

# Some Algebras of Composition Operators

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April 7, 2018

Notes to accompany my talk in the special session "Complex Analysis and Applications" at the AMS Meeting in Portland, April 14, 2018.

## 1 Composition operators

We'll be studying an intriguing class of Hilbert-space operators connected with analytic function theory. Our setting is the open unit disc  $\mathbb{U}$  of the complex plane, upon which lives the "Hardy Space"  $H^2$ , which consists of all functions  $f$  analytic on  $\mathbb{U}$  whose Maclaurin-coefficient sequence is square summable. More precisely

$$(1) \quad f(z) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \hat{f}(n)z^n \quad \text{with} \quad \|f\|^2 := \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} |\hat{f}(n)|^2 < \infty.$$

The second sum above defines a norm on  $H^2$  that makes it into a Hilbert space isometrically isomorphic to the sequence space  $\ell^2$ .

We'll be particularly interested in the class of linear transformations on  $H^2$  induced by analytic functions  $\varphi$  that take  $\mathbb{U}$  into (possibly onto) itself. These are the "holomorphic selfmaps" of  $\mathbb{U}$ .

Any such map  $\varphi$  induces, by means of the formula  $C_\varphi f = f \circ \varphi$ , a linear transformation  $C_\varphi$  on the vector space of *all* complex-valued functions that are analytic on  $\mathbb{U}$ . One of the miracles of analytic function theory is:

**The Littlewood Subordination Theorem** ([8], 1925). *For each holomorphic selfmap  $\varphi$  of  $\mathbb{U}$ , the induced composition operator maps  $H^2$  into itself, and its restriction to  $H^2$  is a bounded linear operator on that space.*<sup>1</sup>

This theorem of Littlewood poses the challenge of relating the operator-theoretic properties of  $C_\varphi$  (on  $H^2$ ) with the function-theoretic properties of its "inducing map"  $\varphi$ . For example:

- What is the *norm* of  $C_\varphi$ ?
- What is the *spectrum* of  $C_\varphi$ ?
- What is the *commutant* of  $C_\varphi$ ?
- What is the *double commutant* of  $C_\varphi$ ?

We'll devote the rest of this note to studying these questions when the mapping  $\varphi$  is about as simple as it can get:  $\varphi(z) = \frac{1+z}{2}$ . Even this special case will lead to fascinating mathematics, and to problems that appear, even now, to be open.

"Holomorphic" means "analytic".

<sup>1</sup> To better appreciate the depth of Littlewood's Theorem, imagine trying to prove directly that  $C_\varphi$  maps  $H^2$  into itself for the special case  $\varphi(z) = \frac{1+z}{2}$ . For  $f \in H^2$  this involves substituting  $\varphi(z)$  for  $z$  in the Maclaurin series expansion of  $f$ , using the binomial theorem to expand the resulting powers of  $\varphi(z)$ , and interchanging the order of summation to get the Maclaurin coefficients of  $f(\frac{1+z}{2})$ . It's not obvious that this new Maclaurin-coefficient sequence, each term of which is a sum involving both binomial coefficients and the original Maclaurin coefficients of  $f$ , has the desired square-summability. For a general holomorphic selfmap  $\varphi$  of the unit disc, the situation is exponentially worse.

## 2 Norm and spectrum

From now on,  $\varphi(z)$  will always be  $\frac{1+z}{2}$ , and we'll allow ourselves to abuse notation by writing  $C_\varphi$  as  $C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}$ . We'll take Littlewood's Subordination Theorem for granted.<sup>2</sup>

### 2.1 Norm

Once you know that a Banach-space operator is bounded, it makes sense to ask for its *norm*, i.e., the supremum of the lengths of the images of unit vectors. For many operators this can be surprisingly difficult. Composition operators, even very simple ones, illustrate this.

**Theorem 1.** (C. Cowen, [3], 1988).<sup>3</sup> If  $|s| + |t| \leq 1$ , then:

$$\|C_{sz+t}\| = \sqrt{\frac{2}{1 + \Delta + \sqrt{(1 - \Delta)^2 - 4|t|^2}}},$$

where  $\Delta := |s|^2 - |t|^2$ .

**Corollary 2.**  $\|C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\| = \sqrt{2}$ .

### 2.2 Spectrum

For a linear transformation  $T$  on a complex Hilbert (or Banach) space, the *spectrum*,  $\sigma(T)$ , is the set of complex numbers  $\lambda$  for which  $T - \lambda I$  is *not invertible*. Every eigenvalue belongs to the spectrum, and if our ambient vector space has finite dimension, that's all there is. However the infinite dimensional situation is different. The spectrum of a bounded operator on a Hilbert (or Banach) space is always compact, and never empty,<sup>4</sup> but in infinitely many dimensions, there may be no eigenvalues (example: The Volterra operator on  $L^2([0, 1])$ ).

Nevertheless, if  $|\lambda| > \|T\|$  then a simple geometric-series argument establishes an important bound on the size of the spectrum: if  $|\lambda| > \|T\|$  then  $T - \lambda I$  is invertible, with inverse given by the "Neumann series"  $\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \lambda^{-(n+1)} T^n$ , which converges in operator norm.

SUMMARY:

$$\sigma(T) \subset \|T\| \cdot \overline{\mathbf{U}} := \{\lambda \in \mathbf{C} : |\lambda| \leq \|T\|\}.$$

In particular,

$$(2) \quad \sigma\left(C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\right) \subset \sqrt{2} \cdot \overline{\mathbf{U}}.$$

<sup>2</sup> For a couple of different proofs see, e.g., [4, §2.6, pp. 28–29] and [11, pp. 13–17].

<sup>3</sup> Theorem 1 tells us that if  $s$  and  $t$  are rational, then  $\|C_{sz+t}\|$  is an algebraic number. This is not always the case for composition operators induced by linear fractional selfmaps of the unit disc. Recently Bourdon et al. [1] have shown that, for example,  $\|C_{\frac{1}{2-z}}\|$  is transcendental!

<sup>4</sup> See [10], Ch. 18, pp. 356–359 (esp. Cor. 3) for an exposition of these matters—in the context of Banach algebras.

The spectrum of an operator contains all its *eigenvalues*. Now the operator  $C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}$ , as it acts on the space of all analytic functions on  $\mathbb{U}$ , has an obvious<sup>5</sup> collection of eigenvectors:

$$(3) \quad e_w(z) = (1 - z)^w \quad (w \in \mathbb{C}),$$

in which case

$$(4) \quad C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}(e_w) = 2^{-w} e_w.$$

We're interested in the restrictions of composition operators to the Hardy space  $H^2$ , so we need to restrict  $w$  so that the eigenfunction  $e_w \in H^2$  for  $C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}$  lies in  $H^2$ , i.e., we must demand that  $\operatorname{Re} w > -\frac{1}{2}$ .

CONSEQUENCE: The eigenvalues of  $C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}$  fill the open disc  $\sqrt{2} \cdot \mathbb{U}$ .

**Theorem 3.**  $\sigma(C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}) = \sqrt{2} \cdot \overline{\mathbb{U}}$ .

*Proof.* We've just seen that

$$\sqrt{2} \cdot \mathbb{U} \subset \sigma(C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}),$$

and we know from (2) that  $\sigma(C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}) \subset \sqrt{2} \cdot \overline{\mathbb{U}}$ . The Theorem now follows from the fact that the spectrum of any bounded operator on a Hilbert (or Banach) space is compact.  $\square$

### 3 Commutant

The *commutant* of a Hilbert-space operator  $T$  is the set of bounded operators on that Hilbert space that commute with  $T$ . Notation:  $\{T\}'$ .

One checks easily that  $\{T\}'$  is an *algebra* that contains the identity map (i.e., is "unital") and is *weak-operator closed*.<sup>6</sup> Commutativity is preserved by weak-operator convergence, so upon letting  $\operatorname{alg}(T)^w$  denote the weak-operator closure of the unital algebra generated by  $T$ , we see immediately that

$$\operatorname{alg}(T)^w \subset \{T\}'$$

for each Hilbert-space operator  $T$ .

Here's one reason why it's important to study the commutant of an operator:

**Proposition 4.** *If  $T$  is a bounded operator on  $H$  and  $M$  is an invariant<sup>7</sup> subspace for  $T$ , then so is  $AM$  for any  $A \in \{T\}'$ .*

We'll begin our study the commutant of  $C_\varphi$  (where  $\varphi(z) = \frac{1+z}{2}$ ) with the following question:

*Is  $\{C_\varphi\}'$  equal to  $\operatorname{alg}(C_\varphi)^w$ ?*

In other words: *Is the commutant of  $C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}$  "minimal"?*

<sup>5</sup> What's "obvious" is Eqn. (4) below at the left, where we define  $(1 - z)^w$  to be  $e^{w \operatorname{Log}(1-z)}$ , with "Log" denoting the principal value of the complex logarithm. What needs to be proved is that  $e_w$  is analytic on  $\mathbb{U}$ , and—when we restrict attention to  $H^2$ —that  $e_w \in H^2$  iff  $\operatorname{Re} w > -1/2$ . For more on this, see the Appendix at the end of this note.

<sup>6</sup> To say a collection  $\mathcal{S}$  of bounded linear operators on a Hilbert space  $H$  is *weak-operator closed* means that: if  $(S_\alpha)$  is a net of operators in  $\mathcal{S}$ , and  $T$  is a bounded operator on  $H$  for which  $\langle S_\alpha x, y \rangle \rightarrow \langle Tx, y \rangle$  for each pair  $x, y$  of vectors in  $H$ , then  $T \in \mathcal{S}$ .

<sup>7</sup> Meaning:  $T(M) \subseteq M$ .

### 3.1 Some operators in $\{C_\varphi\}'$

Here are two classes of operators that commute with  $C_\varphi$ :

- (a) *Composition operators*  $C_{\varphi_r}$ , where  $\varphi_r$  is the affine selfmap of  $\mathbb{U}$  defined by  $\varphi_r(z) = rz + (1 - r)$  for  $0 < r \leq 1$ .

According to Theorem 1,  $\|C_{\varphi_r}\| = \frac{1}{\sqrt{r}}$ .

Note that our map  $\varphi$  is just  $\varphi_{1/2}$ , and that each  $\varphi_r$  has the “same DNA” as  $\varphi$  in that it fixes the points 1 and  $\infty$ , and maps  $\mathbb{U}$  onto an open sub-disc of  $\mathbb{U}$  whose boundary is tangent to the unit circle at the point 1. Note further that

$$\varphi_r \circ \varphi_s = \varphi_{rs} \quad \text{for } 0 < r, s \leq 1,$$

so all the maps  $\varphi_r$  commute with each other, and consequently so do all the composition operators they induce on  $H^2$ .

CONSEQUENCE:  $C_{\varphi_r} \in \{C_\varphi\}'$  for each  $0 < r \leq 1$ .

- (b) *Certain multiplication operators.* If  $b$  is a bounded analytic function on  $\mathbb{U}$  then the *multiplier*  $M_b$ , defined by

$$(M_b f)(z) = b(z)f(z) \quad (z \in \mathbb{U}, f \in H^2)$$

is a bounded linear operator<sup>8</sup> on  $H^2$  that has a particularly interesting connection with composition operators. To wit: for each holomorphic selfmap  $\psi$  of  $\mathbb{U}$  we have, on  $H^2$ :

<sup>8</sup> This, too, needs to be proved. It follows easily upon observing that  $H^2$  is the collection of functions  $f$  holomorphic on  $\mathbb{U}$  for which

$$\sup_{0 \leq r < 1} \int_0^{2\pi} |f(re^{i\theta})|^2 < \infty$$

(in which case above supremum is the square of the norm introduced in the original definition of  $H^2$ ).

$$(5) \quad C_\psi M_b = M_{b \circ \psi} C_\psi.$$

i.e.,  $C_\psi$  intertwines  $M_b$  with  $M_{b \circ \psi}$ .

In particular:

$$M_b \text{ commutes with } C_\psi \text{ whenever } b \circ \psi = b.$$

In other words:

$$M_b \in \{C_\psi\}' \text{ whenever } b \text{ is a } C_\psi\text{-eigenvector for the eigenvalue "1"}.$$

Returning to  $\varphi(z) = \frac{1+z}{2}$ , we've seen in §2.2 that for  $w \in \mathbb{C}$  the function  $e_w: z \rightarrow (1 - z)^w$  is an eigenvector of  $C_\varphi$  (now acting on the space of all analytic functions on  $\mathbb{U}$ ) for the eigenvalue  $2^{-w}$ . Thus  $C_\varphi e_w = e_w$  iff  $2^{-w} = 1$ , and this happens iff  $w = \frac{2\pi i}{\ln 2} k$  for some integer  $k$ . In summary:

**Proposition 5.** For  $w \in \mathbb{C}$ :

$$C_\varphi e_w = e_w \iff w = i\tau k,$$

where  $\tau = \frac{2\pi}{\ln 2}$ , and  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ .

When  $w \in \mathbb{C}$  is pure imaginary, the eigenfunction  $e_w$  is bounded on  $\mathbb{U}$ , so—as noted above—the multiplication operator  $M_{e_w}$  acts boundedly on  $H^2$ . Furthermore, when  $w \in i\tau \cdot \mathbb{Z}$ , Proposition 5 assures us that  $M_{e_w}$  commutes with  $C_\varphi$ .

Collecting the result of part (a) above with that of Proposition 5:

**Proposition 6.** For  $\varphi(z) = \frac{1+z}{2}$ , the commutant of  $C_\varphi$  contains the operators  $C_{\varphi_r}$  for  $0 < r \leq 1$ , and  $M_w$  where  $\tau = \frac{2\pi i}{\ln 2}$  and  $w \in i\tau \cdot \mathbb{Z}$ .

Thanks to Proposition 6 we (finally!) have some definitive results for the commutant of  $C_\varphi$ , where  $\varphi(z) = \frac{1+z}{2}$ :

**Theorem 7.**  $\{C_\varphi\}'$  is not commutative,

*Proof.* Let  $M = M_{e_{i\tau}}$ . Since  $\varphi_r \circ e_{i\tau} = r^{i\tau} e_r$ , we see from Eqn. (5) above that

$$C_{\varphi_r} M = r^{i\tau} M \quad (0 < r \leq 1).$$

Thus  $C_{\varphi_r}$  commutes with  $M$  iff  $r^{i\tau} = 1$ . A little arithmetic shows that this happens iff  $r = 2^{-k}$  for some positive integer  $k$ . In particular,  $C_{\varphi_{1/3}}$  does not commute with  $M$ . □

Since  $\text{alg}(C_\varphi)^w$  inherits the commutativity of  $\text{alg}(C_\varphi)$ , Theorem 7 implies:

**Corollary 8.**  $\{C_\varphi\}' \neq \text{alg}(C_\varphi)^w$ .

I.e., the commutant of  $C_\varphi$  is not minimal.

#### 4 Double Commutant

Having established that the commutant of  $C_\varphi$  is strictly larger than the weak-operator closure of the algebra generated by  $C_\varphi$ , it makes sense to ask: “How much larger?”

For a general bounded operator  $T$  on a Hilbert space  $H$ , the size of its commutant is connected with that of its *double commutant*  $\{T\}''$ : the set of all bounded operators on  $H$  that commute with everything in  $\{T\}'$ . The double commutant of  $T$  is again a weak-operator closed algebra, which (since  $T$  belongs to  $\{T\}'$ ) contains  $\text{alg}(T)^w$ . Thus

$$(6) \quad \text{alg}(T)^w \subseteq \{T\}'' \subseteq \{T\}'$$

and we expect that “larger commutants mean smaller double commutants.”

For example, if  $T$  is identity operator on  $H$ , then  $\{I\}' = \mathcal{L}(H)$ , so  $\{I\}'' = \mathbb{C} \cdot I$ . Just as for commutants, we’ll call  $\{T\}''$  *minimal* whenever it’s equal to  $\text{alg}(T)^w$ . Thus the double commutant of the identity operator is minimal. The most famous result in this direction is:

**von Neumann’s Double-Commutant Theorem.** *If  $T$  is a self-adjoint operator on a Hilbert space, then  $\{T\}''$  is minimal.*

Note also that  $\{T\}''$  is commutative. Reason: If  $A, B \in \{T\}''$  then by (6), they both commute with  $T$ . Being in  $\{T\}''$ , they commute with every thing in  $\{T\}'$ , hence with each other.

[14, 1929]

The question of minimal double commutants has attracted a lot of attention. For example, every *algebraic* operator on Hilbert space (in particular, every operator on a finite dimensional Hilbert space) has minimal double commutant [13 (1972)]. For further references on the minimal double-commutant problem, see [7].

#### 4.1 Carter's Theorem

Now back to  $C_\varphi = C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}$ : Is its double commutant minimal? We've seen in §3.1 that each  $T \in \{C_\varphi\}''$  commutes with both the composition operators induced by the semigroup of affine maps  $\{\varphi_r: 0 < r \leq 1\}$  and the semigroup of multiplication operators  $M_b$ , where  $b = e_{i\tau k}$  for  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ .

Our first result supposes only that  $T$  commutes with the first of these semigroups of operators. Its statement will involve the open half-plane  $\mathbb{P} := \{w \in \mathbb{C}: \operatorname{Re} w > -\frac{1}{2}\}$ , and will show, in particular, that for each  $w \in \mathbb{P}$  the eigenfunction  $e_w$  of  $C_\varphi$  is also an eigenfunction of any operator in  $\{C_\varphi\}''$ .

**Theorem 9.** (James Michael Carter [2, 2013]): *Suppose  $T \in \mathcal{L}(H^2)$  commutes with each operator  $C_{\varphi_r}$  for  $0 < r \leq 1$ . Then there exists a bounded holomorphic function  $F_T$  on  $\mathbb{P}$  such that*

$$Te_w = F_T(w)e_w \quad \text{for each } w \in \mathbb{P}.$$

This leads to a refinement of the set containments (6).

**Corollary 10.**  $\operatorname{alg}(C_{\frac{1+z}{2}})^w \subseteq \{C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\}'' \subsetneq \{C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\}'$ .

*Proof.* We've already noted the non-strict set containments, and have seen in Theorem 7 that  $\{C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\}'$  is not commutative.  $\square$

**Proof of Theorem 9.** Fix  $w \in \mathbb{P}$  and  $T \in \{C_\varphi\}''$ . Then for each  $r \in (0, 1]$  and  $z \in \mathbb{U}$ :

$$r^w(Te_w)(z) = (TC_{\varphi_r}e_w)(z) = C_{\varphi_r}Te_w(z) = (Te_w)(rz + (1-r)),$$

where the middle equality expresses the fact that  $T$  commutes with  $C_{\varphi_r}$ . Upon setting  $f(z) = Te_w(z)$  so  $f \in H^2$  we summarize the above computation:

$$f(rz + (1-r)) = r^w f(z) \quad (z \in \mathbb{U} \quad \& \quad 0 < r \leq 1).$$

Now differentiate the above expression with respect to  $r$ :

$$f'(rz + (1-r))(z-1) = w r^{w-1} f(z) \quad (0 < r \leq 1, z \in \mathbb{U} \quad \& \quad w \in \mathbb{P}),$$

and set  $r = 1$ , obtaining

$$(7) \quad f'(z)(z-1) = w f(z) \quad (z \in \mathbb{U} \quad \& \quad w \in \mathbb{P}).$$

Upon solving the differential equation (7) for  $f$  we obtain the desired result:

$$f(z) = \text{const.} (1 - z)^w = F_T(w) e_w(z) \quad (w \in \mathbb{P}),$$

where  $F_T(w)$  is the “constant of integration.” □

Thanks to Carter’s Theorem, the association of an operator  $T \in \{C_\varphi\}''$  with the function  $F_T$  establishes a map, taking  $\{C_\varphi\}''$  into  $H^\infty(\mathbb{P})$ . More specifically:

$$(8) \quad \Phi(T)e_w = F_T(w)e_w \quad (T \in \{C_\varphi\}'' \ \& \ w \in \mathbb{P}).$$

One checks easily that  $\Phi$  is a Banach algebra isomorphism.<sup>9</sup>

In the next section we’ll present work of Miguel Lacruz and his co-authors, who use the map  $\Phi$  to establish the minimality of  $\{C_\varphi\}''$ .

#### 4.2 Work of Lacruz, Petrovic, Leon-Saavedra, and Rodriguez-Piazza

First, some periodicity.

**Proposition 11.** *If  $T \in \{C_\varphi\}''$  then  $F_T(w + i\tau) = F_T(w)$  for each  $w \in \mathbb{P}$ .*

*Proof.* It’s one line:

$$F_T(w)e_{w+i\tau} = M_f T e_w = T M_f e_w = T e_{w+i\tau} = F_T(w + i\tau)e_{w+i\tau}. \quad \square$$

**Corollary 12.**  $\Phi(\{C_\varphi\}'') \subset H_\tau^\infty(\mathbb{P})$ .

Now let  $H_\tau^\infty(\mathbb{P})$  denote the subspace of  $H^\infty(\mathbb{P})$  consisting of those functions  $f$  that are  $i\tau$ -periodic, i.e. for which  $f(w + i\tau) = f(w)$  for each  $w \in \mathbb{P}$ .

**Theorem 13.** ([7, 2017]).  $\Phi(\text{alg}(C_\varphi)^w) = H_\tau^\infty(\mathbb{P})$ .

*Proof.* Fix  $F \in H_\tau^\infty(\mathbb{P})$ : To find:  $T \in \text{alg}(C_\varphi)^w$  such that

$$\Phi(T) = F \quad \text{i.e.,} \quad T e_w = F(w)e_w \quad \forall w \in \mathbb{P}.$$

Let  $q(w) = 2^{-w}$ . Then  $q(w + i\tau) = q(w)$  for each  $w \in \mathbb{P}$ , from which it follows quickly that the function  $f: \sqrt{2} \cdot \mathbb{U} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  defined by

$$f(2^{-w}) = F(w) \quad (w \in \mathbb{P})$$

is holomorphic and bounded on  $\sqrt{2} \cdot \mathbb{U}$ .

By *Fejer’s Theorem* there exists a sequence  $(p_n)$  of polynomials such that  $p_n \rightarrow f$  pointwise on  $\mathbb{D}$  and  $\|p_n\|_\infty \leq \|f\|_\infty$ , where  $\|\cdot\|_\infty$  is the supremum norm over  $\sqrt{2} \cdot \mathbb{U}$ . Thanks to *von Neumann’s Inequality* we know that for each index  $n$ :

$$\|p_n(C_\varphi)\| \leq \|p_n\|_\infty \leq \|f\|_\infty.$$

<sup>9</sup> That  $\Phi$  is one-to-one follows from the density of the linear span of the eigenfunctions  $\{e_w: w \in \mathbb{P}\}$  in  $H^2$ .

Carter’s argument (given above) depends only on the fact that the operator  $T$  commutes with each composition operator  $C_{\varphi_r}$  for  $0 < r \leq 1$ , and so the isomorphism  $\Phi$  defined above really takes the weakly closed algebra  $\mathcal{A}$  generated by these operators into  $H^\infty(\mathbb{P})$ . Carter goes further ([2], Chapter 5) to prove that  $\Phi(\mathcal{A}) = H^\infty(\mathbb{P})$ . This is not trivial!

By Tychonov's Theorem, bounded subsets of  $\mathcal{L}(H^2)$  are relatively compact in the weak operator topology, and by the separability of  $H^2$  this topology is metrizable on bounded sets. Thus we replace the sequence  $(p_n)$  by a subsequence that converges weakly to some operator  $T \in \text{alg}(C_\varphi)^w$ . Consequently, for each  $w \in \mathbb{P}$

$$Te_w = \lim_n p_n(C_\varphi)e_w = [\lim_n p_n(2^{-w})]e_w = f(2^{-w})e_w = F(w)e_w,$$

with the limit in the weak topology of  $H^2$ . Upon appealing once more to the density of  $\text{span}\{e_w : w \in \mathbb{P}\}$  in  $H^2$ , we obtain the desired result:  $\Phi(T) = F$ .  $\square$

Now the *piece de r sistance*.

**Corollary 14.**  $\{C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\}'' = \text{alg}(C_{\frac{1+z}{2}})^w$ , i.e.,  $\{C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\}''$  is minimal.

*Proof.* Thanks to Theorem 9 and Proposition 11 we know that  $\Phi(\{C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\}'') \subset H_\tau^\infty(\mathbb{P})$ . This along with Theorem 13 shows that:

$$H_\tau^\infty(\mathbb{P}) \supset \Phi(\{C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\}'') \supset \Phi(\text{alg}(C_\varphi)^w) = H_\tau^\infty(\mathbb{P}),$$

so there is equality all the way through. Since  $\Phi$  is one-to-one we conclude that  $\{C_{\frac{1+z}{2}}\}'' = \text{alg}(C_{\frac{1+z}{2}})^w$ .  $\square$

## 5 Strong compactness

So far we've seen that  $\{C_\varphi\}'$  is "large" in the sense that  $\{C_\varphi\}''$  is minimal (i.e., equal to  $\text{alg}(C_\varphi^w)$ ), and not equal to  $\{C_\varphi\}'$ . In this section we'll discuss another way of measuring the size of an algebra of Hilbert-space operators.

**Definition 15.** An algebra  $\mathcal{A} \subset \mathcal{L}(H)$  is said to be "strongly compact" provided its unit ball is relatively compact in the strong operator topology, i.e., the topology of pointwise convergence on  $H$ .

Whereas every bounded subset of  $\mathcal{L}(H)$  is relatively compact in the weak operator topology, the same is not true for the strong topology. *Example:* The closed unit ball of  $\mathcal{L}(H)$  itself, whenever  $\dim H = \infty$ .

This definition of strong compactness was initiated by Victor Lomonosov [9, 1980], who used it in his work on the Invariant Subspace Problem. The concept was introduced into the study of composition operators by Fern ndez-Valles and Lacruz in [5, 2012], and carried further by me in [12, 2013]. In this paper, I was able to show that for the operator  $C_\varphi$  we've been considering here,  $\text{alg}(C_\varphi)^w$  is strongly compact. However I was unable to decide if the same is true for  $\{C_\varphi\}'$  (Conjecture: it's not).

We know that  $\{C_\varphi\}'$  contains all the composition operators  $C_{\varphi_r}$  for  $0 < r \leq 1$ , and  $M_{e_{ik\tau}}$  for  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ . If any of these operators were

to generate a weakly closed algebra that's not strongly compact, then the same would be true of  $\{C_\varphi\}'$ . Unfortunately, it's shown in [11] that each of these individually generated algebras *is* strongly compact.

## 6 Further results

Until now we've been focused on the composition operator  $C_\varphi$  where  $\varphi(z) = \frac{1+z}{2}$ . This is an example of a hyperbolic linear fractional self-map of the unit disc with attractive fixed point on the boundary and repulsive one outside the closed unit disc (in this case: at  $\infty$ ).

The table below summarizes known results for both hyperbolic ("H") and parabolic ("P") linear fractional self-maps of  $\mathbb{U}$ , both automorphic ("A"), i.e., taking the disc *onto* itself, and non-automorphic ("N"). The notation "SC" stands for "Strong Compactness." The results of this table all come from the papers [5, 6, 7,] and [12].

$\varphi$	FP's on	$\{C_\varphi\}'$ min'l?	$\{C_\varphi\}''$ min'l?	$\text{alg}(C_\varphi)^w$ SC?	$\{C_\varphi\}'$ SC?
PA	$\partial\mathbb{U}$	N	N	Y	N
PNA	$\partial\mathbb{U}$	Y	Y	Y	Y
HA	$\partial\mathbb{U}$	N	N	Y	N
HNA	$\partial\mathbb{U} \& \mathbb{U}$	N	Y	N	N
	$\partial\mathbb{U} \& \mathbb{U}_e$	N	Y	Y	???

## References

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