ON BOUNDARY VALUES OF HOLOMORPHIC FUNCTIONS ON BALLS

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Abstract. It is a result of Agranovski and Valski for which Nagel and Rudin, and Stout have given alternate proofs, that if $B$ is the open unit ball in $\mathbb{C}^n$ and if $f \in C(\partial B)$ has the property that for every complex line $\Lambda \subseteq \mathbb{C}^n$, $f|(\Lambda \cap \partial B)$ has a continuous extension to $\Lambda \cap B$ which is holomorphic in $\Lambda \cap B$, then $f$ has a continuous extension to $B$ which is holomorphic in $B$. In the paper we give an easier, more geometric proof of this result and then prove the local version of this result.

The following proposition is a result of Agranovski and Valski [1].

PROPOSITION 1. Let $B$ be the open unit ball in $\mathbb{C}^n$ and let $f \in C(\partial B)$ have the property that for every complex line $\Lambda \subseteq \mathbb{C}^n$, $f|(\Lambda \cap \partial B)$ has a continuous extension to $\Lambda \cap B$ which is holomorphic in $\Lambda \cap B$. Then $f$ has a continuous extension to $B$ which is holomorphic in $B$.

Three different proofs of this result are known. Agranovski and Valski use the theorem of Severi [7] and need the existence of Haar measure on unitary group. Nagel and Rudin [2] obtain this result as a consequence of their characterization of Moebius-invariant subspaces of $C(\partial B)$. Stout [5] proves the result for general smoothly bounded domains in $\mathbb{C}^n$—he shows first that every $f$ satisfying the conditions of Proposition 1 is a weak solution of tangential Cauchy-Riemann equations and then applies a theorem of Weinstock [8]. In [6], Stout proves a local version of the main result of [5].

In this note we present a new, more geometric proof of Proposition 1 (we hope that this will contribute to a better intuitive understanding of Proposition 1) and then use the main argument of the proof to prove a local version of Proposition 1. Our proof uses the well-known fact that the boundary values of functions from the bidisc algebra are those continuous functions $g$ on the torus whose Fourier coefficients

$$\int \int e^{ij\theta}e^{ik\varphi}g(e^{i\theta}, e^{i\varphi}) \, d\theta \, d\varphi$$

vanish whenever at least one of the indices $j$, $k$ is positive [3].

Proof of Proposition 1. It is easy to see that if $\tilde{f}$ is an extension of $f$ to the closed ball $\overline{B}$ such that for every complex line $\Lambda$, $\tilde{f}|(\Lambda \cap \overline{B})$ is continuous and $\tilde{f}|(\Lambda \cap B)$ is holomorphic, then $\tilde{f}$ is continuous on $\overline{B}$ and holomorphic on $B$. 

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Consequently, to prove Proposition 1 it is enough to prove that if \( p \in B \) and if \( \Lambda_1, \Lambda_2 \) are two complex lines passing through \( p \) then the holomorphic extensions of \( f|_{(\Lambda_1 \cap \partial B)}, f|_{(\Lambda_2 \cap \partial B)} \) into \( \Lambda_1 \cap B, \Lambda_2 \cap B \), respectively, have the same value at \( p \). Since Moebius transformations map \( \overline{B} \) homeomorphically onto \( \overline{B} \), and complex lines to complex lines \([2,4]\) it is enough to prove this for \( p = 0 \).

So let \( x, y \in \partial B \), let \( \Delta \subset \mathbb{C} \) be the open unit disc, and let \( f_x, f_y \) be the functions in the disc algebra that satisfy \( f_x(s) = f(s x), f_y(s) = f(s y) \) \( (s \in \partial \Delta) \). We have to prove that \( f_x(0) = f_y(0) \). We will do this by proving that \( f_x \) and \( f_y \) are two slice functions of a function \( \tilde{g} \) from the bidisc algebra. We first construct a torus \( T \) contained in \( \partial B \) which contains the circles \( L_y = \{s x: s \in \partial \Delta \} \) and \( L_x = \{s y: s \in \partial \Delta \} \). Choose \( t \in \partial \Delta \) such that \( (\tau x | y) \) is real and put \( u = (\tau x + y)/2, w = (\tau x - y)/2 \). Then \( |u|^2 + |w|^2 = 1 \), and since \( (\tau x | y) \) is real we have \( (u | w) = 0 \). Consequently the torus \( T = \{u + tw: s, t \in \partial \Delta \} \) is contained in \( \partial B \). Note also—we will need this only in the proof of Proposition 2—that if \( \varepsilon > 0 \) and if \( L_y \subset D = \{z \in \partial B: \text{dist}(z, L_y) < \varepsilon \} \) then \( T \subset D \). Define \( g(s, t) = f(s u + tw) \) \( (s, t \in \partial \Delta) \). By the assumption for each \( s \) the function \( t \mapsto f(s u + tw) \) extends to a function in the disc algebra. Consequently

\[
\int \int e^{it \theta} e^{ik \varphi} g(e^{it \theta}, e^{ik \varphi}) \, d\theta \, d\varphi = 0
\]

whenever at least one of the indices \( j, k \) is positive which implies that \( g \) extends to a function \( \tilde{g} \) in the bidisc algebra. Since

\[
\begin{align*}
  f_x(t) &= f((1 - t^{-1})(u + w)) = \tilde{g}(t(1 - t^{-1})), \\
  f_y(t) &= f(t(u - w)) = \tilde{g}(t(1, -1))
\end{align*}
\]

\( (t \in \partial \Delta) \)

it follows that \( f_x(0) = \tilde{g}(0, 0) = f_y(0) \). This completes the proof.

We use the same idea to prove the following local version of Proposition 1 (see also \([4, \text{Theorem 18.1.12}]\) and \([6, \text{Theorem II.1}]\)).

**Proposition 2.** Let \( B \subset \mathbb{C}^n, n > 1 \), be the open unit ball, let \( x_0 \in \partial B \) and suppose that \( t < 1 \). Let

\[
\Gamma = \{x \in \partial B: t < \text{Re}\langle x | x_0 \rangle\}, \quad \Omega = \{x \in B: t < \text{Re}\langle x | x_0 \rangle\}.
\]

Suppose that \( f \in C(\Gamma) \) has the property that for every complex line \( \Lambda \) such that \( \Lambda \cap \Gamma \) is a circle (i.e. such that \( \Lambda \cap \Gamma = \Lambda \cap \partial B \), \( f|_{(\Lambda \cap \partial B)} \) has a continuous extension to \( \Lambda \cap B \) which is holomorphic in \( \Lambda \cap B \). Then \( f \) has a continuous extension to \( \Gamma \cup \Omega \) which is holomorphic on \( \Omega \).

**Lemma 1.** Let \( \Gamma, \Omega \) and \( f \) be as in Proposition 2. Let \( \mathcal{E} \) be the set of all complex lines \( \Lambda \) such that \( \Lambda \cap \Gamma \) is a circle. Let \( x \in \Omega \) and let \( y \neq 0 \) be such that \( \Lambda = \{x + \xi y: \xi \in \mathbb{C}\} \in \mathcal{E} \). There is an \( \varepsilon > 0 \) such that whenever \( |z - y| < \varepsilon \) then \( \Lambda_z = \{x + \xi z: \xi \in \mathbb{C}\} \in \mathcal{E} \) and the holomorphic extensions of \( f|_{(\Lambda \cap \partial B)}, f|_{(\Lambda_z \cap \partial B)} \) into \( \Lambda \cap B, \Lambda_z \cap B \), respectively, have the same value at \( x \).
Proof. Let $\phi$ be the Moebius transformation mapping $0$ to $x$. Let $S \subset \partial B$ be a neighbourhood of $L = \phi^{-1}(\Lambda \cap \partial B)$ such that $\phi(S) \subset \Gamma$. If $v \in \partial B$ is such that $L' = \{tv: t \in \partial \Delta\}$ is sufficiently close to $L$ then $L$ and $L'$ are contained in a torus $T \subset \partial B$ (see the proof of Proposition 1). It follows that there is an $\epsilon > 0$ such that if $|z - y| < \epsilon$ then $\Lambda_z \subset \bar{E}$ and $L$ and $\phi^{-1}(\Lambda_z \cap \partial B)$ are contained in a torus $T \subset \partial B$ such that $\phi(T) \subset \bar{\Gamma}$. Consequently $\phi$ maps the complex circles (= intersections of $\partial B$ with complex lines) contained in $T$ to complex circles contained in $\bar{\Gamma}$. By the argument used in the proof of Proposition 1 it follows that the holomorphic extensions of $f_1((\Lambda \cap \partial B), f_1((\Lambda_z \cap \partial B))$ to $\Lambda \cap B$, $\Lambda_z \cap B$, respectively, have the same value at $x$. This completes the proof.

Lemma 2. Let $g$ be a bounded function on $B$ and let $x_1, x_2, \ldots, x_n$ span $\mathbb{C}^n$. Suppose that $g|(\Lambda \cap B)$ is holomorphic for every complex line $\Lambda$ of the form $\Lambda = \{p + \xi x_i: \xi \in \mathbb{C}\}$, $p \in B$, $1 \leq i \leq n$. Then $g$ is holomorphic on $B$.

Proof. If $L: \mathbb{C}^n \to \mathbb{C}^n$ is the linear map which maps the $i$th coordinate vector to $x_i$, $1 \leq i \leq n$, then $g \circ L$ is bounded on $L^{-1}(B)$ and analytic in each variable separately. Consequently $g \circ L$ is analytic on $L^{-1}(B)$ and so is $g$ on $B$.

Proof of Proposition 2. Let $\mathfrak{E}$ be as in Lemma 1. Let $x \in \Omega$ and let $y_0, y_1 \in \partial B$ be such that $\Lambda_0 = \{x + \xi y_0: \xi \in \mathbb{C}\}$, $\Lambda_1 = \{x + \xi y_1: \xi \in \mathbb{C}\}$ both belong to $\mathfrak{E}$. It is easy to construct a path $y: [0, 1] \to \partial B$, $y(0) = y_0$, $y(1) = y_1$, such that $\{x + \xi y(t): \xi \in \mathbb{C}\} \subset \mathfrak{E}$ $(0 < t < 1)$. By Lemma 1 it follows that the holomorphic extensions of $f_1(\Lambda_0 \cap \partial B), f_1(\Lambda_1 \cap \partial B)$ into $\Lambda_0 \cap B$, $\Lambda_1 \cap B$, respectively, have the same value at $x$. Since every $x \in \Omega$ belongs to some $\Lambda \in \mathfrak{E}$ it follows that $f$ extends to a function $\tilde{f}$ on $\Omega \cap \Gamma$ such that for each $\Lambda \in \mathfrak{E}$, $\tilde{f}|(\Lambda \cap B)$ coincides with the holomorphic extension of $f_1((\Lambda \cap B)$ into $\Lambda \cap B$.

Let $x \in \Omega$. Applying the maximum modulus theorem and using the continuity of $f$ we see that there are an open ball $U \subset \Omega$, centered at $x$, and a nonempty open set $W \subset \mathbb{C}^n$ such that $\tilde{f}|U$ is bounded and such that $\tilde{f}|(U \cap \Lambda)$ is holomorphic whenever $\Lambda = \{y + \xi p: \xi \in \mathbb{C}\}$, $y \in U$, $p \in W$. By Lemma 2 it follows that $\tilde{f}$ is analytic on $U$. This proves that $\tilde{f}$ is analytic in $\Omega$. To prove the continuity of $\tilde{f}$ at $x \in \Gamma$, fix $x \in \Gamma$, let $\varepsilon > 0$ and choose $\tau < 1$ so close to $1$ that $\Gamma_\tau = \{y \in \partial B: \tau < \text{Re}(y | x)\} \subset \Gamma$ and that $|f(y) - f(x)| < \varepsilon$ $(y \in \Gamma_\tau)$. Let $z \in \Omega_\tau = \{y \in B: \tau < \text{Re}(y | x)\}$. Then $z$ belongs to a complex line $\Lambda$ such that $\Lambda \cap \partial B \subset \Gamma_\tau$. We have $|f(p) - f(x)| < \varepsilon$ $(p \in \Lambda \cap \partial B)$ and by the maximum modulus theorem it follows that $|f(z) - f(x)| < \varepsilon$. This completes the proof.

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References


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