



Differentiability of quasiconformal reflections

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Introduction

Let h be an increasing homeomorphism of the real axis onto itself, for which there exists a constant M such that

$$M^{-1} \leq \frac{h(x+t) - h(x)}{h(x) - h(x-t)} \leq M,$$

for all real x and $t > 0$. The Beurling-Ahlfors extension of h to the upper half plane is given by $\phi(x, y)$, where

$$\begin{aligned} \operatorname{Re}(\phi) &= \frac{1}{2} \int_0^1 [h(x+ty) + h(x-ty)] dt \\ \operatorname{Im}(\phi) &= \frac{r}{2} \int_0^1 [h(x+ty) - h(x-ty)] dt. \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

This is shown in [4] to be quasiconformal for any fixed $r > 0$. Let L be a Jordan curve through infinity which divides the plane into the regions Ω and Ω^* . A reflection over L is a map which swaps Ω , Ω^* and keeps points on L fixed. Using (1) Ahlfors proved the following lemma in [1, 2]:

Lemma 1. *If L permits a K -quasiconformal reflection, then it also permits a $C(K)$ quasiconformal reflection which changes Euclidean lengths at most by a factor $C(K)$.*

It is additionally claimed in [2, p. 48] that the reflection is differentiable. Differentiability away from L follows directly from the proof of the lemma, but differentiability on L does not. The aim of this report is to show that the parameter choice $r = 2$ and some extra assumptions about L are required to be sure the reflection is differentiable on L .

The matrix of partial derivatives of a function $g : \mathbb{C} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ at $z = x + iy$ will be denoted $D_z(g)$ or $D_{(x,y)}(g)$. The symbols f, f^* will be used throughout to denote conformal maps from the upper and lower half plane to Ω and Ω^* . Both maps extend to homeomorphisms of the boundary by Carathodory's Theorem (on conformal mapping). The symbol ω will be used to denote reflections over L .

Reflections over curves

Example 1. *A reflection cannot be differentiable over sharp corners*

Let Ω^* be the open first quadrant, Ω be the interior of its complement, and let ω be a reflection over $L = \partial\Omega$. By definition ω is differentiable at the origin if

$$\lim_{\mathbf{h} \rightarrow \mathbf{0}} \frac{\|\omega(\mathbf{h}) - \omega(\mathbf{0}) - D_0(\omega) \cdot \mathbf{h}\|}{\|\mathbf{h}\|} = 0. \tag{2}$$

Taking limits along the positive real and positive imaginary axis shows that

$$D_0(\omega) = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Also, ω fixes the origin and so (2) is equivalent to

$$\lim_{\mathbf{h} \rightarrow \mathbf{0}} \frac{\|\omega(\mathbf{h}) - \mathbf{h}\|}{\|\mathbf{h}\|} = 0. \tag{3}$$

If $\mathbf{h} \in \Omega$ is in the lower left quadrant, the origin is closer to \mathbf{h} than any point of Ω^* . As $\omega(\mathbf{h}) \in \Omega^*$, it follows that

$$\|\omega(\mathbf{h}) - \mathbf{h}\| \geq \|\mathbf{h}\|.$$

Taking $\mathbf{h} \rightarrow \mathbf{0}$ in the lower left quadrant then contradicts (3), which proves ω is not differentiable at $\mathbf{0}$. For this to show that differentiability of the reflection in Lemma 1 cannot be guaranteed, it remains to show that L permits a quasiconformal reflection. This follows from Theorem 2 (Appendix) with the constant $C = 1$.

Example 2. *Formula for a reflection over a sharp corner*

As in Example 1, let Ω^* be the open first quadrant, Ω the open part of its complement. The conformal maps f, f^* from the upper and lower half planes to Ω, Ω^* are

$$\begin{aligned} f(z) &= iz^{3/2} & f^{-1}(z) &= (-iz)^{2/3} \\ f^*(z) &= iz^{1/2} & f^{*-1}(z) &= -z^2, \end{aligned}$$

where the branch cut for $z^{2/3}$ is taken on the positive real axis, and the branch cut for \sqrt{z} is taken on the negative real axis but with $\sqrt{re^{i\pi}} := re^{-i\pi/2}$. The boundary function is $h(x) = (f^{*-1} \circ f)(x) = x^3$. Its Beurling-Ahlfors extension is

$$\begin{aligned} \phi(x, y) &= x^3 + xy^2 + \frac{ri}{2} \left(3x^2y + \frac{y^3}{2} \right) \\ &= \rho^3 \left[\cos \theta + \frac{ri}{16} (9 \sin \theta + 5 \sin 3\theta) \right], \end{aligned}$$

where $x = \rho \cos \theta, y = \rho \sin \theta$. Hence

$$j \circ \phi \circ f^{-1} = \rho^2 \left[\cos \left(\frac{2\theta - \pi}{3} \right) + \frac{ri}{16} \left(5 \sin 2\theta - 9 \sin \left(\frac{2\theta - \pi}{3} \right) \right) \right].$$

And in $\Omega, \omega = f^* \circ j \circ \phi \circ f^{-1}$, so

$$\omega(\rho e^{i\theta}) = i\rho \sqrt{\cos \left(\frac{2\theta - \pi}{3} \right) + \frac{ri}{16} \left(5 \sin 2\theta - 9 \sin \left(\frac{2\theta - \pi}{3} \right) \right)},$$

where $\theta \in [\frac{\pi}{2}, 2\pi]$ and $\sqrt{\rho e^{-i\pi}} := \sqrt{\rho} \cdot e^{-i\pi/2}$. The behaviour of ω is shown in Figure 1.

Example 3. *A reflection over the right branch of a hyperbola*

Let Ω be the region to the left of the right branch of the hyperbola $x^2 - y^2 = a^2$, Ω^* the region to the right. From [3, p. 97] the conformal maps are

$$f(z) = \begin{cases} a\sqrt{\frac{1}{2} [iz^3 + 3iz + 2]} & \text{if } \operatorname{Re}(z) \geq 0, \\ a\sqrt{\frac{1}{2} [-i\bar{z}^3 - 3i\bar{z} + 2]} & \text{if } \operatorname{Re}(z) \leq 0 \end{cases}$$

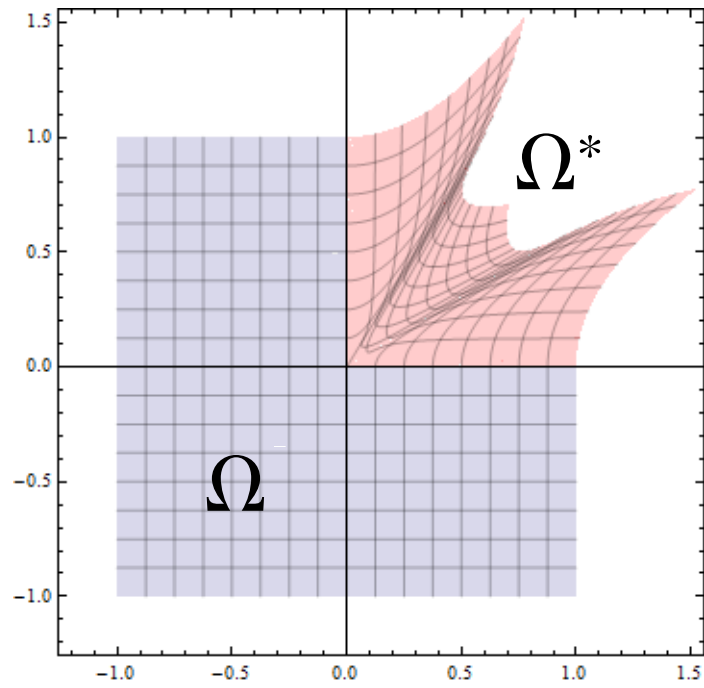


Figure 1: The image of three quarters of a square under ω . The code used to generate this figure is given in the Appendix.

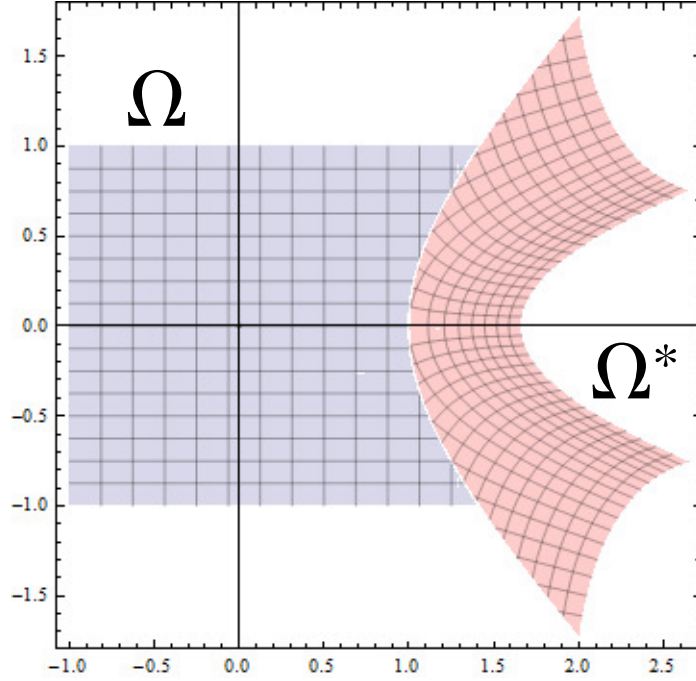


Figure 2: The reflection of the left side of a hyperbola onto the right. The code used to generate this figure is given in the Appendix.

and

$$f^*(z) = \sqrt{iz + a^2}, \quad (f^*)^{-1}(z) = i(a^2 - z^2).$$

The boundary function is

$$h(x) = (f^*)^{-1} \circ f(x) = \frac{a^2}{2}(x^3 + 3x),$$

for all $x \in \mathbb{R}$. With $r = 2$ the Beurling-Ahlfors extension of h is

$$\phi(x + iy) = \frac{a^2}{2} \left[x(x^2 + y^2 + 3) + \frac{iy}{2}(6x^2 + y^2 + 6) \right].$$

The image of Ω under $\omega = f^* \circ j \circ \phi \circ f^{-1}$ is shown in Figure 2. For points (x, y) on the hyperbola, the derivative of the reflection tends to

$$D_{(x,y)}(\omega) = \frac{1}{x^2 + y^2} \begin{pmatrix} y^2 - x^2 & 2xy \\ 2xy & x^2 - y^2 \end{pmatrix}, \quad (4)$$

which is involutory ($D^2 = I$). The tangent to the hyperbola at (x, y) has direction (y, x) , which is an eigenvector of D with eigenvalue 1. The function ω thus locally reflects points over the tangent to the curve; this can be seen in Figure 2. The formula (4) will later be evident and does not need to be shown directly.

Theorem 1. *Let z_0 be a point on L , let the partial derivatives of f extend continuously to a real neighbourhood of $x_0 = f^{-1}(z_0)$, and likewise for f^* . If $f_x(x_0, 0) \neq 0$, then ω is C^1 at z_0 only if $r = 2$.*

Proof. In Ω , the reflection ω is the composition of four functions $f^* \circ j \circ \phi \circ f^{-1}$. The proof will extend the partial derivatives of each of these to their boundaries, and then extend the partial derivatives of ω to L via the chain rule.

By assumption f_x is continuous inside the rectangle R with vertices $x_0 \pm \epsilon$, $x_0 + i \pm \epsilon$ for some $\epsilon > 0$. Applying Theorem 3 (Appendix) to the real and imaginary parts of f , with

$$g(x, y) = C = \max_R |f_x(x, y)|$$

results in

$$\begin{aligned} f'(x_0) &:= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + h, 0) - f(x_0, 0)}{h} \\ &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \lim_{y \rightarrow 0} \frac{f(x_0 + h, y) - f(x_0, y)}{h} \\ &= \lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \lim_{y \rightarrow 0} \int_0^1 f_x(x_0 + ht, y) dt \\ &= f_x(x_0, 0), \end{aligned}$$

with this holding similarly for f^* . Applying the chain rule to $h = f \circ f^{*-1}$ gives

$$f'(x_0) = (f^*)'(h(x_0)) \cdot h'(x_0), \quad (5)$$

and so $(f^*)'(h(x_0)) \neq 0$ by the assumption $f'(x_0) \neq 0$. The limiting matrix $D_{x_0}(f) := \lim_{z \rightarrow x_0} D_z(f)$ has determinant $|f'(x_0)|^2 \neq 0$, so by the Inverse Function Theorem

$$D_{z_0}(f^{-1}) := \lim_{z \rightarrow z_0} D_z(f^{-1}) = (D_{x_0}(f))^{-1},$$

where $z \rightarrow z_0$ inside Ω . This ensures that the partial derivatives of f^{-1} extend continuously at z_0 . If ϕ is the extension of h to the upper half plane then from [2, p. 43] its partial derivatives are

$$\begin{aligned} \operatorname{Re}(\phi)_x &= \frac{1}{2y} (h(x+y) - h(x-y)), \\ \operatorname{Re}(\phi)_y &= -\frac{1}{2y^2} \int_{x-y}^{x+y} h dt + \frac{1}{2y} (h(x+y) + h(x-y)), \\ \operatorname{Im}(\phi)_x &= \frac{r}{2y} [h(x+y) - 2h(x) + h(x-y)], \\ \operatorname{Im}(\phi)_y &= \frac{r}{2} \left[-\frac{1}{y^2} \left(\int_x^{x+y} h dt - \int_{x-y}^x h dt \right) + \frac{1}{y} (h(x+y) - h(x-y)) \right]. \end{aligned}$$

Applying L'Hôpital's rule gives the limiting matrix of partial derivatives

$$D_{(x_0, y)}(j \circ \phi) \rightarrow \begin{pmatrix} h'(x_0) & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{r}{2} h'(x_0) \end{pmatrix} \text{ as } y \rightarrow 0^+,$$

where j is the conjugate map $z \rightarrow \bar{z}$. Denote the real and imaginary parts of f^{-1} and f^* by u, v and u^*, v^* respectively. Then as $z \rightarrow z_0$ inside Ω ,

$$\begin{aligned} f^{-1}(z) &\rightarrow f^{-1}(z_0) = x_0 \\ j \circ \phi \circ f^{-1}(z) &\rightarrow h(x_0). \end{aligned}$$

Thus

$$\begin{aligned} D_z(f^{-1}) &\rightarrow \begin{pmatrix} u_x(z_0) & u_y(z_0) \\ v_x(z_0) & v_y(z_0) \end{pmatrix} \\ D_{f^{-1}(z)}(j \circ \phi) &\rightarrow \begin{pmatrix} h'(x_0) & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{-r}{2}h'(x_0) \end{pmatrix}. \\ D_{j \circ \phi \circ f^{-1}(z)}(f^*) &\rightarrow \begin{pmatrix} u_x^*(h(x_0)) & u_y^*(h(x_0)) \\ v_x^*(h(x_0)) & v_y^*(h(x_0)) \end{pmatrix}, \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

as $z \rightarrow z_0$ inside Ω . The reflection formula is

$$\omega := \begin{cases} f^* \circ j \circ \phi \circ f^{-1} & \text{in } \Omega \cup L \\ f \circ \phi^{-1} \circ j \circ f^{*-1} & \text{in } \Omega^* \cup L. \end{cases}$$

Applying the chain rule at $z \in \Omega$ yields

$$\begin{aligned} D_z(\omega) &= D_{j \circ \phi \circ f^{-1}(z)}(f^*) \cdot D_{f^{-1}(z)}(j \circ \phi) \cdot D_z(f^{-1}), \\ &\rightarrow \begin{pmatrix} u_x^*(h(x_0)) & u_y^*(h(x_0)) \\ v_x^*(h(x_0)) & v_y^*(h(x_0)) \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} h'(x_0) & 0 \\ 0 & \frac{-r}{2}h'(x_0) \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} u_x(z_0) & u_y(z_0) \\ v_x(z_0) & v_y(z_0) \end{pmatrix} \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

as $z \rightarrow z_0$ inside Ω , by (6). Setting $r = 2$ and omitting arguments reduces this to

$$D_{z_0}(\omega) := \lim_{z \rightarrow z_0, z \in \Omega} D_z(\omega) = h'(x_0) \cdot \begin{pmatrix} u_x^* \cdot u_x + u_y^* \cdot u_y & u_x^* \cdot u_y - u_y^* \cdot u_x \\ u_x^* \cdot u_y - u_y^* \cdot u_x & -u_x^* \cdot u_x - u_y^* \cdot u_y \end{pmatrix}, \quad (8)$$

which when squared becomes

$$D_{z_0}(\omega)^2 = (u_x^2 + u_y^2) \cdot (u_x^{*2} + u_y^{*2}) \cdot h'(x_0)^2 \cdot \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Differentiating $f^{-1} \circ f^* \circ h(x) = x$ at $x = x_0$ gives

$$[u_x - iu_y] \cdot [u_x^* - iu_y^*] \cdot h'(x_0) = 1. \quad (9)$$

Equating moduli and squaring results in

$$D_{z_0}(\omega)^2 = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}, \quad (10)$$

that is, the limiting derivative matrix is its own inverse. By the Inverse Function Theorem, and the fact that ω is its own inverse,

$$D_{\omega(z)}(\omega) = (D_z(\omega))^{-1}, \quad (11)$$

for z not on L . As ω fixes points on L , combining (10) and (11) shows that $D_z(\omega) \rightarrow D_{z_0}(\omega)$ as $z \rightarrow z_0$ from inside Ω or Ω^* . The formula $\det(AB) = \det(A)\det(B)$ combined with (7) implies that $r = 2$ is the only choice that makes $D_{z_0}(\omega)$ involutory, which means ω is not C^1 at z_0 for $r \neq 2$. We now show that $D_z(\omega) \rightarrow D_{z_0}(\omega)$ also holds as $z \rightarrow z_0$ along L . The form of (8) means $D_{z_0}(\omega)$ must reflect points over some axis. By (5) we know that $f^{*'}(h(x_0)) \neq 0$, so the tangent to L at z_0 has direction $f^{*'}(h(x_0)) = \begin{pmatrix} u_x^* \\ v_x^* \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} u_x^* \\ -u_y^* \end{pmatrix}$. Multiplication gives

$$\begin{aligned} D_{z_0}(\omega) \cdot \begin{pmatrix} u_x^* \\ -u_y^* \end{pmatrix} &= h'(x_0) \cdot \begin{pmatrix} u_x^* \cdot u_x + u_y^* \cdot u_y & u_x^* \cdot u_y - u_y^* \cdot u_x \\ u_x^* \cdot u_y - u_y^* \cdot u_x & -u_x^* \cdot u_x - u_y^* \cdot u_y \end{pmatrix} \cdot \begin{pmatrix} u_x^* \\ -u_y^* \end{pmatrix}, \\ &= h'(x_0) \cdot (u_x^{*2} + u_y^{*2}) \cdot \begin{pmatrix} u_x^* \\ u_y^* \end{pmatrix}. \end{aligned}$$

Rearranging (9) gives

$$h'(x_0)(u_x - iu_y) = \frac{1}{u_x^* - iu_y^*}.$$

Equating real and imaginary parts of this results in

$$h'(x_0) \cdot u_x \cdot (u_x^{*2} + u_y^{*2}) = u_x^*, \quad h'(x_0) \cdot u_y \cdot (u_x^{*2} + u_y^{*2}) = -u_y^*,$$

and so

$$D_{z_0}(\omega) \cdot \begin{pmatrix} u_x^* \\ -u_y^* \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} u_x^* \\ -u_y^* \end{pmatrix},$$

which means the axis of reflection is the tangent to L at z_0 . As L has a continuously turning tangent at z_0 , this proves $D_z(\omega) \rightarrow D_{z_0}(\omega)$ as $z \rightarrow z_0$ along L , and thus $D_{z_0}(\omega)$ defines a continuous extension of the partial derivatives of ω to L . It remains to show the extension matches the usual definition of partial derivatives, for example

$$\lim_{h \rightarrow 0} \left[\frac{\omega(z_0 + h) - \omega(z_0)}{h} - \omega_x(z_0) \right] = 0. \quad (12)$$

where h is real. Assume without loss of generality that L is not parallel to the x -axis at z_0 . Then for h small enough, $z_0 + h$ will not lie on L . Eq.(12) now follows by L'Hôpital's rule; $\omega_y(z_0)$ may be verified in the same way. As the partial derivatives of ω exist and are continuous in neighbourhood of z_0 , ω is C^1 at z_0 . \square

Corollary 1. *If L is Dini-smooth and $r = 2$, then ω is C^1 everywhere.*

Proof. If L is Dini-smooth and $r = 2$, the assumptions of Theorem 1 all hold by Theorem 4 (Appendix). \square

Every C^1 curve with Hölder continuous derivative is Dini-smooth, so a less general version of this is:

Corollary 2. *If $L \in C^{1,\alpha}$ for some $0 < \alpha \leq 1$, then ω is C^1 everywhere for $r = 2$.*

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Appendix

Theorem 2. A Jordan curve L through ∞ permits a quasiconformal reflection if and only if there exists a constant C such that

$$|\zeta_1 - \zeta_2| \leq C|\zeta_1 - \zeta_3|,$$

for any three points $\zeta_1, \zeta_2, \zeta_3$ on L which follow each other in this order.

Theorem 3. Let f_n be a sequence of real-valued measurable functions on a measure space S . Suppose that $f_n \rightarrow f$ pointwise and $f_n(x) \leq g(x)$ for all $x \in S$ and for all n , for some integrable function g . Then f is integrable and

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int_S f_n(x) d\mu = \int_S f(x) d\mu = \int_S \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} f_n(x) d\mu.$$

Definition 1. Let $\gamma : [0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be a continuous. The modulus of continuity of γ is

$$\omega(t) = \sup_{|x-y| \leq t} |\gamma(x) - \gamma(y)|.$$

Then γ is called Dini-continuous if

$$\int_0^1 \frac{\omega(t)}{t} dt < \infty.$$

A C^1 curve with regular parametrisation γ is Dini-smooth if γ' is Dini-continuous.

Theorem 4. Let f map \mathbb{D} conformally onto the inner domain of the Dini-smooth Jordan curve C . Then f' has a continuous extension to $\overline{\mathbb{D}}$ and

$$\frac{f(\zeta) - f(z)}{\zeta - z} \rightarrow f'(z) \neq 0 \quad \text{for } \zeta \rightarrow z, \zeta, z \in \overline{\mathbb{D}},$$

$$|f'(z_1) - f'(z_2)| \leq C\omega^*(\delta) \quad \text{for } z_1, z_2 \in \overline{\mathbb{D}}, |z_1 - z_2| \leq \delta.$$

Theorem 4 and the definition of Dini-smooth are from [5, p. 48]. Theorem 2 is Ahlfors' three point condition from [1]. The letter \mathbb{D} in Theorem 4 denotes the unit disc.

Mathematica code used to generate Figure 1

```
a = 2;
arg2[z_] := Mod[Arg[z], -2*Pi, 2 *Pi]
crt2[z_] := Abs[z]^(2/3) * Exp[I*2*arg2[z]/3]
finv[z_] := crt2[-I*z]
fstar[z_] := I*Sqrt[z]
jphi[z_] := Abs[z]^2*Re[z] - a*I/2*(3*Re[z]^2*Im[z] + 1/2*Im[z]^3)
```

```

omega[z_] := N[fstar[jphi[finv[z]]]]
image = ParametricPlot[
  Evaluate@(Through[{Re, Im}[omega[x + I*y]]] Boole[
    x < 0 || y < 0]), {x, -1, 1}, {y, -1, 1}, AspectRatio -> 1,
  PlotRange -> All, PlotPoints -> 80, PlotStyle -> Red,
  BoundaryStyle -> None];
domain = ParametricPlot[
  Evaluate@(Through[{Re, Im}[x + I*y]] Boole[
    x < 0 || y < 0]), {x, -1, 1}, {y, -1, 1}, AspectRatio -> 1,
  PlotPoints -> 80, BoundaryStyle -> None];
Rasterize[
  Show[domain, image, PlotRange -> {{-1.2, 1.5}, {-1.2, 1.5}}]]

```

Mathematica code used to generate Figure 2

```

a = 1; (*a determines the vertex of the hyperbola *)
w /. Simplify[Solve[(I*w^3 + 3*I*w + 2) == 2*z^2/a^2, w],
  Assumptions -> {a > 0}][[1]];
finv[z_] := (
  I (1 + I Sqrt[
    3] + (1 - I Sqrt[3]) (1 - z^2 + Sqrt[z^2 (-2 + z^2)])^(2/3)))/(
  2 (1 - z^2 + Sqrt[z^2 (-2 + z^2)])^(1/3));
finv2[z_] := (
  I (1 - I Sqrt[
    3] + (1 + I Sqrt[3]) (1 - z^2 + Sqrt[z^2 (-2 + z^2)])^(2/3)))/(
  2 (1 - z^2 + Sqrt[z^2 (-2 + z^2)])^(1/3));
jphi[z_] := (a^2/2)*(Re[z]*(Abs[z]^2 + 3) -
  I*Im[z]/2*(Abs[z]^2 + 5*Re[z]^2 + 6))
fstar[z_] := Sqrt[I*z + a^2]
omega[z_] := N[fstar[jphi[finv[z]]]]
omega2[z_] := N[fstar[jphi[finv2[z]]]]
upperimage =
  ParametricPlot[
    Evaluate@(Through[{Re, Im}[omega[x + I*y]]] Boole[
      x < a || (x^2 - y^2 < a^2)]), {x, 0, 2}, {y, 0, Sqrt[3]},
    AspectRatio -> 1, PlotRange -> All, PlotStyle -> Red,
    BoundaryStyle -> None, PlotPoints -> 20];
lowerimage =
  ParametricPlot[
    Evaluate@(Through[{Re, Im}[omega2[x + I*y]]] Boole[
      x < a || (x^2 - y^2 < a^2)]), {x, 0, 2}, {y, -Sqrt[3], 0},
    AspectRatio -> 1, PlotRange -> All, PlotStyle -> Red,
    BoundaryStyle -> None, PlotPoints -> 20];
domain = ParametricPlot[
  Evaluate@(Through[{Re, Im}[x + I*y]] Boole[
    x < a || (x^2 - y^2 < a^2)]), {x, -1, 2}, {y, -1, 1},

```

```
AspectRatio -> 1, BoundaryStyle -> None, PlotPoints -> 20];  
Rasterize[Show[domain, upperimage, lowerimage, PlotRange -> All]]
```

References

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