quasiconformal map $\varphi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ so that $\psi \circ \varphi$ is conformal on $\varphi^{-1}(\Omega)$.

We can now state our main result.

THEOREM 1.1 (All models occur). *Suppose that (Ω, F) is a model and $0 < \rho \leqslant 1$. Then there is $f \in \mathcal{B}$ and a quasiconformal $\varphi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ so that $F = f \circ \varphi$ on $\Omega(2\rho)$. In addition, the following conditions hold.*

(1) *We have $|f \circ \varphi| \leqslant e^{2\rho}$ off $\Omega(2\rho)$ and $|f \circ \varphi| \leqslant e^{\rho}$ off $\Omega(\rho)$. Thus the components of $\{z : |f(z)| > e^{\rho}\}$ are in 1-to-1 correspondence to the components of Ω via φ.*
(2) *$S(f) \subset D(0, e^{\rho})$.*
(3) *The quasiconstant of φ is $O(\rho^{-2})$ with a constant independent of F and Ω.*
(4) *The map φ^{-1} is conformal except on the set $\Omega(\rho/2, 2\rho)$.*

Another useful way to state the result (for those familiar with the language), is that for any model F and any $\rho > 0$, F restricted to $\Omega(\rho)$ can be extended to a quasiregular function on $\mathbb{C}$ that is bounded off $\Omega(\rho)$ and has a quasiconstant bounded depending only on ρ. The extension

is holomorphic off $\Omega(\rho/2)$. The precise definition and basic properties of quasiregular functions can be found in, for example, [**13**, **14**, **18**, **20**].

We say that two continuous maps $f : X \to X$ and $g : Y \to Y$ are conjugate if there is a homeomorphism $h : X \to Y$ so that

$$g = h \circ f \circ h^{-1}.$$

It is easy to see that if this holds, then

$$g^n = h \circ f^n \circ h^{-1},$$

for all $n \geqslant 0$, so that the orbits of f correspond via h to the orbits of g. For our purposes, this means that the dynamics of f and g are 'the same'.

Rempe-Gillen has pointed out that Theorem 1.1 implies the following result.

THEOREM 1.2. *If F is any disjoint-type model, then there is a disjoint-type Eremenko–Lyubich function f so that f and F are quasiconformally conjugate on a neighborhood of their Julia sets. More precisely, there is a quasiconformal $\varphi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ so that*

$$f \circ \varphi = \varphi \circ F,$$

on an open set that contains both $\mathcal{J}(f)$ and $\mathcal{J}(F)$.

This means that any property of $\mathcal{J}(F)$ that is preserved by quasiconformal maps also holds for $\mathcal{J}(f)$; for example, every component of $\mathcal{J}(f)$ is path connected or the Julia set has positive area. Since it is generally easier to build a model with a desired property than to build a entire function directly, this result is useful in constructing Eremenko–Lyubich functions with pathological behavior. For example, Rempe-Gillen uses this result in [**17**] to show that there are functions in $\mathcal{B}$ so that the components of the Julia sets are pseudo-arcs, by building models that have this property.

Theorems 1.1 and 1.2 are inspired by results of Rempe-Gillen [**16**] that draw the same conclusions from a stronger hypothesis: he assumes that $F = e^{\tau}$ is defined on a model domain Ω with a single tract and restricts it to a slightly smaller domain than $\Omega(\rho)$; roughly, he omits a strip whose width grows logarithmically, that is, $\tau^{-1}(\{x + iy : x > \max(1, \log|y|)\})$. His version of Theorem 1.1 is proved by using a Cauchy integral construction to first approximate F uniformly and then show that uniform approximation implies quasiconformal approximation in the sense of Theorem 1.1. Rempe-Gillen then shows how to deduce Theorem 1.2 from Theorem 1.1 using an iterative construction. With his permission, we sketch his argument in Section 9 for the convenience of the reader (our application does not require the much more powerful results he also proved in [**15**]).

We sketch the proof of Theorem 1.1 quickly here to give the basic idea. Let $W = \mathbb{C} \setminus \overline{\Omega(\rho)}$. It is simply connected, non-empty and not the whole plane, so there is a conformal map $\Psi : W \to \mathbb{D}$. Since Ψ maps ∂W to the unit circle, if we knew that $F = f|_{\Omega}$ for some entire function f, then $B = e^{-\rho} \cdot F \circ \Psi^{-1}$ would be an inner function on $\mathbb{D}$ (that is, a holomorphic function on $\mathbb{D}$ so that $|B| = 1$ almost everywhere on the boundary).

The proof of Theorem 1.1 reverses this observation. Given the model and the corresponding domain W and conformal map Ψ, we construct a Blaschke product B (a special type of inner function) on the disk so that $G = B \circ \Psi$ approximates $F = e^{\tau}$ on $\partial\Omega(\rho)$ (the precise nature of the approximation will be described later). This step is fairly straightforward using standard estimates of the Poisson kernel on the disk. We then 'glue' G to F across ∂W to get a quasiregular function g that agrees with F on $\Omega(2\rho)$ and agrees with G on W. This takes several (individually easy) steps to accomplish. We then use the measurable Riemann mapping theorem to define a quasiconformal mapping $\phi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ so that $f = g \circ \phi$ is holomorphic on the whole plane. The only critical points of g correspond to critical points of B, and critical

points introduced into $\Omega(\rho, 2\rho)$ by the gluing process. We will show that both types of critical values have absolute value at most e^ρ. A different argument shows that any finite asymptotic value of f must correspond to a limit of B along a curve in $\mathbb{D}$, so all finite asymptotic values of f are also bounded by e^ρ. Thus $f \in \mathcal{B}$. Since g is only non-holomorphic in $\Omega(\rho, 2\rho)$, we will also get that ϕ^{-1} is conformal everywhere except in $\Omega(\rho, 2\rho)$.

Given Theorem 1.1 for the Eremenko–Lyubich class $\mathcal{B}$, it is natural to ask the analogous question for the more restrictive Speiser class: can every model be approximated by a Speiser model? This question is addressed in [4], where an analog of Theorem 1.1 is proved for the Speiser class. In that paper we show that given a model (Ω, F) and any $\rho > 0$, there is an $f \in \mathcal{S}$ and a quasiconformal map $\phi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ so that $f \circ \phi = e^\tau$ on $\Omega(2\rho)$. We may take ϕ to be conformal on $\Omega(\rho)$, and f may be taken with the two critical values $\pm e^\rho$ and no finite asymptotic values.

Note that this result omits the conclusion '$f \circ \phi$ is bounded off $\Omega(2\rho)$'. In fact, the Speiser functions constructed in [4] will usually be unbounded off Ω; f can have 'extra' tracts that do not correspond to tracts of the original model function F. It is shown in [4] that f has at most twice as many tracts as F and sometimes this many are needed. The Speiser version of Theorem 1.2 says that if (Ω, F) is any model, then there is a Speiser class function f, a closed set $A \subset \mathcal{J}(f)$, an open neighborhood U of A and a quasiconformal map $\varphi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ that conjugates f to F on U. Thus the dynamics of any model can be found 'inside' the Julia set of a Speiser class function. See [4] for the precise statement.

Finally, the construction in this paper uses a construction called 'simple folding'. A more complicated version of this is used in [5] to construct functions in the Speiser class with prescribed geometry. The paper [4] on Speiser models uses the main result of [5] to prove the results described in the preceding paragraphs. Thus this paper can be thought of as a gentle introduction to [5], whereas [4] is a sequel to [5]. The results of both this paper and [4] originally appeared in a single preprint titled 'The geometry of bounded type entire functions', but I have split this into two papers in an attempt to improve the exposition and to separate the simpler, self-contained arguments for the Eremenko–Lyubich class $\mathcal{B}$ from the more intricate arguments relying on [5] needed for the Speiser class $\mathcal{S}$.

Using quasiconformal methods to construct holomorphic functions with desired geometry has a long history and has been a crucial tool in several areas such as value distribution theory and, more recently, holomorphic dynamics. See [8, 12] for surveys of applications to the first area and [6] for a recent survey of the second.

2. *Reduction of Theorem 1.1 to the case $\rho = 1$*

We start the proof of Theorem 1.1 with the observation that it suffices to prove the result for $\rho = 1$.

To do this, we define two quasiconformal maps, ψ_ρ and φ_ρ. Define

$$L(x) = \begin{cases} x, & 0 < x < \rho/2, \\ \left(\dfrac{2-\rho}{\rho}\right)(x - \rho/2) + \rho/2, & \rho/2 \leqslant x \leqslant \rho, \\ x/\rho, & \rho \leqslant x \leqslant 2\rho. \end{cases}$$

This is a piecewise linear map that sends $[\rho/2, \rho]$ to $[\rho/2, 1]$ and sends $[\rho, 2\rho]$ to $[1, 2]$. The slope on both intervals is less than $2/\rho$. For $z = x + iy \in \mathbb{H}_r$, define

$$\sigma_\rho(z) = \begin{cases} L(x) + iy, & 0 < x \leqslant 2\rho, \\ z + 2 - 2\rho, & x > 2\rho. \end{cases}$$

This is quasiconformal $\mathbb{H}_r \to \mathbb{H}_r$ with quasiconstant $K \leqslant 2/\rho$. Then set

$$\psi_\rho(z) = \begin{cases} z, & z \notin \Omega, \\ \tau_j^{-1} \circ \sigma_\rho \circ \tau_j(z), & z \in \Omega_j. \end{cases}$$

Note that ψ_ρ is the identity near $\partial\Omega$, so ψ_ρ is quasiconformal on the whole plane by the Royden gluing lemma, for example, [**3**, Lemma 2], [**7**, Lemma I.2, p. 303] or [**19**]. (Actually, since ψ_ρ is the identity off $\Omega(\rho/2)$ which has a smooth boundary, one can use a weaker version of the gluing lemma.)

Next, define

$$\varphi_\rho(z) = \begin{cases} z, & |z| < e^{\rho/2}, \\ \exp(\sigma_\rho(\log(z))), & |z| \geqslant e^{\rho/2}. \end{cases}$$

Note that even though $\log(z)$ is multi-valued, the function σ_ρ does not change the imaginary part of its argument, so the exponential of $\sigma_\rho(\log(z))$ is well defined. This is clearly a quasiconformal map of the plane with quasiconstant $2/\rho$. Note also that these functions were chosen so that if $F = \exp \circ \tau$ is the model function associated to Ω and τ, then on Ω_j,

$$\begin{aligned} F \circ \psi_\rho &= \exp \circ \tau_j \circ \tau_j^{-1} \circ \sigma_\rho \circ \tau_j \\ &= \exp \circ \sigma_\rho \circ \log \circ \exp \circ \tau_j \\ &= \varphi_\rho \circ F. \end{aligned} \tag{2.1}$$

Now apply Theorem 1.1 to the model (Ω, F) with $\rho = 1$ to get an $f \in \mathcal{B}$ and a quasiconformal map $\Phi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ so that $f \circ \Phi = F$ on $\Omega(2)$ and $S(f) \subset D(0, e^1)$. Let $g_\rho = \varphi_\rho^{-1} \circ f \circ \Phi \circ \psi_\rho$. This is an entire function pre- and post-composed with quasiconformal maps of the plane, so it is quasiregular. By the measurable Riemann mapping theorem, there is a quasiconformal $\Phi_\rho : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ so that $f_\rho = g_\rho \circ \Phi_\rho^{-1}$ is entire and clearly

$$S(f_\rho) = S(g_\rho) \subset \varphi_\rho^{-1}(S(f)) \subset \varphi_\rho^{-1}(D(0, e)) = D(0, e^\rho).$$

For $z \in \Omega(2\rho)$, $\psi_\rho(z) \in \Omega(2)$, so using this and (2.1),

$$\begin{aligned} f_\rho \circ \Phi_\rho(z) &= g_\rho(z) \\ &= \varphi_\rho^{-1}(f(\Phi(\psi_\rho(z)))) \\ &= \varphi_\rho^{-1}(F(\psi_\rho(z))) \\ &= F(z). \end{aligned}$$

Similarly, $|f_\rho \circ \Phi_\rho| = |g_\rho|$ is bounded by $e^{2\rho}$ off $\Omega(2\rho)$. The quasiconstant of Φ_ρ is, at worst, the product of the constants for Φ, ψ_ρ and φ_ρ, which is $K_1 \cdot 4\rho^{-2}$, where K_1 is the upper bound for the quasiconstant in Theorem 1.1 in the case $\rho = 1$.

Finally, our construction in the next section will show that Φ is conformal except on $\Omega(1, 2)$ and that F has a quasiregular extension to the plane that is holomorphic except on $\Omega(1, 2)$ and is bounded by e off $\Omega(1)$ and by e^2 off $\Omega(2)$. This implies that g_ρ is holomorphic except on $\Omega(\rho/2, 2\rho)$ (since ψ_ρ is holomorphic off $\Omega(\rho/2, 2\rho)$ and φ_ρ^{-1} is holomorphic off $\{e^{\rho/2} < |z| < e^2\}$). This, in turn, implies that Φ_ρ is conformal except on $\Omega(\rho/2, 2\rho)$, as desired. Thus f_ρ satisfies Theorem 1.1 for the model (Ω, F) and the given $\rho > 0$.

3. *The proof of Theorem 1.1*

In this section, we give the proof of Theorem 1.1 for $\rho = 1$, stating certain facts as lemmas to be proved in later sections.

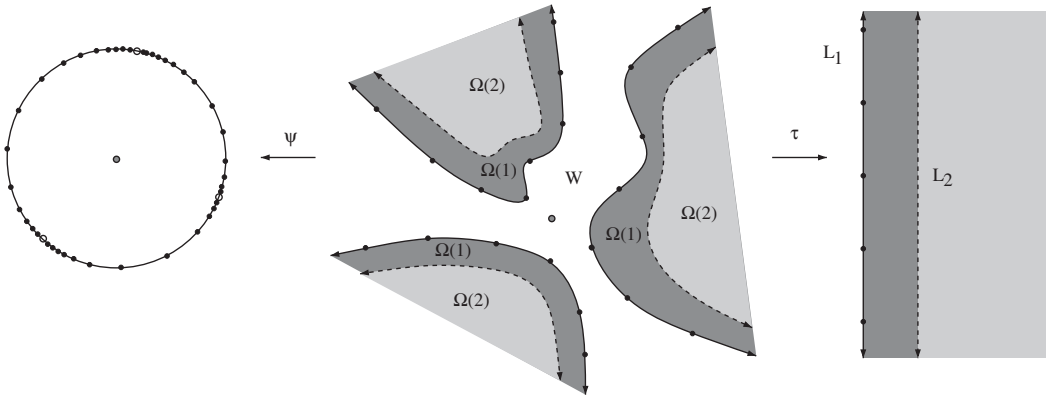

FIGURE 2. *The domain W is the complement of $\Omega(1)$; it is simply connected and bounded by smooth curves. We are given the holomorphic function $F = e^{\tau}$ on $\Omega(2)$ and we will define a holomorphic function on W using the Riemann map Ψ of W to the unit disk, and a specially chosen infinite Blaschke product B on the disk. We will then interpolate these functions in $\Omega(2) \setminus \Omega(1)$ by a quasiregular function. Each component of this set is mapped to a vertical strip by τ, and it is in these strips that we construct the interpolating functions. Note that the integer partition on the boundary of the half-plane pulls back under τ to a partition of each component of $\partial\Omega(1)$, and that Ψ maps these to a partition of the unit circle (minus the singular set of Ψ). The Blaschke product B will be constructed so that $B^{-1}(1)$ approximates this partition of the circle.*

Let $W = \mathbb{C} \setminus \overline{\Omega(1)}$. This is an open, connected, simply connected domain that is bounded by analytic arcs $\{\gamma_j\}$ that are each unbounded in both directions. See Figure 2. The same comments hold for the larger domain $W_2 = \mathbb{C} \setminus \overline{\Omega(2)}$.

Let $L_1 = \{x + iy : x = 1\}$ and $L_2 = \{x + iy : x = 2\}$. The vertical strip between these two lines will be denoted by S. Note that L_1 is partitioned into intervals of length 2π by the points $1 + 2\pi i\mathbb{Z}$. This partition of L_1 will be denoted by $\mathcal{J}$. Note that $\tau_j(\gamma_j) = L_1$, so each curve γ_j is partitioned by the image of $\mathcal{J}$ under τ_j^{-1}. We denote this partition of γ_j by $\mathcal{J}_j$. Because elements of $\mathcal{J}_j$ are all images of a fixed interval $J \in L_1 \subset \mathbb{H}_r$ under some conformal map of $\mathbb{H}_r$, the distortion theorem (for example, [**11**, Theorem I.4.5]) implies that they all lie in a compact family of smooth arcs and that adjacent elements of $\mathcal{J}_j$ have comparable lengths with a uniform constant, independent of j, Ω and F.

Let $\Psi : W \to \mathbb{D}$ be a conformal map given by the Riemann mapping theorem. We claim that Ψ can be analytically continued from W to W_2 across γ_j. Let R_1 denote reflection across L_1 and for $z \in \Omega_j \cap W = \tau_j^{-1}(\{x + iy : 0 < x < 1\})$ let $T = \tau_j^{-1} \circ R_1 \circ \tau_j$; this defines an anti-holomorphic 1-to-1 map from $\Omega_j(0, 1)$ to $\Omega_j(1, 2)$ that fixes each point of γ_j. We can then extend Ψ by the formula

$$\Psi(T(z)) = 1/\overline{\Psi(z)}$$

(where the right-hand side denotes reflection of $\Psi(z)$ across the unit circle). The Schwarz reflection principle says that this is an analytic continuation of Ψ to W_2.

Thus Ψ is a smooth map of each γ_j onto an arc I_j of the unit circle $\mathbb{T} = \partial\mathbb{D} = \{|z| = 1\}$. The complement of these arcs is a closed set $E \subset \mathbb{T}$. It is a standard fact of conformal mappings that since E is the set where a conformal map fails to have a finite limit, it has zero Lebesgue, indeed, zero logarithmic capacity. We will not need this fact, although we will use the easier fact that E cannot contain an interval (that is, a conformal map cannot have infinite limits on an interval).

The partition $\mathcal{J}_j$ of γ_j transfers via Ψ to a partition of $I_j \subset \mathbb{T}$ into infinitely many intervals $\{J_k^j\}, k \in \mathbb{Z}$. We will let $\mathcal{K} = \bigcup_{j,k} J_k^j$ denote the collection of all intervals that occur this way. Thus $\mathbb{T} = E \cup \bigcup_{K \in \mathcal{K}} K$.

Because Ψ conformally extends from W to W_2, $|\Psi'|$ has comparable minimum and maximum on each partition element of γ_j (with uniform constants). Thus the corresponding intervals $\{J_k^j\}$ have the property that adjacent intervals have comparable lengths (again with a uniform bound).

The hyperbolic distance between two points $z_1, z_2 \in \mathbb{D}$ is defined as

$$\rho(z_1, z_2) = \inf_{\gamma} \int_{\gamma} \frac{|dz|}{1 - |z|^2}.$$

See [**11**, Chapter 1] for the basic properties of the hyperbolic metric. Here we will mostly need the facts that it is invariant under Möbius self-maps of the disk, that hyperbolic geodesics are circular arcs in $\mathbb{D}$ that are perpendicular to $\mathbb{T}$, and that points hyperbolic distance r from 0 are Euclidean distance

$$\frac{2}{\exp(2r) + 1} = O(\exp(-r))$$

from the unit circle.

For any proper subinterval $I \subset \mathbb{T}$, let γ_I be the hyperbolic geodesic with the same endpoints as I and let a_I be the point on γ_i that is closest to the origin (closest in either the Euclidean or hyperbolic metrics; it is the same point).

Since $\mathcal{K}$ are disjoint intervals on the circle,

$$\sum_{K \in \mathcal{K}} (1 - |a_K|) < \infty,$$

and so

$$B(z) = \prod_{\mathcal{K}} \frac{|a_K|}{a_K} \frac{a_K - z}{1 - \overline{a_K} z}$$

defines a convergent Blaschke product (see [**10**, Theorem II.2.2]). Thus B is a bounded, non-constant, holomorphic function on $\mathbb{D}$ that vanishes exactly on the set $\{a_n\}$. Also, $|B|$ has radial limits 1 almost everywhere. Moreover, B extends meromorphically to $\mathbb{C} \setminus E$, where E is the accumulation set of its zeros on $\mathbb{T}$; this is the same set E as defined above using the map Ψ (the zeros accumulate at both endpoints of every component of $\mathbb{T} \setminus E$, and since these points are dense in E, the accumulation set of the zeros is the whole singular set E). The poles of the extension are precisely the points in the exterior of the unit disk that are the reflections across $\mathbb{T}$ of the zeros.

Any subset $\mathcal{M}$ of $\mathcal{K}$ also defines a convergent Blaschke product. Fix such a subset. The corresponding Blaschke product $B_{\mathcal{M}}$ induces a partition of each I_j with endpoints given by the set $\{e^{i\theta} : B_{\mathcal{M}}(e^{i\theta}) = 1\}$ and this induces a partition $\mathcal{H}_j$ of each γ_j via the map Ψ. This, in turn, induces a partition $\mathcal{L}_j$ of L_1 via τ_j.

We would like to say that the partitions $\mathcal{L}_j$ and $\mathcal{J}$ are 'almost the same'. The first step to making this precise is a lemma that we will prove in Section 4.

LEMMA 3.1. *There is a subset $\mathcal{M} \subset \mathcal{K}$ so that if B is the Blaschke product corresponding to $\mathcal{M}$ and $\mathcal{L}_j$ is the partition of L_1 corresponding to B via $\tau_j \circ \Psi^{-1}$, then each element of $\mathcal{J}$ hits at least two elements of $\mathcal{L}_j$ and at most M elements of $\mathcal{L}_j$, where M is uniform. In particular, no element of $\mathcal{J}$ can hit both endpoints of any element of $\mathcal{L}_j$ (elements of each partition are considered as closed intervals).*

In Section 5, we will prove the following lemma.

LEMMA 3.2. *Suppose $K = [1 + ia, 1 + ib] \in \mathcal{L}_j$ and define*

$$\alpha(1 + iy) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \arg(B \circ \Psi \circ \tau_j^{-1}(1 + iy)),$$

where we choose a branch of α *so* $\alpha(1+ia)=0$ *(recall that* $B(\Psi(\tau_j^{-1}(1+ia)))=1\in\mathbb{R}$*). Set*

$$\psi_1(z)=1+i(a(1-\alpha(z))+b\alpha(z))=1+i(a+(b-a)\alpha(z)).$$

Then ψ_1 *is a homeomorphism from* K *to itself so that* $\alpha\circ\psi_1^{-1}:K\to[0,1]$ *is linear and* ψ_1 *can be extended to a quasiconformal homeomorphism of* $R=K\times[1,2]$ *to itself that is the identity map on the* $\partial R\setminus K$ *(that is, it fixes points on the top, bottom and right side of* R*).*

The main point of the proof is to show that $\arg(B\circ\Psi\circ\tau_j^{-1}):K\to[0,2\pi]$ is bi-Lipschitz with uniform bounds.

Roughly, Lemma 3.1 says that there are more elements of $\mathcal{J}$ than there are of $\mathcal{L}_j$. This is made a little more precise by the following lemma.

LEMMA 3.3. *There is a* 1*-to-*1*, order-preserving map of* $\mathcal{L}_j$ *into (but not necessarily onto)* $\mathcal{J}$ *so that each interval* $K\in\mathcal{L}_j$ *is sent to an interval* J *with* $\operatorname{dist}(K,J)\leqslant 2\pi$*. Moreover, adjacent elements of* $\mathcal{L}_j$ *map to elements of* $\mathcal{J}$ *that are either adjacent or are separated by an even number of elements of* $\mathcal{J}$*.*

This will be proved in Section 6. Again, the proof is quite elementary.

Partition $\mathcal{J}=\mathcal{J}_1^j\cup\mathcal{J}_2^j$ according to whether the interval is associated to some element of $\mathcal{L}_j$ by Lemma 3.3 (that is, $\mathcal{J}_1^j$ is the image of $\mathcal{L}_j$ under the map in the lemma). The maximal chains of adjacent elements of $\mathcal{J}_2^j$ will be called blocks. By the lemma, each block has an even number of elements. We will say that the block associated to an element $J\in\mathcal{J}_1^j$ is the block immediately above J.

Thus each interval K in $\mathcal{L}_j$ is associated to an interval J' that consists of the corresponding J given by Lemma 3.3 and its associated block. The intervals K and J' have comparable lengths and are close to each other, so the orientation-preserving linear map from J' to K defines a piecewise linear map $\tilde{\psi}_2:\mathbb{R}\to\mathbb{R}$ that is bi-Lipschitz with a uniform constant. Using linear interpolation, we can extend this to a bi-Lipschitz map ψ_2 of the strip $S=\{x+iy:1<x<2\}$ to itself that equals $\tilde{\psi}_2$ on L_1 (the left boundary) and is the identity on L_2 (the right side).

Each element $J\in\mathcal{J}_2^j$ is paired with a distinct element $J^*\in\mathcal{J}_2^j$ that belongs to the same block. The two outermost elements of the block are paired, as are the pair adjacent to these, and so on. Similarly, each point z is paired with the other point z^* in the block that has the same distance to the boundary (the center of the block is an endpoint of $\mathcal{J}$ and is paired with itself).

For each $K\in\mathcal{L}_j$, let J_K be the corresponding element of $\mathcal{J}_1^j$ and let I_K be the union of J_K and its corresponding block. Let $R_K=[1,2]\times I_K$. Let $U_K=R_K\setminus X_K$, where X_K is the closed segment connecting the upper left corner of R_K to the center of R_K. See Figure 3.

LEMMA 3.4 (Simple folding). *There is a quasiconformal map* $\psi_3:U_K\to R_K$ *so that the following conditions hold (*ψ_3 *depends on* j *and on* K*, but we drop these parameters from the notation).*

(1) *The map* ψ_3 *is the identity on* $\partial R_K\setminus L_1$ *(that is, it is the identity on the top, bottom and right side of* R_K*).*

(2) *The map* ψ_3^{-1} *extends continuously to the boundary and is linear on each element of* $\mathcal{J}$ *lying in* I_K*.*

(3) *The map* ψ_3 *maps* I_K *(linearly) to* J_K*.*

(4) *For each* $z\in I_K$*,* $\psi_3^{-1}(z)=\psi_3^{-1}(z^*)\in X_k$ *(that is,* ψ_3 *maps opposite sides of* X_k *to paired points in* I_k*).*

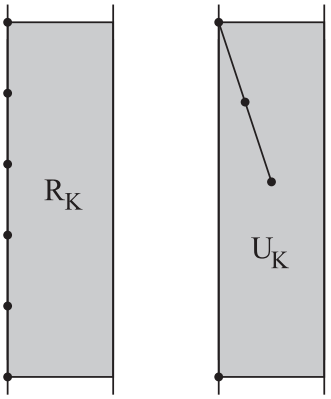

FIGURE 3. *Definition of U_K.*

(5) *The quasiconstant of ψ_3 depends only on $|I_K|/|J_K|$, that is, on the number of elements in the block associated to K. It is independent of the original model and of the choice of j and K.*

We call this a 'simple folding' because it is a simple analog of a more complicated folding procedure given in [5]. In the lemma above, the image domain is a rectangle with a slit removed and the quasiconstant of ψ_3 is allowed to grow with n, the number of block elements. This growth is not important in this paper because here we apply the folding construction only in cases where this number n is uniformly bounded (this will occur in our application because of Lemma 3.1). In [5], the corresponding values may be arbitrarily large but the folding construction there must give a map with uniformly bounded quasiconstant regardless. The construction in [5] removes a collection of finite trees from R_k and does so in a way that keeps the quasiconstant of ψ_3 bounded independent of n (there are also complications involving how the constructions on adjacent rectangles are merged).

We want to treat the boundary intervals in $\mathcal{J}_1$ and $\mathcal{J}_2$ slightly differently. The precise mechanism for doing this is the following lemma.

LEMMA 3.5 (exp–cosh interpolation). *There is a quasiregular map $\sigma_j : S \to D(0, e^2)$ so that*

$$\sigma_j(z) = \begin{cases} \exp(z), & z \in J \in \mathcal{J}_1^j, \\ e \cdot \cosh(z-1), & z \in J \in \mathcal{J}_2^j, \\ \exp(z), & z \in \mathbb{H}_r + 2. \end{cases}$$

The quasiconstant of ϕ_j is uniformly bounded, independent of all our choices.

This lemma will be proved in Section 8 and is completely elementary.

We now have all the individual pieces needed to construct the interpolation g_j between e^z on L_2 and $B \circ \Psi \circ \tau_j^{-1}$ on L_1. Let U_j be S minus all the segments X_K where $K \in \mathcal{L}_j$ as in Lemma 3.4. Define a quasiconformal map $\psi : U_j \to S$ by

$$\psi = \psi_1 \circ \psi_2 \circ \psi_3,$$

and let $g_j = \sigma_j \circ \psi$ map U_j into $D(0, e^2)$. By definition, each ψ_i, $i = 1, 2, 3$ is the identity on L_2, so $g_j(z) = e^z$ on L_2. For any $K \in \mathcal{L}_j$, the map ψ sends the boundary segments of ∂U_K that lie on some X_K linearly onto elements of $\mathcal{J}_2^j$, so boundary points on opposite sides of X_K

get mapped to points that are equidistant from $2\pi i\mathbb{Z}$ and cosh agrees at any two such points. Thus g_j extends continuously across each slit X_K. Finally, the map ψ was designed so that g_j is continuous on S and agrees with $B \circ \Psi \circ \tau_j^{-1}$ on L_1. Thus $g_j \circ \tau_j$ continuously interpolates between $B \circ \Psi$ on W and F on $\Omega(2)$ and so defines a quasiregular g on the whole plane with a uniformly bounded constant. Thus by the measurable Riemann mapping theorem there is a quasiconformal $\varphi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ so that $f = g \circ \varphi$ is entire.

The singular values of f are the same as for g. On $\Omega(2)$, $g = F = e^\tau$, so g has no critical points in this region. In U_j, $g = g_j$ is locally 1-to-1, so has no critical points there either. Thus the only critical points of g in $\Omega(1)$ are on the slits X_K, then these are mapped by g onto the circle of radius e around the origin. Thus every critical value of g (and hence f) must lie in $D(0, e)$.

If g has a finite asymptotic value outside $\overline{D(0, e)}$, then it must be the limit of g along some curve Γ contained in a single component of Ω. Then e^z has a finite limit along $\tau(\Gamma) \subset \mathbb{H}_r$; this is impossible, so f has no finite asymptotic values outside $\overline{D(0, e)}$. Thus $S(f) \subset \overline{D(0, e)}$, and so $f \in \mathcal{B}$.

This proves Theorem 1.1 except for the proof of the lemmas.

4. *Blaschke partitions*

In this section, we prove Lemma 3.1. We start by recalling some basic properties of the Poisson kernel and harmonic measure in the unit disk $\mathbb{D}$.

The Poisson kernel on the unit circle with respect to the point $a \in \mathbb{D}$ is given by the formula

$$P_a(\theta) = \frac{1 - |a|^2}{|e^{i\theta} - a^2|} = \frac{1 - |a|^2}{1 - 2|a| \cos(\theta - \phi) + |a|^2},$$

where $a = |a|e^{i\phi}$. This is the same as $|\sigma'|$ where σ is any Möbius transformation of the disk to itself that sends a to 0. If $E \subset \mathbb{T}$, then we write

$$\omega(E, a, \mathbb{D}) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_E P_a(e^{i\theta})\, d\theta,$$

and call this the harmonic measure of E with respect to a. This is the same as the (normalized) Lebesgue measure of $\sigma(E) \subset \mathbb{T}$ where $\sigma : \mathbb{D} \to \mathbb{D}$ is any Möbius transformation sending a to 0. It is also the same as the first hitting distribution on $\mathbb{T}$ of a Brownian motion started at a (although we will not use this characterization).

Suppose that $I \subset \mathbb{T}$ is any proper arc, and, as before, let γ_I be the hyperbolic geodesic in $\mathbb{D}$ with the same endpoints as I; then γ_I is a circular arc in $\mathbb{D}$ that is perpendicular to $\mathbb{T}$ at its endpoints. Let a_I denote the point of γ_I that is closest to the origin.

LEMMA 4.1. $\omega(I, a_I, \mathbb{D}) = \frac{1}{2}$.

Proof. Apply a Möbius transformation of $\mathbb{D}$ that sends a_I to the origin. Then γ_I must map to a diameter of the disk and I maps to a semicircle. □

Given two disjoint arcs I, J in $\mathbb{T}$, let γ_I, γ_J be the two corresponding hyperbolic geodesics and let a_I^J be the point on γ_I that is closest to J and let a_J^I be the point on γ_J that is closest to I.

LEMMA 4.2. $\omega(I, a_J^I, \mathbb{D}) = \omega(J, a_I^J, \mathbb{D})$.

Proof. Everything is invariant under Möbius maps of the unit disk to itself, so use such a map to send I, J to antipodal arcs. Then the conclusion is obvious. □

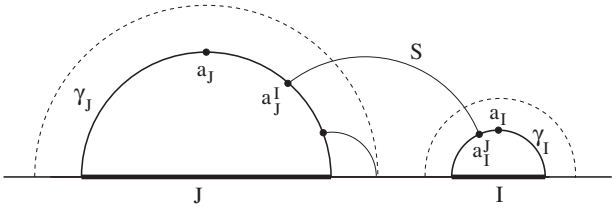

FIGURE 4. *If the intervals I and J are ϵ-separated, then a shortest path between γ_I and γ_J must hit each geodesic near the 'top' points. A perpendicular geodesic that starts too 'low' on γ_J will hit the unit circle without hitting γ_I.*

LEMMA 4.3. *If $z, w \in \mathbb{D}$ and $I \subset \mathbb{T}$, then*

$$\frac{\omega(I, z, \mathbb{D})}{\omega(I, w, \mathbb{D})} \leqslant C,$$

where the constant C depends only on the hyperbolic distance between z and w.

Proof. Suppose that $\sigma(z) = (z - w)/(1 - \overline{w}z)$ maps w to 0. Then $u(z) = \omega(I, \sigma(z), \mathbb{D})$ is a positive harmonic function on $\mathbb{D}$, so the lemma is just Harnack's inequality applied to u. □

Suppose that $I, J, \subset \mathbb{T}$ are disjoint closed arcs and $\operatorname{dist}(I, J) \geqslant \epsilon \max(|I|, |J|)$. Then we call I and J ϵ-separated. This implies that the hyperbolic geodesics γ_I, γ_J are separated in the hyperbolic metric (with a lower bound depending only on ϵ), but the converse is not true.

LEMMA 4.4. *If $I, J \subset \mathbb{T}$ are ϵ-separated, then the hyperbolic distance between a_I and a_I^J is bounded, depending only on ϵ.*

Proof. Assume that I is the longer arc and consider the hyperbolic geodesic S that connects a_I^J and a_J^I. Then S is perpendicular to γ_I at a_I^J, so if $1 - |a_I^J| \ll 1 - |a_I|$, then S will hit the unit circle without hitting γ_j. See Figure 4. □

LEMMA 4.5. *Suppose that I, J are ϵ-separated. Then*

$$\omega(I, a_J, \mathbb{D}) \simeq \omega(J, a_I, \mathbb{D}),$$

where the constant depends only on ϵ.

Proof. This follows immediately from our earlier results. □

LEMMA 4.6. *Suppose that I and J are ϵ-separated and that a_J, a_I are at least distance R apart in the hyperbolic metric. Then*

$$\omega(J, a_I, \mathbb{D}) \leqslant C(\epsilon) e^{-R}.$$

Proof. Since the intervals are ϵ-separated, the hyperbolic distance between a_I and a_J is the same as the distance between a_I^J and a_J^I, up to a bounded additive factor. Thus if we apply a Möbius transformation of $\mathbb{D}$ so that $a_J = 0$, then a_I is mapped to a point w with $1 - |w| = O(e^{-R})$, which implies $\omega(I, a_J, \mathbb{D}) = O(e^{-R})$. Since the intervals are ϵ-separated, the reverse inequality also holds by Lemma 4.5. □

Fix $M < \infty$ and suppose that $\mathcal{K}$ is a collection of disjoint (except possibly for endpoints) closed intervals on $\mathbb{T}$ so that any two adjacent intervals have length ratio at most M. We say that two intervals I, J are S steps apart if there is a chain of $S+1$ adjacent intervals $J_0, \dots, J_S$ so that $I = J_0$ and $J = J_S$.

Note that if $I, J \in \mathcal{K}$ are adjacent, then a_I, a_J are at bounded hyperbolic distance T apart (and T depends only on M). Also, if $I, J \in \mathcal{K}$ are not adjacent, then they are ϵ-separated for some $\epsilon > 0$ that depends only on M.

LEMMA 4.7. *For any $R > 0$, there is a collection $\mathcal{N} \subset \mathcal{K}$ so that the following conditions hold.*

(1) *For any $I \in \mathcal{K}$, there is a $J \in \mathcal{N}$ with $\rho(a_J, a_I) \leqslant R$.*
(2) *For any $I, J \in \mathcal{N}$, $\rho(a_J, a_I) \geqslant R$.*

Proof. Just let $\mathcal{N}$ correspond to a maximal collection of the points $\{a_K\}$ with the property that any two of them are hyperbolic distance at least R apart. □

Fix a positive integer S. For each $J \in \mathcal{N}$, choose the shortest element of $\mathcal{K}$ that is at most S steps away from J. Let $\mathcal{M} \subset \mathcal{K}$ be the corresponding collection of intervals.

LEMMA 4.8. *Suppose that R, S, T are as above and $R \geqslant 4ST$. If $\mathcal{K}$ and $\mathcal{M}$ are as above, then for all $K \in \mathcal{K}$,*

$$\epsilon \leqslant \sum_{J \in \mathcal{M}} \omega(K, a_J, \mathbb{D}) \leqslant \mu,$$

where $\epsilon > 0$ depends only on R and $\mu \to 1/2$ as $S \to \infty$.

Proof. The left-hand inequality is easier and we do it first. Fix $K \in \mathcal{K}$. There is an $I \in \mathcal{N}$ with $\rho(a_I, a_K) \leqslant R$, and since adjacent elements of $\mathcal{K}$ have points that are only T apart in the hyperbolic metric, there is an element $J \in \mathcal{M}$ with $\rho(a_K, a_J) \leqslant R + ST \leqslant \frac{5}{4}R$. This implies $|J| \simeq |K| \simeq \operatorname{dist}(J, K)$ and this implies $\omega(K, a_J, \mathbb{D}) \geqslant \epsilon$ with ϵ depending only on ρ. Thus every element of $\mathcal{K}$ has harmonic measure bounded below with respect to some point corresponding to a single element of $\mathcal{M}$ and hence the sum of harmonic measures over all elements of $\mathcal{M}$ is also bounded away from 0 uniformly.

Now we prove the right-hand inequality. By our choice of R, points a_J corresponding to distinct intervals in $\mathcal{M}$ are at least distance $R/2$ apart. Fix $K \in \mathcal{K}$. There is at most one point within hyperbolic distance $R/4$ of a_K and the harmonic measure it assigns K is at most $1/2$ since the point lies on or outside the geodesic γ_K.

All other points associated to elements of $\mathcal{M}$ are Euclidean distance at least $\exp(R/8)|K|$ away from K or are within this distance of K, and are within Euclidean distance $\exp(-R/8)|K|$ of the unit circle (this is because of the Euclidean geometry of hyperbolic balls in the half-space). We call these two disjoint sets $\mathcal{M}_1$ and $\mathcal{M}_2$, respectively.

Using Lemma 4.5, we see that

$$\sum_{J \in \mathcal{M}_1} \omega(K, a_J, \mathbb{D}) = O\left(\sum_{J \in \mathcal{M}_1} \omega(J, a_K, \mathbb{D}) \right) = O(\exp(-R/8)).$$

To bound the sum over $\mathcal{M}_2$, we note that each interval in $\mathcal{M}_2$ is the endpoint of a chain of S adjacent intervals that are each at least as long as J. Since

$$|J| \leqslant \exp(-R/8)|K|$$

and

$$\operatorname{dist}(J, K) \gtrsim |K|,$$

we can deduce

$$\omega(J, a_K, \mathbb{D}) \leqslant O\left(\frac{1}{S}\right) \omega(a_K, J, \mathbb{D}),$$

and since the intervals $J \in \mathcal{M}_2$ are all pairwise disjoint, we get

$$\sum_{J \in \mathcal{M}_2} \omega(K, a_J, \mathbb{D}) = O\left(\frac{1}{S} \sum_{J \in \mathcal{M}_2} \omega(J, a_K, \mathbb{D})\right) = O\left(\frac{1}{S}\right).$$

Choosing first S large, and then R large (depending on S and the separation constant of $\mathcal{K}$), both sums are as small as we wish, which proves the lemma. □

COROLLARY 4.9. *Suppose that B is as above and $K \in \mathcal{K}$. Then*

$$\epsilon \leqslant \frac{1}{|K|} \frac{\partial B}{\partial \theta} \leqslant C.$$

Proof. If I, J are ϵ-separated, then it is easy to verify that

$$\sup_{z \in J} P_{a_I}(z), \quad \inf_{z \in J} P_{a_I}(z)$$

are comparable up to a bounded multiplicative factor that depends only on ϵ. The corollary then follows from our earlier estimates. □

We have now essentially proved Lemma 3.1; it just remains to reinterpret the terminology a little. For the reader's convenience, we restate the lemma.

LEMMA (Lemma 3.1; the Blaschke partition). *There is a subset $\mathcal{M} \subset \mathcal{K}$ so that if B is the Blaschke product corresponding to $\mathcal{M}$ and $\mathcal{L}_j$ is the partition of L_1 corresponding to B via $\tau_j \circ \Psi^{-1}$, then each element of $\mathcal{J}$ hits at least two elements of $\mathcal{L}_j$ and at most M elements of $\mathcal{L}_j$, where M is uniform. In particular, no element of $\mathcal{J}$ can hit both endpoints of any element of $\mathcal{L}_j$ (elements of each partition are considered as closed intervals).*

Proof. A computation shows that for the Blaschke product

$$B(z) = \prod_n \frac{|a_n|}{a_n} \frac{z - a_n}{1 - \bar{a}_n z},$$

the derivative satisfies

$$\left|\frac{\partial B}{\partial \theta}(e^{i\theta})\right| = \sum_n P_{a_n}(e^{i\theta}),$$

and the convergence is absolute and uniform on any compact set K disjoint from the singular set E of B (since B is a product of Möbius transformations, and the derivative of a Möbius transformation is a Poisson kernel, this formula is simply the limit of the n-term product formula for derivatives).

Lemma 4.8 now says that we can choose $\mathcal{M}$ so that

$$2\pi\epsilon \leqslant \int_J \left|\frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} B\right| d\theta \leqslant \frac{3}{4} \cdot 2\pi = \frac{3\pi}{2}.$$

Since the integral over an element of $\mathcal{L}$ has integral exactly 2π, the lower bound means that an element of $\mathcal{L}$ can contain at most $1/\epsilon$ elements of $\mathcal{J}$ and hence can intersect at most $2 + 1/\epsilon$ elements of $\mathcal{J}$. The upper bound says that each element K of $\mathcal{L}$ must hit at least two elements

of $\mathcal{J}$. Hence it is not contained in any single element of $\mathcal{J}$, and so no single element of $\mathcal{J}$ can hit both endpoints of K. □

5. *Straightening a bi-Lipschitz map*

LEMMA 5.1. *Suppose $K = [1 + ia, 1 + ib] \in \mathcal{L}_j$ and define*

$$\alpha(1 + iy) = \frac{1}{2\pi} \arg(B \circ \Psi \circ \tau_j^{-1}(1 + iy)),$$

where we choose a branch of α so $\alpha(1 + ia) = 0$ (recall that $B(\Psi(\tau_j^{-1}(1 + ia))) = 1 \in \mathbb{R}$). Set

$$\psi_1(z) = 1 + i(a(1 - \alpha(z)) + b\alpha(z)) = 1 + i(a + (b - a)\alpha(z)).$$

Then ψ_1 is a homeomorphism from K to itself so that $\alpha \circ \psi_1^{-1} : K \to [0, 1]$ is linear and ψ_1 can be extended to a quasiconformal homeomorphism of $R = K \times [1, 2]$ to itself that is the identity on $\partial R \setminus K$ (that is, it fixes points on the top, bottom and right side of R).

Proof. The linearizing property of ψ_1 is clear from its definition, so we need to verify only the quasiconformal extensions property.

Corollary 4.9 implies that α' is bounded above and below by absolute constants. Let $R = K \times [1, 2]$ and define an extension of ψ_1 by

$$\psi_1(x + iy) = u(x, y) + iv(x, y) = x + i[(2 - x)\psi_1(1 + iy) + (x - 1)y)],$$

that is, take the linear interpolation between ψ_1 on L_1 and the identity on L_2. We can easily compute

$$\begin{pmatrix} u_x & u_y \\ v_x & v_y \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ y - \psi(y) & (2 - x)(b - a)\alpha'(y) + (x - 1) \end{pmatrix}.$$

Note that $|y - h(y)| \leqslant |K|$ is absolutely bounded. Also, since $|b - a||\alpha'|$ is bounded above and away from 0, so is v_y. Thus the derivative matrix lies in a compact subset of the invertible 2×2 matrices and hence ψ_1 is quasiconformal (with only a little more work we could compute an explicit bound for the quasiconstant, and even prove that the extension is actually bi-Lipschitz). □

6. *Aligning partitions*

Now we prove Lemma 3.3, which we restate for convenience.

LEMMA (Lemma 3.3). *There is a 1-to-1, order-preserving map of $\mathcal{L}_j$ into (but not necessarily onto) $\mathcal{J}$ so that each interval $K \in \mathcal{L}_j$ is sent to an interval J with $\operatorname{dist}(K, J) \leqslant 2\pi$. Moreover, adjacent elements of $\mathcal{L}_j$ map to elements of $\mathcal{J}$ that are either adjacent or are separated by an even number of elements of $\mathcal{J}$.*

Proof. For each $K \in \mathcal{K}$, choose $J \in \mathcal{J}$ so that J contains the lower endpoint of K (if two such intervals contain the endpoint, then choose the upper one). No interval J is chosen twice, since Lemma 3.1 says that no J can hit both endpoints of any element of $\mathcal{L}$.

Fix an order-preserving labeling of the chosen $\mathcal{J}$ by $\mathbb{Z}$ and denote it by $\{J_n\}$. By the gap between J_n and J_{n+1}, we mean the number of unselected elements of $\mathcal{J}$ that separate these two intervals. The position of J_0 is fixed. If the gap between J_0 and J_1 is even (including no gap), then we leave J_1 where it is. If the gap is odd, then there is a least one separating interval and we replace J_1 by the adjacent interval in $\mathcal{J}$ that is closer to J_0. If the gap between (the new) J_1 and J_2 is even, then we leave J_2 alone; otherwise, we move it one interval closer to J_0.

Continuing in this way, we can guarantee that for all $n \geqslant 0$, gaps are even and each J_n is either in its original position or adjacent to its original position. Thus its distance to the associated element of $\mathcal{K}$ is at most 2π. The argument for negative indices is identical. □

7. *Foldings*

Now we prove Lemma 3.4. This is the step that makes the gluing procedure a little different from a standard quasiconformal surgery.

LEMMA 7.1 (Simple folding). *There is a quasiconformal map $\psi_3 : U_K \to R_K$ so that the following conditions hold (ψ_3 depends on j and on K, but we drop these parameters from the notation).*

(1) *The map ψ_3 is the identity on $\partial R_K \setminus L_1$ (that is, it is the identity on the top, bottom and right side of R_K).*
(2) *The map ψ_3^{-1} extends continuously to the boundary and is linear on each element of $\mathcal{J}$ lying in I_K.*
(3) *The map ψ_3 maps I_K (linearly) to J_K.*
(4) *For each $z \in I_K$, $\psi_3^{-1}(z) = \psi_3^{-1}(z^*) \in X_k$ (that is, ψ_3 maps opposite sides of X_k to paired points in I_k).*
(5) *The quasiconstant of ψ_3 depends only on $|I_K|/|J_K|$, that is, on the number of elements in the block associated to K. It is independent of the original model and of the choice of j and K.*

Proof. The proof is a picture, namely Figure 5. The map is defined by giving compatible finite triangulations of R_k and U_k (compatible means that there is 1-to-1 map between vertices of the triangulations that preserves adjacencies along edges). Such a map defines linear maps between corresponding triangles that are continuous across edges. Since each such map is non-degenerate, it is quasiconformal and hence the piecewise linear map defined between U_k and R_K is quasiconformal (with quasiconstant given by the worst quasiconstant of the finitely many triangles). The other properties are evident. □

8. *Interpolating between* exp *and* cosh

LEMMA 8.1 (exp–cosh interpolation). *There is a quasiregular map $\sigma_j : S \to D(0, e^2)$ so that*

$$\sigma_j(z) = \begin{cases} \exp(z), & z \in J \in \mathcal{J}_1^j, \\ e \cdot \cosh(z-1), & z \in J \in \mathcal{J}_2^j, \\ \exp(z), & z \in \mathbb{H}_r + 2. \end{cases}$$

The quasiconstant of σ_j is uniformly bounded, independent of all our choices.

Proof. As with the previous lemma, the proof is basically a picture; see Figure 6. Suppose $J \in \mathcal{J}$ and let $R = [1, 2] \times J$. The exponential map sends R to the annulus $A = \{e < |z| < e^2\}$, with the left side of R mapping to the inner circle and the top and bottom edges of R mapping to the real segment $[e, e^2]$.

Now define a quasiconformal map $\phi : A \to D(0, e^2)$ that is the identity on $\{|z| = e^2\}$ and on $[e, e^2]$, but that maps $\{|z| = e\}$ onto $[-e, e]$ by $z \to \frac{1}{2}(z + e^2/z)$ (this is just a rescaled version of the Joukowsky map $\frac{1}{2}(z + 1/z)$ that maps the unit circle to $[-1, 1]$, identifying complex conjugate points).

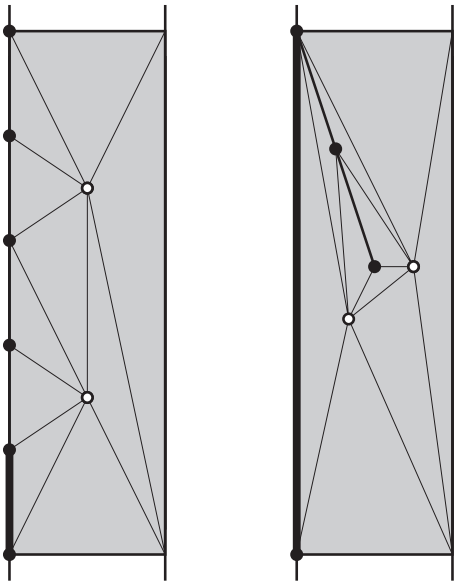

FIGURE 5. *The pictorial proof of Lemma 7.1 for* $n = 5$.

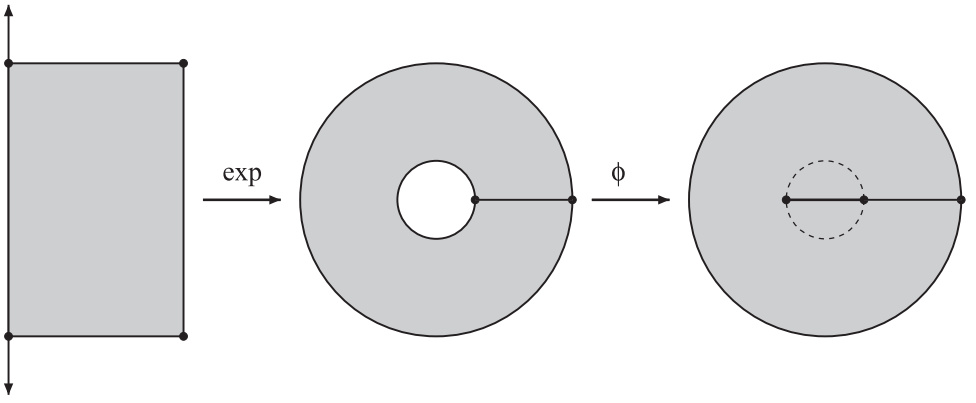

FIGURE 6. *The exponential function maps the rectangle* $[1,2] \times J$ *conformally to the slit annulus* $\{e < |z| < e^2\} \setminus [e, e^2]$. *The map* ϕ *is chosen to map the annulus* $A = \{e < |z| < e^2\}$ *to the slit disk* $\{|z| < e^2\} \setminus [-e, e]$ *so that it equals the identity on* $\{|z| = e^2\}$ *and equals* $\frac{1}{2}(z + e^2/z)$ *on* $\{|z| = e\}$.

In $\mathbb{H}_r + 2$ and in rectangles of the form $[1,2] \times J$ for $J \in \mathcal{J}_1$ we set $\sigma_j(z) = \exp(z)$. In the rectangles corresponding to elements of $\mathcal{J}_2$, we let $\sigma_j(z) = \phi(\exp(z))$. This clearly has the desired properties. □

Actually, the cosh function in the lemma can be replaced by any function $h : J \to [-1, 1]$ that has the property that $h(z)$ depends only on the distance from z to the endpoint of J. This will ensure that after applying a folding map, points that started on opposite sides of some slit X_k will end up being identified by h, which is all we need.

This completes the proof of Theorem 1.1.

9. *Proof of Theorem 1.2*

THEOREM 9.1 (Rigidity for disjoint type). *Suppose that (Ω, f) and (Ω', g) are disjoint-type models, $\varphi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ is quasiconformal with $\varphi(\Omega) = \Omega'$ and $f = g \circ \varphi$ on Ω. Then there is a quasiconformal map Φ of the plane so that*

$$\Phi \circ f = g \circ \Phi$$

on Ω. In particular, $\mathcal{J}(g) = \Phi(\mathcal{J}(f))$.

Proof. The statement and proof are due to Rempe [15], but we recreate it here for the convenience of the reader.

Let $W = \mathbb{C} \setminus \overline{\Omega}$ and $W' = \mathbb{C} \setminus \overline{\Omega'}$. We can write W as a union of nested open sets $U_1 \subset U_2 \subset \dots$ that have smooth boundaries. Then W' is the union of the nested open sets $\varphi(U_1) \subset \varphi(U_2) \subset \dots$. Since W and W' each contains the closed unit disk (since we assume both models are disjoint type), there is a n so that U_n and$\varphi(U_n)$ both contain the closed unit disk. Choose such a n and set $U = U_n$. Then by a standard argument we can define a quasiconformal map $\phi : \mathbb{C} \to \mathbb{C}$ that equals φ outside U and equals the identity map inside the unit disk.

Now inductively define a sequence of quasiconformal maps $\{\Phi_n\}$ on $\mathbb{C}$ by setting Φ_0 to be the identity and, in general,

$$\Phi_{n+1} = \begin{cases} g^{-1} \circ \Phi_n \circ f, & z \in \Omega, \\ \phi, & z \notin \Omega. \end{cases}$$

Note that since $f : \Omega \to \{|z| > 1\}$ and $g : \Omega' \to \{|z| > 1\}$ are covering maps, the definition of Φ_{n+1} makes sense as long as Φ_n is a homeomorphism of $\{|z| > 1\}$ to itself. We shall verify this below.

Set $U_0 = U \cap \{|z| > 1\}$ and let $U_n = \bigcup_{k=1}^{n} \{z \in \Omega : f^k(z) \in \overline{U}\}$. Then $\bigcup_n U_n$ is the set of all points in Ω that eventually iterate out of Ω. This is the complement of $\mathcal{J}(f)$ in Ω and hence is an open dense set in Ω by [15, Lemma 2.3]. Let $V_n = \bigcup_{k=1}^{n} U_k$.

We make the following claims.

(1) For $n \geqslant 0$, Φ_n maps $\{|z| > 1\}$ to itself.
(2) For $n \geqslant 0$, Φ_n is quasiconformal with the same quasiconstant as ϕ.
(3) For $n \geqslant 1$, $\Phi_n = \Phi_{n+1}$ on V_n.

We prove these by induction. The case $n = 0$ for (1) and (2) is trivial since Φ_0 is the identity. For $n = 1$, (3) holds because if $z \in U_1$, then $f(z) \in U_0$,

$$\Phi_2(z) = g^{-1}(\Phi_1(f(z))) = g^{-1}(\Phi_0(f(z))) = \Phi_1(z).$$

Similarly, for general n, (3) holds because if $z \in V_n$, then $z \in U_k$ for some $1 \leqslant k \leqslant n$, so $f(z) \in U_k$ for some $0 \leqslant k \leqslant n-1$. By the induction hypothesis, $f(z) \in f^{-n-1}(U)$, so

$$\Phi_{n+1}(z) = g^{-1}(\Phi_n(f(z))) = g^{-1}(\Phi_{n-1}(f(z))) = \Phi_n(z).$$

Claim (1) follows from (3) for every n since (3) implies that Φ_n is the identity on U_0, which contains the unit circle. Since Φ_n is a homeomorphism of the plane, that means that Φ_n is a homeomorphism of $\{|z| > 1\}$ to itself.

Since $f : \Omega \to \{|z| > 1\}$ and $g : \Omega' \to \{|z| > 1\}$ are holomorphic covering maps, (1) for n implies that the first part of the definition of Φ_{n+1} gives a quasiconformal homeomorphism from Ω to Ω' with the same quasiconstant as Φ_n. By induction, this constant is bounded by the quasiconstant for ϕ. Outside Ω, Φ_{n+1} agrees with ϕ, so again is quasiconformal with constant bounded by that of ϕ. By the Royden gluing lemma (for example, [3, Lemma 2], [7, Lemma I.2, p. 303], [19]), this implies that Φ_{n+1} is K-quasiconformal on the whole plane. (In many

cases of interest, $\partial\Omega$ will be piecewise smooth, hence removable for quasiconformal mappings, and then the gluing lemma is not needed.) Thus all the claims have been established.

Since the sequence $\{\Phi_n(z)\}$ is eventually constant for every z in the dense set $\bigcup_n V_n \subset \Omega_0$, and since K-quasiconformal maps form a compact family, we deduce that $\Phi(z) = \lim_n \Phi_n$ defines a K-quasiconformal map of the plane. Moreover,

$$\Phi_{n+1} = g^{-1} \circ \Phi_n \circ f, \quad z \in \Omega$$

becomes

$$\Phi = g^{-1} \circ \Phi \circ f, \quad z \in \Omega$$

in the limit. □

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Christopher J. Bishop
Department of Mathematics
Stony Brook University
Stony Brook, NY 11794-3651
USA

bishop@math.sunysb.edu