

## Minimal Tori in $S^3$ Whose Lines of Curvature Lie in $S^2$

Dedicated to Professor Morio Obata on his 60th birthday

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### Introduction

Let  $\varphi: \Sigma \rightarrow S^3$  be a minimal immersion of a compact orientable surface  $\Sigma$  into the unit 3-sphere  $S^3$ . It is valuable to study the set of such immersions with  $\Sigma$  of given genus. For example, when  $\Sigma$  is of genus 0, i.e.,  $\Sigma$  is the 2-sphere,  $\varphi$  must be the totally geodesic immersion of  $S^2$  into  $S^3$  [3] [1] [4].

Assume  $\Sigma$  is the torus. In this case, there is the well-known minimal isometric *embedding* of the flat square torus  $S^1(1/\sqrt{2}) \times S^1(1/\sqrt{2})$  into  $S^3$  called the *Clifford immersion*. Though there are many minimal immersions of the torus into  $S^3$ , they are not embedded. Thus, it is conjectured that the only minimal embedding of the torus into  $S^3$  is the Clifford one [7].

To study this, we consider minimal immersions of a torus into  $S^3$  having the following property:

- (\*) Each line of curvature of the immersions lies in some totally geodesic 2-sphere in  $S^3$ .

The main theorem of this paper is the following:

**THEOREM.** (1) *There exist infinitely many minimal immersions of the torus into  $S^3$  satisfying (\*).*

(2) *A minimal immersion of the torus into  $S^3$  satisfying (\*) is not an embedding provided that it is congruent with the Clifford one.*

### §1. Preliminaries.

Let  $\varphi: \Sigma \rightarrow S^3$  be a smooth immersion of a surface into the unit 3-

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sphere. The first fundamental form of  $\varphi$  is the induced metric  $g = \varphi^*\langle, \rangle$ , where  $\langle, \rangle$  is the standard metric of  $S^8$ . The second fundamental form  $h$  of  $\varphi$  is defined as  $h(X, Y) = -\langle \bar{\nabla}_X \nu, Y \rangle$  for all vectors  $X$  and  $Y$  tangent to  $\varphi$ , where  $\nu$  is the unit normal vector field of  $\varphi$  and  $\bar{\nabla}$  is the canonical connection of  $S^8$ .

The existence of isothermal coordinates shows us that there exist local coordinates  $(u, v)$  of  $\Sigma$  in which  $g$  is written as

$$(1.1) \quad g = e^\sigma(du^2 + dv^2),$$

where  $\sigma$  is a smooth function of  $u$  and  $v$ . Write the second fundamental form in these coordinates as

$$(1.2) \quad h = Ldu^2 + 2Mdudv + Ndv^2,$$

where  $L, M$  and  $N$  are functions of  $u$  and  $v$ .

The mean curvature of  $\varphi$  is the function  $H$  on  $\Sigma$  defined by

$$(1.3) \quad H = \frac{1}{2}e^{-\sigma}(L + N)$$

in the present isothermal coordinates. The immersion  $\varphi$  is called *minimal* when  $H$  is identically 0, i.e.,  $N = -L$  in (1.2).

In these coordinates, the equation of Gauss is

$$(1.4) \quad -\frac{1}{2}e^{-\sigma}\Delta\sigma = (LN - M^2)e^{-2\sigma} + 1, \quad \text{where} \quad \Delta = \frac{\partial^2}{\partial u^2} + \frac{\partial^2}{\partial v^2}.$$

Consider the complex function  $f$  of  $z = u + iv$

$$(1.5) \quad f(z) = M + iN.$$

When  $\varphi$  is minimal, the equation of Codazzi holds if and only if  $f$  is a holomorphic function of  $z$ .

## §2. Fundamental equation.

Suppose  $\varphi: \Sigma \rightarrow S^8$  be a minimal immersion of the torus. On taking the universal cover of  $\Sigma$ ,  $\varphi$  is lifted to the minimal immersion  $\tilde{\varphi}: \mathbf{R}^2 \rightarrow S^8$ . Since the induced metric  $\tilde{g} = \tilde{\varphi}^*\langle, \rangle$  is conformal to the flat metric of  $\mathbf{R}^2$  [2], there exist *global* coordinates  $(u, v)$  in which the first fundamental form is

$$(2.1) \quad \tilde{g} = e^\sigma(du^2 + dv^2),$$

where  $\sigma$  is a smooth function on  $\mathbf{R}^2$  which is invariant by the deck

transformations of the cover  $R^2 \rightarrow \Sigma$ , i.e.,  $\sigma$  is a doubly periodic function. The second fundamental form of  $\tilde{\varphi}$  is written as (1.2), where  $L, M$  and  $N$  are also doubly periodic functions defined on  $R^2$ .

Since  $\tilde{\varphi}$  is minimal, the doubly periodic function  $f$  in (1.5) is holomorphic on the whole complex plane. Hence by Liouville's theorem,  $L, M$  and  $N$  must be constant on  $R^2$ . Then, by a suitable change of coordinates, we may assume the second fundamental form is diagonalized as

$$h = L(du^2 - dv^2),$$

where  $L$  is a positive constant. Replacing  $u, v$  and  $\sigma$  by  $u/\sqrt{L}, v/\sqrt{L}$  and  $\sigma + \log L$  respectively, we have the first fundamental form (2.1) and the second fundamental form

$$(2.2) \quad h = du^2 - dv^2.$$

By (2.1) and (2.2), the equation of Gauss (1.4) becomes

$$(2.3) \quad \Delta\sigma = -4 \sinh \sigma.$$

Conversely, by the fundamental theorem of the theory of surfaces [5], we have the following proposition:

**PROPOSITION 2.1.** (1) *If  $\varphi: \Sigma \rightarrow S^3$  is a minimal immersion of the torus, and  $\tilde{\varphi}: R^2 \rightarrow S^3$  is the lift of  $\varphi$  to the universal cover of  $\Sigma$ , then there exist coordinates  $(u, v)$  of  $R^2$  in which the first and the second fundamental forms of  $\tilde{\varphi}$  are written as (2.1) and (2.2) respectively, and the function  $\sigma$  in (2.1) satisfies (2.3).*

(2) *If a smooth function  $\sigma$  on  $R^2$  satisfies (2.3), then there exists a minimal immersion  $\varphi_\sigma: R^2 \rightarrow S^3$  whose first and the second fundamental forms are (2.1) and (2.2) respectively. Moreover, such an immersion is unique up to congruence.*

**REMARK.** Even if  $\sigma$  in (2.3) is doubly periodic, the corresponding immersion  $\varphi_\sigma$  is not necessarily doubly periodic. To study minimal immersions of the torus into  $S^3$ , we must search for doubly periodic solutions of (2.3) whose corresponding immersions are also doubly periodic.

The trivial solution of (2.3) is  $\sigma = 0$ . In this case, the corresponding minimal immersion  $\varphi_0$  is an isometric minimal immersion of  $R^2$  with flat metric which is written explicitly as

$$\varphi_0(u, v) = \left( \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \cos \sqrt{2}u, \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \sin \sqrt{2}u, \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \cos \sqrt{2}v, \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \sin \sqrt{2}v \right) \in S^3,$$

where  $S^3 = \{(x^0, x^1, x^2, x^3) \in \mathbf{R}^4; \sum_{i=0}^3 (x^i)^2 = 1\}$ . Since  $\varphi_0$  is doubly periodic, it gives the minimal isometric immersion of the flat torus  $\mathbf{R}^2/\Gamma$  into  $S^3$ , where  $\Gamma$  is the lattice on  $\mathbf{R}^2$  generated by  $\{(0, \sqrt{2}\pi), (\sqrt{2}\pi, 0)\}$ . This immersion is called the *Clifford immersion*, which has the following properties:

(1) It is the only isometric minimal immersion of the flat torus into  $S^3$  up to congruence.

(2) The immersion is one-to-one, i.e., it is an embedding.

(3) The area of the immersed torus is  $2\pi^2$ .

(4) The immersion is given by the first eigenfunctions of the laplacian of  $\mathbf{R}^2/\Gamma$ . In other words, the first eigenvalue of the laplacian of  $\mathbf{R}^2/\Gamma$  is 2.

### § 3. Lines of curvature.

Suppose  $\varphi: \mathbf{R}^2 \rightarrow S^3$  be a minimal immersion with the first and the second fundamental forms (2.1) and (2.2) respectively.

Vector fields  $\partial/\partial u$  and  $\partial/\partial v$  give the principal directions of  $h$ , and their integral curves are the lines of curvature of  $\varphi$ . Let

$$(3.1) \quad c_u(v) = \varphi(u, v), \quad c_v(u) = \varphi(u, v).$$

Then curves  $c_u$  and  $c_v$  in  $S^3$  are lines of curvature of  $\varphi$  parametrized by  $v$  and  $u$  respectively. The following lemma is easy to show.

LEMMA 3.1. (1) *The curve  $c_u$  has the curvature*

$$\kappa_u = \frac{1}{2} e^{-\sigma/2} \{(\partial_u \sigma)^2 + 4e^{-\sigma}\}^{1/2}$$

and the torsion

$$\tau_u = e^{-\sigma/2} \left[ \left\{ \partial_v \left( \frac{e^{-\sigma/2} \partial_u \sigma}{2\kappa_u} \right) \right\}^2 + \left\{ \partial_v \left( \frac{e^{-\sigma}}{\kappa_u} \right) \right\}^2 \right]^{1/2}.$$

(2) *The curve  $c_v$  has the curvature*

$$\kappa_v = \frac{1}{2} e^{-\sigma/2} \{(\partial_v \sigma)^2 + 4e^{-\sigma}\}^{1/2}$$

and the torsion

$$\tau_v = e^{-\sigma/2} \left[ \left\{ \partial_u \left( \frac{e^{-\sigma/2} \partial_v \sigma}{2\kappa_v} \right) \right\}^2 + \left\{ \partial_u \left( \frac{e^{-\sigma}}{\kappa_v} \right) \right\}^2 \right]^{1/2}.$$

LEMMA 3.2. *Each line of curvature of  $\varphi$  lies in some totally geodesic*

2-sphere in  $S^3$  if and only if  $\sigma$  is the following form:

$$(3.2) \quad \sigma(u, v) = \log\{U(u) + V(v)\}^2,$$

where  $U$  and  $V$  are smooth functions on  $\mathbf{R}$ .

PROOF. Suppose  $\sigma$  is as in (3.2). So, it is an easy consequence of Lemma 3.1 that  $\tau_u$  and  $\tau_v$  are identically 0 for any  $u$  and  $v$ . Then each  $c_u$  and  $c_v$  lies in some totally geodesic 2-sphere in  $S^3$ .

Conversely, if each  $\tau_u$  is identically 0,  $\partial_u(e^{-\sigma}/\kappa_u)$  must be identically 0. Hence  $4(e^{-\sigma}/\kappa_u)^2 = (\partial_u e^{\sigma/2})^2 + 4$  must depend only on  $u$ . Let  $\partial_u e^{\sigma/2} = U(u)$ . Then  $e^{\sigma/2} = U(u) + V(v)$  for some function  $V(v)$  and the conclusion follows.  $\square$

PROPOSITION 3.3. Let  $\varphi: \mathbf{R}^2 \rightarrow S^3$  be a minimal immersion with the first and the second fundamental forms (2.1) and (2.2) respectively. Then each line of curvature of  $\varphi$  lies in some totally geodesic 2-sphere in  $S^3$  if and only if  $\sigma(u, v)$  depends only on one variable  $u$  or  $v$ .

PROOF. If  $\sigma$  depends only on  $u$  or  $v$ ,  $c_u$  and  $c_v$  are curves without torsion because of Lemma 3.1.

Assume each  $c_u$  or  $c_v$  lies in a totally geodesic  $S^2$ . Then  $\sigma$  is written as (3.2). Substituting (3.2) in (2.3), we have

$$U''(U+V) + V''(U+V) - (U')^2 - (V')^2 = 1 - (U+V)^4,$$

where  $U' = dU/du$ ,  $V' = dV/dv$ , etc. Differentiating this equation by  $u$  and  $v$ ,

$$U'''V' + U'V''' = -12(U+V)^2 U'V'.$$

If  $U'V' \neq 0$ , then

$$\left(\frac{U'''}{U'}\right) + \left(\frac{V'''}{V'}\right) = -12(U+V)^2.$$

Differentiating the above, we obtain  $U'V' = 0$ . So,  $U'V'$  must be identically 0. Hence  $U$  or  $V$  is a constant function.  $\square$

#### § 4. Differential equation.

In this section, we construct a family of minimal immersions of  $\mathbf{R}^2$  into  $S^3$  whose lines of curvature lie in some totally geodesic 2-spheres in  $S^3$ .

Let  $\varphi: \mathbf{R}^2 \rightarrow S^3$  be one of such immersions. So, by Propositions 2.1 and 3.3, there exist coordinates  $(u, v)$  of  $\mathbf{R}^2$  with the following properties:

(1) The first fundamental form of  $\varphi$  is

$$(4.1) \quad g = e^\sigma (du^2 + dv^2),$$

(2) the second fundamental form of  $\varphi$  is

$$(4.2) \quad h = du^2 - dv^2,$$

(3) the function  $\sigma$  depends only on  $v$ , and

(4) the function  $\sigma(v)$  satisfies the ordinary differential equation:

$$(4.3) \quad \frac{d^2\sigma}{dv^2} = -4 \sinh \sigma.$$

The equation (4.3) has an integral:

$$\frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{d\sigma}{dv} \right)^2 + 4 \cosh \sigma = 4\alpha,$$

where  $\alpha$  is an integral constant. Then for each  $\alpha \in [1, \infty)$ , there exists a unique solution  $\sigma_\alpha$  such that:

$$(4.4) \quad \frac{1}{2} \left( \frac{d\sigma_\alpha}{dv} \right)^2 + 4 \cosh \sigma_\alpha = 4\alpha,$$

$$(4.5) \quad \sigma_\alpha(0) = \log a, \quad \text{where } a = \alpha + \sqrt{\alpha^2 - 1},$$

$$(4.6) \quad \frac{d^2\sigma_\alpha}{dv^2}(0) \leq 0.$$

LEMMA 4.1. *The solutions  $\{\sigma_\alpha; \alpha \in [1, \infty)\}$  have the following properties:*

$$(1) \quad \sigma_1 = 0.$$

(2) For each  $\alpha \in (1, \infty)$ ,  $\sigma_\alpha$  is a periodic function with period

$$T(\alpha) = \frac{2}{\sqrt{a}} \int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{dx}{\sqrt{1 - (1 - a^{-2}) \sin^2 x}}.$$

$$(3) \quad \sigma_\alpha(v) = \sigma_\alpha(-v), \quad \frac{d\sigma_\alpha}{dv}(v) = -\frac{d\sigma_\alpha}{dv}(-v).$$

$$(4) \quad -\log a \leq \sigma_\alpha \leq \log a.$$

(5)  $\sigma_\alpha$  is simply decreasing on  $\left[0, \frac{T(\alpha)}{2}\right]$  and increasing on  $\left[\frac{T(\alpha)}{2}, T(\alpha)\right]$ .

PROOF. (1) and (3) are immediate consequences of (4.4).

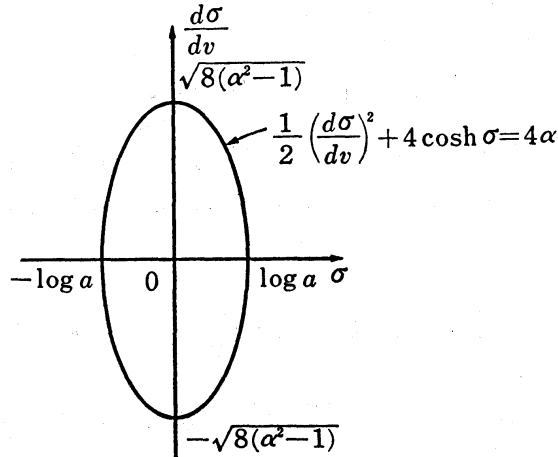


FIGURE 1

Figure 1 is the phase curve of the solution  $\sigma_\alpha$  of the equation (4.4). The tangent vectors  $(d\sigma_\alpha/dv, d^2\sigma_\alpha/dv^2)$  of this curve never vanishes, so  $\sigma_\alpha$  is periodic with period

$$\begin{aligned} T(\alpha) &= \int_0^{T(\alpha)} dv = -2 \int_{\log a}^{-\log a} \frac{d\sigma_\alpha}{d\sigma_\alpha/dv} \\ &= 2 \int_{-\log a}^{\log a} \frac{d\sigma}{\sqrt{8(\alpha - \cosh \sigma)}} \\ &= \frac{2}{\sqrt{a}} \int_0^{\pi/2} \frac{dx}{\sqrt{1 - (1 - a^{-2})\sin^2 x}}, \end{aligned}$$

and thus (2) is proved.

By Figure 1, (4) and (5) are also proved. □

By Proposition 1.1, there exists the immersion  $\varphi_\alpha$  of  $\mathbb{R}^2$  into  $S^3$  defined by (4.1), (4.2) and  $\sigma = \sigma_\alpha$ . Since  $\sigma_1 = 0$ , the immersion  $\varphi_1$  is the Clifford immersion.

REMARK. Though the period of the Clifford immersion in the direction  $v$  is  $\sqrt{2}\pi$ ,  $\lim_{\alpha \downarrow 1} T(\alpha) = \pi$ . This shows that the Clifford immersion is isolated in the family  $\{\varphi_\alpha\}$  as an immersion of the torus.

Consider the lines of curvature of  $\varphi_\alpha$ ,

$$c_u^\alpha(v) = \varphi_\alpha(u, v), \quad c_v^\alpha(u) = \varphi_\alpha(u, v).$$

Since they lie in some totally geodesic 2-spheres in  $S^3$ , we may consider each of  $c_u^\alpha$  and  $c_v^\alpha$  as a curve in  $S^2 \subset \mathbb{R}^3$ . By Lemma 3.1, we obtain the

following lemma.

LEMMA 4.2. (1)  $c_\alpha^\alpha$  is the curve in  $S^2$  with the curvature

$$\kappa_\alpha^\alpha = \sqrt{2\alpha e^{-\sigma_\alpha} - 1}.$$

(2)  $c_\alpha^\alpha$  is a small circle with radius  $e^{\sigma_\alpha/2}/\sqrt{2\alpha}$  in  $R^3$ .

(3)  $\varphi_\alpha$  gives a minimal immersion of the cylinder whose fundamental domain is

$$\left\{ (u, v); 0 \leq u < \sqrt{\frac{2}{\alpha}}\pi \right\} \subset R^2.$$

(4)  $c_\alpha^\alpha$  is the curve in  $S^2$  with the curvature

$$\kappa_\alpha^\alpha = e^{-\sigma_\alpha}.$$

(5) The curves  $c_\alpha^\alpha$  are congruent with each other.

### §5. Existence of minimal tori.

In this section, we prove the first part of the main theorem.

Let  $\sigma_\alpha$  and  $\varphi_\alpha$  be as in the previous section. Then by Lemma 4.2 (3),  $\varphi_\alpha$  gives an immersion of the cylinder.

Assume  $\varphi_\alpha$  gives an immersion of the torus and  $c_\alpha^\alpha$  never closes up in  $S^2$ . Then the image of  $c_\alpha^\alpha$  is dense in the image of  $\varphi_\alpha$ . On the other hand, the image of  $c_\alpha^\alpha$  lies in some totally geodesic 2-sphere, then the image of  $\varphi_\alpha$  lies in the 2-sphere. This is impossible. Hence  $\varphi_\alpha$  gives an immersion of the torus if and only if the curve  $c_\alpha^\alpha$  is closed with some integral times of the period of  $\sigma_\alpha$ .

The first part of the main theorem is an immediate consequence of the following proposition:

PROPOSITION 5.1. *There exist countably many  $\alpha$ 's in  $(1, \infty)$  such that the curve  $c_\alpha^\alpha$  is closed with period  $k_\alpha T(\alpha)$  for some positive number  $k_\alpha \geq 2$ .*

We shall prove this later.

Take  $\alpha \in (1, \infty)$ , and let  $T = T(\alpha)$  and  $\sigma = \sigma_\alpha$ . Consider  $c = c_\alpha^\alpha|_{[0, T(\alpha)]}$  as a curve in  $S^2 \subset R^3$ . Let  $\kappa = \kappa_\alpha^\alpha = e^{-\sigma}$  be the curvature of  $c$  as the curve in  $S^2$  and  $\tilde{\kappa} = \sqrt{\kappa^2 + 1}$  that of  $c$  as the curve in  $R^3$ . In the rest of this section, we take the arc length  $s$  as the parameter of  $c$  instead of  $v$ . To begin with, we have the following lemma:



LEMMA 5.2.

(1)  $\text{Length of } c = \int_0^T e^{\sigma/2} dv = \pi .$

(2)  $\int_0^\pi \kappa ds = \pi .$

(3)  $\int_0^\pi \tilde{\kappa} ds < 2\pi .$

PROOF. Since  $\|dc/dv\| = e^{\sigma/2}$ ,

$$\begin{aligned} \text{length of } c &= \int_0^T e^{\sigma/2} dv \\ &= 2 \int_{-\log \alpha}^{\log \alpha} \frac{e^{\sigma/2} d\sigma}{\sqrt{8(\alpha - \cosh \sigma)}} \quad (\text{by (4.4)}) \\ &= \pi , \end{aligned}$$

then (1) is proved.

Similarly, (2) is true because

$$\begin{aligned} \int_0^\pi \kappa ds &= \int_0^T e^{-\sigma} e^{\sigma/2} dv \\ &= 2 \int_{-\log \alpha}^{\log \alpha} \frac{e^{-\sigma/2} d\sigma}{\sqrt{8(\alpha - \cosh \sigma)}} \\ &= -2 \int_{\log \alpha}^{-\log \alpha} \frac{e^{\rho/2} d\rho}{\sqrt{8(\alpha - \cosh \rho)}} \\ &= \pi . \end{aligned}$$

Finally, by Lemma 5.2,

$$\begin{aligned} \int_0^\pi \tilde{\kappa} ds &= \int_0^\pi \sqrt{\kappa^2 + 1} ds \\ &< \int_0^\pi \kappa ds + \int_0^\pi ds \\ &= 2\pi , \end{aligned}$$

so (3) is proved. □

This lemma leads the following:

LEMMA 5.3. *If the curve  $c$  is closed with period  $k_\alpha$ -times that of the period of the metric  $e^{-\sigma/2}$ , then  $k_\alpha \geq 2$ .*

PROOF. If  $k_\alpha = 1$ , the total curvature of the closed curve  $c$  as a curve in  $R^3$  is

$$\int_0^\pi \tilde{\kappa} ds < 2\pi$$

by Lemma 5.1. On the other hand, by Fenchel's theorem [5], the total curvature of a closed space cannot be less than  $2\pi$ . This is impossible.  $\square$

Let  $e$  (resp.  $n$ ) be the unit tangent vector (resp. the unit normal vector) of  $c$  as a curve in  $S^2$ . So,  $(c(s), e(s), n(s))$  forms the moving frame of  $R^3$  along  $c$ . Define  $F(\alpha)$  to be the orthogonal matrix which changes the frame  $(c(0), e(0), n(0))$  to  $(c(\pi), e(\pi), n(\pi))$ . So  $F(\alpha)$  is a continuous curve in  $SO(3)$  parametrized by  $\alpha \in (1, \infty)$ .

Each orthogonal matrix  $A \in SO(3)$  is conjugate to a matrix

$$R(\theta) = \begin{pmatrix} \cos \theta & -\sin \theta & 0 \\ \sin \theta & \cos \theta & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}.$$

Let  $\theta(\alpha)$  be a continuous function such that  $F(\alpha)$  is conjugate to  $R(\theta(\alpha))$ . In terms of  $F$ , the curve  $c$  is closed with period  $k_\alpha$ -times that of the metric  $e^{\alpha/2}$  if and only if  $F(\alpha)^{k_\alpha}$  is the identity matrix. This condition is equivalent to

$$(5.1) \quad k_\alpha \theta(\alpha) \equiv 0 \pmod{2\pi}.$$

To prove Proposition 5.1, we see the behavior of the curve  $F(\alpha)$  when  $\alpha$  tends to 1 and  $\infty$ .

LEMMA 5.4.

$$(1) \quad \lim_{\alpha \downarrow 1} \theta(\alpha) = \sqrt{2}\pi.$$

$$(2) \quad \lim_{\alpha \uparrow \infty} \theta(\alpha) = \pi.$$

PROOF. The curve  $c$  converges to the small circle with radius  $1/\sqrt{2}$  in  $R^3$  as  $\alpha \downarrow 1$ .

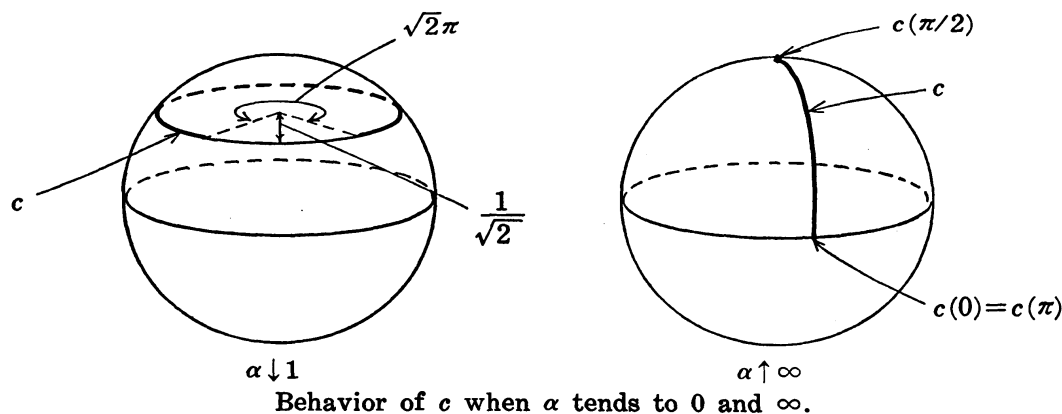


FIGURE 2

By Lemma 5.2, the length of  $c$  is  $\pi$  independent of  $\alpha$ , so the angle between  $(c(0), e(0), n(0))$  and  $(c(\pi), e(\pi), n(\pi))$  tends to  $\sqrt{2}\pi$  as  $\alpha \downarrow 1$  (Figure 2). Then (1) is true.

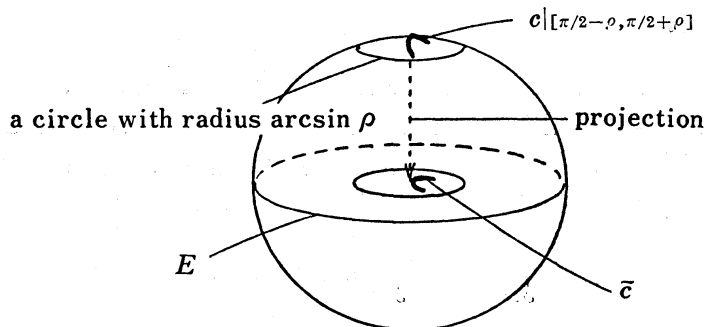


FIGURE 3

To prove (2), we consider  $c$  as a curve in  $R^3$  such that  $c(\pi/2)$  is the north pole  $(0, 0, 1)$  of the unit sphere, and  $E$  denotes the equator of the unit sphere as in Figure 3. Let  $\rho$  be a small positive number. So the curve  $c_0 = c|_{[0, \pi/2-\rho]}$  and  $c_1 = c|_{[\pi/2+\rho, \pi]}$  converge to the great circles in  $S^2$  with length  $\pi/2 - \rho$  as  $\alpha \uparrow \infty$  because  $\sigma$  tends to  $\infty$  and  $\kappa = e^{-\sigma}$  tends uniformly to 0.

Let  $\tilde{c}$  be the orthogonal projection of  $c|_{[\pi/2-\rho, \pi/2+\rho]}$  to the plane containing  $E$ , and  $\tilde{k}$  the total curvature of  $\tilde{c}$ . For sufficiently small  $\rho$ ,  $\tilde{k}$  is nearly equal to the total curvature of  $c|_{[\pi/2-\rho, \pi/2+\rho]}$ . Then by Lemma 5.2 and the fact that the curvature of  $c$  is concentrated in  $s = \pi/2$  as  $\alpha \uparrow \infty$ , we have

$$\lim_{\alpha \uparrow \infty} \tilde{k} = \pi + \delta(\rho),$$

where  $\lim_{\rho \downarrow 0} \delta(\rho) = 0$ . So the rotation number of  $\tilde{c}$  tends to  $1/2 + \delta'(\rho)$  as  $\alpha \uparrow \infty$ , where  $\lim_{\rho \downarrow 0} \delta' = 0$ .

Hence, the curve  $c$  converges to a curve consisting of two great arcs of length  $\pi/2$  which meet at north pole with angle  $\pi$ . This shows that  $\lim_{\alpha \uparrow \infty} \theta(\alpha) = \pi$  and (2) is proved. □

**PROOF OF PROPOSITION 5.1.** By Lemma 5.4, there exist countably many  $\alpha$ 's in  $(1, \infty)$  such that  $\theta(\alpha)/2\pi$  are rational numbers. For such  $\alpha$ , the lines of curvature  $c$  are closed in  $[0, k_\alpha\pi]$ . Moreover, by Lemma 5.3,  $k_\alpha \geq 2$ . □

**§ 6. Proof of non-embeddedness.**

In this section, we prove the last part of the main theorem. This

is the immediate consequence of the following proposition.

**PROPOSITION 6.1.** *If the curve  $c$  in the previous section is closed in  $S^2$  with period  $k$ -times that of its metric, where  $k \geq 2$ , then  $c$  must have a self-intersection.*

**PROOF.** Assume  $c$  has no self-intersection. So,  $c$  bounds a simply connected domain  $\Omega$  of  $S^2$  such that the normal vector field of  $c$  is the inward normal of  $\partial\Omega$ . By Gauss-Bonnet theorem for a domain of a surface [5], we have

$$\int_{\Omega} 1dv + \int_{\partial\Omega} \kappa ds = 2\pi ,$$

where  $dv$  is the canonical area element of  $S^2$ . On the other hand, the total curvature of  $\partial\Omega$  is

$$\int_{\partial\Omega} \kappa ds = k \int_0^\pi \kappa ds = k\pi ,$$

because of Lemma 5.2(3). Then,

$$\text{Area of } \Omega = \int_{\Omega} 1dv = (2-k)\pi \leq 0 .$$

This is impossible. □

This completes the proof of the main theorem.

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