

THE WHISHART–PICKRELL DISTRIBUTIONS AND CLOSURES OF GROUP ACTIONS

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Consider probability distributions on the space of infinite Hermitian matrices $\text{Herm}(\infty)$ invariant with respect to the unitary group $U(\infty)$. We describe the closure of $U(\infty)$ in the semigroup of spreading maps (polymorphisms) of $\text{Herm}(\infty)$; this closure is a semigroup isomorphic to the semigroup of all contractive operators. Bibliography: 11 titles.

1. THE ASSERTION

1.1. Notation. Denote by Herm_∞ the space of all infinite Hermitian matrices. By Herm_∞^0 we denote the space of all infinite Hermitian matrices with finitely many nonzero matrix elements.

By $U(\infty)$ we denote the group of infinite unitary matrices g such that $g - 1$ has only finitely many nonzero matrix elements. This group acts on Herm_∞ by conjugations,

$$U : X \mapsto U^{-1} X U. \quad (1.1)$$

By $\bar{U}(\infty)$ we denote the full unitary group in ℓ_2 , equipped with the weak operator topology. By $\mathcal{B}(\infty)$ we denote the semigroup of all linear operators in ℓ_2 with norm ≤ 1 , also equipped with the weak operator topology.

1.2. The Wishart–Pickrell distributions. For any probability measure μ on Herm_∞ , we define its characteristic function on Herm_∞^0 by the formula

$$\chi(\mu|A) = \int_{\text{Herm}_\infty} e^{i \text{tr} AX} d\mu(X).$$

Obviously, this function uniquely determines the measure.

The following theorem, in the spirit of de Finetti's theorem, is due to Pickrell [11] (see also another proof with additional details in [9]).

Any $U(\infty)$ -invariant measure on Herm_∞ can be uniquely decomposed into ergodic measures. An ergodic $U(\infty)$ -invariant measure has a characteristic function of the form

$$\chi_{\gamma_1, \gamma_2, \lambda}(A) = e^{-\frac{\gamma_1}{2} \text{tr} A^2 + i\gamma_2 \text{tr} A} \prod_{k=1}^{\infty} \left(\det \frac{e^{-i\lambda_k A}}{1 - i\lambda_k A} \right), \quad (1.2)$$

where $\gamma_1 \geq 0$, γ_2 , and $\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots$ are real numbers and $\sum \lambda_k^2 < \infty$.

Denote this measure by $\mu_{\gamma_1, \gamma_2, \lambda}$.

The characteristic function is a product, hence the corresponding measure can be decomposed into an (infinite) convolution. The factor $e^{-\frac{\gamma_1}{2} \text{tr} A^2 + i\gamma_2 \text{tr} A}$ corresponds to a Gaussian measure on Herm_∞ . Let us explain the meaning of the factors $\det(1 - i\lambda_k A)^{-1}$. Consider the complex plane \mathbb{C} equipped with the Gaussian measure $\pi^{-1} e^{-|u|^2} d \text{Re} u d \text{Im} u$. Consider the space \mathbb{C}^∞ equipped with a product measure ν . Consider the map $\mathbb{C}^\infty \rightarrow \text{Herm}_\infty$ given by

$$u \mapsto \lambda_k u^* u.$$

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Consider the image μ of ν under this map. The characteristic function of μ is

$$\int_{\text{Herm}_\infty} e^{i \text{tr} AX} d\mu(X) = \int_{\mathbb{C}^\infty} e^{i \text{tr} \lambda_k A u^* u} d\nu(u) = \int_{\mathbb{C}^\infty} e^{i \lambda_k u A u^*} d\nu(u) = \det(1 - i \lambda_k A)^{-1}.$$

If $\sum |\lambda_k| < \infty$, then we can transform the expression (1.2) into

$$\chi_{\gamma_1, \gamma_2, \lambda}(A) = e^{-\frac{\gamma_1}{2} \text{tr} A^2 + i(\gamma_2 - \sum \lambda_k) \text{tr} A} \prod_{k=1}^{\infty} \det(1 - i \lambda_k A)^{-1}.$$

If the series $\sum \lambda_k$ diverges, we obtain a divergent series in the exponent and a divergent product.

1.3. Polymorphisms. See [3, 10], [5, Sec. VIII.4]. Consider a Lebesgue measure space M with a nonatomic probability measure μ . Denote by $\text{Ams}(M)$ the group of measure-preserving bijective a.e. transformations of M .

A *polymorphism* of M is a measure \varkappa on $M \times M$ whose pushforwards to M with respect to both projections $M \times M \rightarrow M$ coincide with μ . Denote by $\text{Pol}(M)$ the set of all polymorphisms of M . We say that a sequence $\pi_j \in \text{Pol}(M)$ converges to π if for any measurable sets $A, B \subset M$ we have the convergence $\pi_j(A \times B) \rightarrow \pi(A \times B)$. The space $\text{Pol}(M)$ is compact, and the group $\text{Ams}(M)$ is dense in $\text{Pol}(M)$.

Polymorphisms can be regarded as maps spreading points of M to probability measures on M . Namely, for $\pi \in \text{Pol}(M)$ consider the system of conditional measures π_m on the sets $m \times M \subset M \times M$, where m ranges over M . We declare that the “map” π sends each point m to the measure π_m . If $\pi, \varkappa \in \text{Pol}(M)$, then the product $\rho = \varkappa \circ \pi$ is defined from the condition

$$\rho_m = \int_M \varkappa_n d\pi_m(n).$$

We obtain a semigroup with a separately continuous product.

For any $g \in \text{Ams}(M)$, consider the map from M to $M \times M$ defined by $m \mapsto (m, g(m))$ and take the pushforward of the measure μ . Thus we obtain a polymorphism supported by the graph of g . The group $\text{Ams}(M)$ is dense in $\text{Pol}(M)$.

A *Markov operator* R in $L^2(M)$ is a bounded operator satisfying the following properties:

- for any function $f \geq 0$, we have $Rf \geq 0$;
- $R \cdot 1 = 1, R^* \cdot 1 = 1$.

Recall that, automatically, $\|R\| = 1$. There is a one-to-one correspondence between the set of Markov operators $\text{Mar}(M)$ and $\text{Pol}(M)$. Namely, let R be a Markov operator; then we define a polymorphism π by the formula

$$\pi(A \times B) = \langle R I_A, I_B \rangle_{L^2(M)},$$

where $A, B \subset M$ are measurable sets and I_A, I_B are their indicator functions. The weak convergence in $\text{Mar}(M)$ corresponds to the convergence in $\text{Pol}(M)$, the product of Markov operators corresponds to the product of polymorphisms.

1.4. Closures of actions. Let a group G act on M by measure-preserving transformations. That is, we have a homomorphism $G \rightarrow \text{Ams}(M)$; for definiteness, assume that this is an embedding. Then the closure of G in $\text{Pol}(M)$ is a compact semigroup $\Delta \supset G$. The description of the closure is not very interesting for connected Lie groups (for instance, for semisimple linear Lie groups, we get a one-point compactification, this follows from [2, Theorem 5.3]). However, the description of such a closure is interesting for infinite-dimensional groups.

The first result of this type was obtained by Nelson [4] in 1973. He showed that the standard action of the infinite-dimensional orthogonal group on the space with a Gaussian measure admits an extension to an action of the semigroup of all contractive operators by polymorphisms and obtained formulas for the corresponding measures. Now, a large collection of actions of infinite-dimensional groups on measure spaces is known, however, the closures are found only in few cases, see [6, 7]. In this paper, we describe a new (relatively simple) example.

1.5. The assertion. For any polymorphism π on Herm_∞ , we define a characteristic function on $\text{Herm}_\infty^0 \times \text{Herm}_\infty^0$ by the formula

$$F(\pi|A, B) := \int_{\text{Herm}_\infty \times \text{Herm}_\infty} e^{i \text{tr} AX + BY} d\pi(X, Y).$$

Our purpose is the following assertion.

Theorem 1.1. *For any ergodic measure $\mu_{\gamma_1, \gamma_2, \lambda}$ on Herm_∞ , the action (1.1) of $U(\infty)$ admits a continuous extension to an action of the semigroup $\mathcal{B}(\infty)$ by polymorphisms of M . The closure of $U(\infty)$ in $\text{Pol}(\text{Herm}_\infty)$ coincides with the image of $\mathcal{B}(\infty)$. If $S \in \mathcal{B}(\infty)$, then the characteristic function of the corresponding polymorphism π_S is given by*

$$F(\pi_S|A, B) = \exp\left\{-\frac{\gamma_1}{2} \text{tr} \left[\begin{pmatrix} A & 0 \\ 0 & B \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & S \\ S^* & 1 \end{pmatrix} \right]^2 + i\gamma_2(\text{tr} A + \text{tr} B)\right\} \\ \times \prod_k \frac{e^{-i\lambda_k(\text{tr} A + \text{tr} B)}}{\det \left[1 - i\lambda_k \begin{pmatrix} A & 0 \\ 0 & B \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & S \\ S^* & 1 \end{pmatrix} \right]}. \quad (1.3)$$

Since the characteristic function is a product, the measure π_S can be decomposed into a convolution of measures. The exponential factor corresponds to a Gaussian measure; let us explain the meaning of the other factors in the product. Consider a measure ν_S on $\mathbb{C}^\infty \times \mathbb{C}^\infty$ defined in the following way in terms of its characteristic function:

$$\int_{\mathbb{C}^\infty \times \mathbb{C}^\infty} e^{i \text{Re} u \bar{z}_1 + i \text{Re} v \bar{z}_2} d\nu_S(z_1, z_2) := \exp\left\{-\frac{1}{2} \begin{pmatrix} u & v \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & S \\ S^* & 1 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} u^* \\ v^* \end{pmatrix}\right\}.$$

Consider the map $\mathbb{C}^\infty \times \mathbb{C}^\infty \rightarrow \text{Herm}_\infty \times \text{Herm}_\infty$ given by

$$(u, v) \mapsto (\lambda u^* u, \lambda v^* v).$$

Then the image of ν_S under this map is the measure whose characteristic function is

$$\det \left[1 - i\lambda_k \begin{pmatrix} A & 0 \\ 0 & B \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & S \\ S^* & 1 \end{pmatrix} \right]^{-1}.$$

2. THE PROOF

2.1. A priori remarks

Theorem 2.1. *Let the full unitary group $\overline{U}(\infty)$ act by measure-preserving transformations¹ on a Lebesgue space M with a probability measure. Then this action admits a continuous extension to an action of $\mathcal{B}(\infty)$ by polymorphisms of M . The closure of $\overline{U}(\infty)$ in $\text{Pol}(M)$ coincides with the image of $\mathcal{B}(\infty)$.*

¹Such an action cannot be pointwise; the transformations are defined only almost everywhere, and the equalities $g_1(g_2m) = (g_1g_2)m$ are fulfilled only a.e., see [1].

Proof. Let ρ be a unitary representation of $\overline{U}(\infty)$ in a Hilbert space H . The closure of the group $\rho(\overline{U}(\infty))$ in the group of all bounded operators in H with respect to the weak operator topology is a semigroup isomorphic to $\mathcal{B}(\infty)$ (this follows from the Kirillov–Olshanski classification of unitary representations of $\overline{U}(\infty)$, see [8, Theorem 1.2]).

We apply this to the action of $\overline{U}(\infty)$ in $L^2(M)$. The group $\overline{U}(\infty)$ acts by Markov operators, and weak limits of Markov operators are Markov operators. Therefore, the semigroup $\mathcal{B}(\infty)$ also acts by Markov operators. \square

Lemma 2.2. *For any $U(\infty)$ -ergodic measure on Herm_∞ , the action of $U(\infty)$ admits a continuous extension to an action of the full unitary group $\overline{U}(\infty)$.*

Proof. According to [9, Corollary 2.14], the representation of $U(\infty)$ in the space $L^2(\text{Herm}_\infty, \mu)$ has a continuous extension to $\overline{U}(\infty)$. By continuity arguments, the group $\overline{U}(\infty)$ acts by Markov operators $\rho(g)$. We have $\|\rho(g)\| \leq 1$, $\|\rho(g)^{-1}\| \leq 1$. Therefore, $\rho(g)$ is a unitary operator. Hence it corresponds to a measure-preserving transformation. \square

2.2. The calculation. Consider a measure μ with a characteristic function of the form (1.2). For $g \in U(\infty)$, consider the corresponding polymorphism π_g of Herm_∞ . The characteristic function of π_g is

$$F(\pi_g|A, B) = \exp\left\{-\frac{\gamma_1}{2} \text{tr}(A + UBU^{-1})^2 + i\gamma_2(\text{tr} A + \text{tr} UBU^{-1})\right\} \times \prod_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{e^{-i\lambda_k \text{tr}(A+UBU^{-1})}}{\det[1 - i\lambda_k(A + UBU^{-1})]}. \quad (2.4)$$

By Theorem 2.1, for any $R \in \mathcal{B}(\infty)$ we have a polymorphism π_R of the space $(\text{Herm}_\infty, \mu)$. If a sequence $R_j \in \mathcal{B}(\infty)$ weakly converges to R , then we have the weak convergence of the corresponding polymorphisms, $\pi_{R_j} \rightarrow \pi_R$. It is equivalent to the pointwise convergence of the characteristic functions. Now, for $R \in \mathcal{B}(\infty)$ and a sequence $g_j \in U(\infty)$ weakly converging to R , we can find $F(\pi_R|A, B)$ as the pointwise limit of $F(\pi_{g_j}|A, B)$.

Let S be a finitary operator with norm ≤ 1 , and let S be represented as a $(\alpha + \infty)$ -block matrix of the form

$$S = \begin{pmatrix} u & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Then we can build u as a block into a unitary $(\alpha + \alpha)$ -block matrix $\begin{pmatrix} u & v \\ w & z \end{pmatrix}$ (see, e.g., [5, Theorem VIII.3.2]). Let $U = U_m$ be a block unitary $(\alpha + m + m + \alpha + \infty)$ -matrix of the form

$$U_m = \begin{pmatrix} u & 0 & 0 & v & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ w & 0 & 0 & z & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Clearly, we have the weak convergence $U_m \rightarrow S$, and we want to trace the convergence of the characteristic functions $F(\pi_{U_m}|A, B)$. In fact, we will show that this sequence is eventually constant for any fixed A, B .

Fix $A, B \in \text{Herm}_\infty^0$. Assume that actually $A, B \in \text{Herm}_{\alpha+\beta}$. Let m be sufficiently large (in fact, we need that $m \geq \beta$). We represent the matrices A, B as block matrices of size

$\alpha + \beta + (m - \beta) + \beta + (m - \beta) + \infty$:

$$A = \begin{pmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \end{pmatrix}, \quad B = \begin{pmatrix} b_{11} & b_{12} & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ b_{21} & b_{22} & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \dots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

We want to evaluate

$$\det[1 - i\lambda_k(A + U_m B U_m^{-1})] \quad \text{and} \quad \text{tr}(A + U_m B U_m^{-1})^2.$$

A straightforward calculation gives

$$A + U_m B U_m^{-1} = \begin{pmatrix} a_{11} + ub_{11}u^* & a_{12} & 0 & ub_{12} & ub_{11}w^* & 0 & 0 \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ b_{21}u^* & 0 & 0 & b_{22} & b_{21}w^* & 0 & 0 \\ wb_{11}u^* & 0 & 0 & wb_{12} & wb_{11}w^* & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Clearly, we can remove zero columns and zero rows from this matrix. Formally,

$$\det(1 - i\lambda_k(A + U_m B U_m^{-1})) = \det(1 - i\lambda_k H),$$

where

$$H = \begin{pmatrix} a_{11} + ub_{11}u^* & a_{12} & ub_{12} & ub_{11}w^* \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & 0 & 0 \\ b_{21}u^* & 0 & b_{22} & b_{21}w^* \\ wb_{11}u^* & 0 & wb_{12} & wb_{11}w^* \end{pmatrix}.$$

Denote by Δ the block diagonal matrix with blocks 1, 1, 1, w . Represent H as $H = \Delta Z$ (where the expression for Z is clear). We apply the formula

$$\det(1 - i\lambda_k \Delta Z) = \det(1 - i\lambda_k Z \Delta).$$

Denote $H' := Z \Delta$,

$$H' = \begin{pmatrix} a_{11} + ub_{11}u^* & a_{12} & ub_{12} & ub_{11}w^*w \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & 0 & 0 \\ b_{21}u^* & 0 & b_{22} & b_{21}w^*w \\ b_{11}u^* & 0 & b_{12} & b_{11}w^*w \end{pmatrix}. \quad (2.5)$$

Since the matrix $\begin{pmatrix} u & v \\ w & z \end{pmatrix}$ is unitary, we have $w^*w = 1 - uu^*$. We substitute this into the 4th column of (2.5) and, keeping the result in mind, continue our calculations. Denote

$$T = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 & u \\ 0 & 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Then

$$H' = \begin{pmatrix} a_{11} + ub_{11}u^* & a_{12} & ub_{12} & a_{11}u + ub_{11} \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & 0 & a_{21}u \\ b_{21}u^* & 0 & b_{22} & b_{21} \\ b_{11}u^* & 0 & b_{12} & b_{11} \end{pmatrix} T^{-1} = T \begin{pmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & 0 & a_{11}u \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & 0 & a_{21}u \\ b_{21}u^* & 0 & b_{22} & b_{21} \\ b_{11}u^* & 0 & b_{12} & b_{11} \end{pmatrix} T^{-1}.$$

Hence

$$\begin{aligned} \det(1 - i\lambda_k H') &= \det \left[1 - i\lambda_k \begin{pmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & 0 & a_{11}u \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & 0 & a_{21}u \\ b_{21}u^* & 0 & b_{22} & b_{21} \\ b_{11}u^* & 0 & b_{12} & b_{11} \end{pmatrix} \right] \\ &= \det \left[1 - i\lambda \begin{pmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} & a_{11}u & 0 \\ a_{21} & a_{22} & a_{21}u & 0 \\ b_{11}u^* & 0 & b_{11} & b_{12} \\ b_{21}u^* & 0 & b_{21} & b_{22} \end{pmatrix} \right] \det \left[1 - i\lambda \begin{pmatrix} A & 0 \\ 0 & B \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & S \\ S^* & 1 \end{pmatrix} \right], \quad (2.6) \end{aligned}$$

and we get the desired expression.

Next,

$$\operatorname{tr}(A + U_m B U_m^{-1})^2 = \operatorname{tr} A^2 + \operatorname{tr} B^2 + 2 \operatorname{tr} A U_m B U_m^{-1}.$$

Multiplying the matrices, we observe that $A U_m B U_m^{-1}$ has a unique nonzero diagonal block, $a_{11} u b_{11} u^*$. Thus,

$$\operatorname{tr} A U_m B U_m^{-1} = \operatorname{tr} a_{11} u b_{11} u^* = \operatorname{tr} A S B S^*,$$

and this implies that

$$\operatorname{tr}(A + U_m B U_m^{-1})^2 = \operatorname{tr} \left[\begin{pmatrix} A & 0 \\ 0 & B \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} 1 & S \\ S^* & 1 \end{pmatrix} \right]^2.$$

Thus, for $m \geq \beta$ the value of $F(\pi_{U_m} | A, B)$ is given by formula (1.3).

So, the theorem holds for finitary matrices S . Consider an arbitrary operator $S \in \mathcal{B}(\infty)$. Denote by $S[m]$ the left upper corner of S of size m . Denote

$$S_m := \begin{pmatrix} S[m] & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

We have the weak convergence $S_m \rightarrow S$. On the other hand, we have the pointwise convergence

$$F(\pi_{S_m} | A, B) \rightarrow F(\pi_S | A, B)$$

(in fact, this sequence is eventually constant for any fixed A, B).

This completes the proof of the theorem.

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