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The Riemann Hypothesis for
Function Fields
Frobenius Flow and Shift Operators

MACHIEL VAN FRANKENHUIJSEN
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Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-68531-4 — The Riemann Hypothesis for Function Fields
Machiel van Frankenhuysen
Frontmatter
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CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.
It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of
education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107685314

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First published 2014

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-107-04721-1 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-107-68531-4 Paperback

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Cambridge University Press
978-1-107-68531-4 — The Riemann Hypothesis for Function Fields
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To my beautiful wife Jena

Contents

	<i>List of illustrations</i>	<i>page</i> x
	<i>Preface</i>	xi
	<i>Introduction</i>	1
1	Valuations	9
1.1	Trace and norm	9
1.1.1	The canonical pairing	11
1.2	Valued fields	12
1.2.1	Norms on a vector space	13
1.2.2	Discrete valuations	16
1.2.3	Different and ramification	18
1.2.4	Inseparable extensions	20
1.3	Valuations of $\mathbb{F}_q(T)$	21
1.4	Global fields	24
1.4.1	Constants and nonconstant functions	26
1.4.2	Ramification	28
2	The local theory	31
2.1	Additive character and measure	31
2.1.1	Characters of $\mathbb{F}_q(T)$	32
2.1.2	Characters of K	35
2.1.3	Fourier transform	36
2.2	Multiplicative character and measure	38
2.3	Local zeta function	40
2.4	Functional equation	40
3	The zeta function	43
3.1	Additive theory	43
3.1.1	Divisors	45
3.1.2	Riemann–Roch	46

viii	<i>Contents</i>	
3.2	Multiplicative theory	48
3.2.1	Divisor classes	48
3.2.2	Coarse idele classes	50
3.3	The zeta function	51
3.3.1	Constant field extensions	54
3.3.2	Shifted zeta function	56
3.4	Computation	56
3.5	Semi-local theory	59
3.6	Two-variable zeta function	63
3.6.1	The polynomial $L_{\mathcal{C}}(X, Y)$	65
4	Weil positivity	69
4.1	Functions on the coarse idele classes	69
4.2	Zeros of $\Lambda_{\mathcal{C}}$	70
4.3	Explicit formula	72
5	The Frobenius flow	75
5.1	Heuristics for the Riemann hypothesis	75
5.2	Orbits of Frobenius	79
5.2.1	The projective line	79
5.2.2	Example: elliptic curves	84
5.2.3	The curve \mathcal{C}	85
5.3	Galois covers	89
5.4	The Riemann hypothesis for \mathcal{C}	91
5.4.1	The Frobenius flow	92
5.4.2	Frobenius as symmetries	97
5.5	Comparison with the Riemann hypothesis	100
6	Shift operators	107
6.1	The Hilbert spaces \mathcal{Z} and \mathcal{H}	108
6.1.1	The truncated shift on \mathcal{Z}	110
6.1.2	The trace using a kernel	111
6.2	Shift operators	112
6.2.1	Averaging spaces	115
6.3	Local trace	117
6.3.1	Order of the cutoffs	119
6.3.2	Direct computation	120
6.3.3	Trace using the kernel	121
6.4	How to prove the Riemann hypothesis for \mathcal{C} ?	124
6.5	The operators M , A , C , \mathcal{F}^* , and E	126
6.5.1	Restricting the support	126
6.5.2	Making the measure additive	127

	<i>Contents</i>	ix
	6.5.3 Smoothing the oscillations	128
	6.5.4 Restricting to the coarse idele classes	130
	6.6 Semi-local and global trace	130
	6.7 The kernel on the analytic space	133
7	Epilogue	137
	7.1 Archimedean translation	138
	7.2 Global translation	140
	7.3 The space of adèle classes	141
	<i>References</i>	143
	<i>Index of notation</i>	149
	<i>Index</i>	151

Illustrations

1.1	$\mathbb{P}^1(\mathbb{F}_2)$. The point at infinity corresponds to $\frac{1}{T}$	22
1.2	$\text{spec } \mathbb{Z}$ completed with the archimedean valuation	24
3.1	An irreducible family of zeros	68
4.1	Four zeros of $\Lambda_{\mathcal{C}}$	71
5.1	The curve $Y^2 = X^3$ has a cusp singularity	87
5.2	The curve $Y^2 = X^3 + X^2$ has a double point	88
5.3	The graph of Frobenius intersected with the diagonal	93
5.4	The graph of Frobenius intersected with the graph of σ	98
5.5	Nevanlinna defects	105
6.1	The dilated Gaussian	113
7.1	The shifted Gaussian	138
7.2	The shifted and dilated Gaussian	139

Preface

This book grew out of an attempt to understand the paper [Conn1], in which Alain Connes constructs a beautiful noncommutative space with a view to proving the Riemann hypothesis. That paper is supplemented by Shai Haran's papers [Har2, Har3], which give a similar construction with more details on some of the computations. Connes' proof is explored in Chapter 6, where his method is applied with an aim of proving the Riemann hypothesis for a curve over a finite field (Weil's theorem).

Chapter 5 presents Bombieri's proof [Bom1] of the Riemann hypothesis for curves over a finite field. This chapter is not necessary for Chapter 6, and can be skipped by a reader who is only interested in understanding Connes' approach.

Chapters 1, 2, and 3 provide background. Chapter 1 is an exposition of the theory of valued fields, and in Chapters 2 and 3, we present Tate's thesis [Ta] for curves over a finite field.

There are numerous exercises throughout the book where the reader is asked to work out a detail or explore related material. The exercises that are labelled as 'problems' ask questions that may not have a definite answer.

This book is not primarily about number fields, but occasionally we discuss the connection between number fields and function fields. We have included several diagrams to help the reader create a mental picture of this connection.

The author believes that Connes' approach provides the first truly convincing heuristic argument for the Riemann hypothesis. He also believes that working out this argument for the function field case is the key to getting it to work for the integers. It is therefore not surprising that we do not reach our goal in Chapter 6. This book provides the basis for further research in this direction.

Acknowledgements The research for this book was started at the University of California in Riverside and continued over the years at Rutgers University (New Jersey), Utah Valley State College (now Utah Valley University), the Institut des Hautes Études Scientifiques (IHÉS) in Bures-sur-Yvette, France, of which I was a member during February of 2007, and the Georg-August-Universität in Göttingen, Germany, during the author's sabbatical year at the invitation of Professor Dr. Ralf Meyer in 2011.

The material and financial support of the IHÉS and the Department of Mathematics and the School of Science and Health of Utah Valley University is gratefully acknowledged. The generous support from Professor Meyer during the author's sabbatical year is also gratefully acknowledged. I also want to acknowledge the many excellent teachers whom I had at the university of Nijmegen, Riverside, the IHÉS, Rutgers University, and Göttingen. I fondly remember Serge Lang, whose way of doing mathematics has been an example ever since we first met. I miss him. I want to thank the students and professors who gave talks in my seminar in Göttingen when I was there in 2011. That seminar greatly accelerated the evolution of this book.