Hyperbolization of Euclidean Ornaments

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Abstract

In this article we outline a method that automatically transforms an Euclidean ornament into a hyperbolic one. The necessary steps are pattern recognition, symmetry detection, extraction of a Euclidean fundamental region, conformal deformation to a hyperbolic fundamental region and tessellation of the hyperbolic plane with this patch. Each of these steps has its own mathematical subtleties that are discussed in this article. In particular, it is discussed which hyperbolic symmetry groups are suitable generalizations of Euclidean wallpaper groups. Furthermore it is shown how one can take advantage of methods from discrete differential geometry in order to perform the conformal deformation of the fundamental region. Finally it is demonstrated how a *reverse pixel lookup* strategy can be used to obtain hyperbolic images with optimal resolution.

1 Introduction

Ornaments and regular tiling patterns have a long tradition in human culture. Their origins reach back to ancient cultures like China, Egypt, Greece and the Islam. Each of these cultures has its own specific way to create symmetric decorative patterns. Mathematically the underlying structures are well understood. Taking only the pattern into account (and neglecting possible color symmetries) there are just 24 sporadic groups and 2 infinite classes of groups governing the symmetry structure of plane images. The two infinite classes belong to rosette patterns with an n-fold rotational symmetry (having reflections or not). Furthermore there are 7 frieze groups describing patterns that have translational symmetry in a single direction. And last but not least there are the most interesting ones, the 17 wallpaper groups for patterns that admit translational symmetries in at least two independent directions. The frieze and wallpaper groups are infinite symmetry groups.

Structurally we have to tell apart at least three different layers when speaking about symmetric patterns – two of them belong to mathematics and one belongs to art. Starting