Rhombic Cell Analysis. II. Application to the IRAS/PSCZ Catalogue

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Abstract

Rhombic cell analysis as outlined in the first paper of the present series is applied to samples of varying depths and limiting luminosities of the IRAS/PSCz Catalogue. Numerical indices are introduced to summarize essential information. Because of the discrete nature of the analysis and of the space distribution of galaxies, the indices for a given sample must be regarded as each having an irreducible scatter. Despite the scatter, the mean indices show remarkable variations across the samples. The underlying factor for the variations is shown to be the limiting luminosity rather than the sampling depth. As samples of more and more luminous galaxies are considered over a range of some 2.5 magnitudes (a factor of some 75 in space density), the morphology of the filled and empty regions defined by the galaxies degrades steadily towards insignificance, and the degrading is faster for the filled than the empty region.

1 INTRODUCTION

This is the second paper in the series “Rhombic Cell Analysis”. Here we apply the technique described in Paper I (Kiang 2003) to the IRAS/PSCz Catalogue (Saunders et al. 2000, ‘PSCz’ hereinafter). The wealth of data in PSCz has meant that we can now apply the analysis to various depths (Section 2), and simultaneously to various limiting luminosities, since PSCz is flux-limited. The method developed so far centers on two number distributions, one of $n_1$, the number of like neighboring cells to a given cell, and one of $\tau$, a two-suffixed topological type, the two suffices being the numbers of like and unlike neighbors. Here in Section 3 we introduce four numerical indices, $\eta$ on one hand, and $\chi_1$, $\chi_2$, $\chi_{21}$ on the other, intended to respectively summarise the most important characteristics of the two distributions. In Section 4 we shall point out an important circumstance in the practical application, namely, the $n_1$- and $\tau$-distributions depend rather sensitively on the precise location of the zero of the cells and that, as a consequence, each of the indices introduced above must be regarded as a random variable with a certain probability distribution. For each chosen sample of galaxies we consider a set of 16 independent zero offsets of the analysing cells and calculate the mean and standard deviation of the four indices. And we do this separately for the sets of filled cells and empty cells.
In Section 5 we plot the mean indices as functions of the sample depth, \( r_* \). Remarkable features are found in the curves and their interpretation concludes this paper.

2 THE IRAS/PSCz CATALOGUE

The IRAS/PSCz Catalogue (Saunders et al. 2000) is the most comprehensive redshift catalogue to date. It covers 84\% of the sky and contains about 15000 galaxies to a uniform \( \mu_{60} \) flux limit of 0.60 Jy. We counted 14669 galaxies with measured (positive) redshifts \( z \).

The 16\% of the sky not covered by PSCz (the “gaps”) consists of a large irregular zone of avoidance along the galactic equator, and two narrow stripes extending to high latitudes (Saunders et al., Fig. 4). For our purpose the gaps must first be filled with mock galaxies. We are most grateful to Dr Fabio Fontanot of Trieste for kindly providing us, before publication of the paper where it was used (Fontanot et al. 2003), with just such a list of 2808 mock galaxies, constructed according to a procedure given in (Branchini et al. 1999).

The Fontanot list gives only the galactic coordinates and the redshifts; but we shall also be needing flux values. As we only need a random selection from the distribution of fluxes in PSCz, and as the Fontanot list is ordered quite independently of PSCz, we simply assigned every fifth value in PSCz to the Fontanot list. This “Filled-out PSCz catalogue” of 14669 + 2808 = 17477 galaxies is the basic material for the present study.

We should point out that while a minor part of the data in the Fontanot list pertaining to the two narrow stripes were used in our work with the full weight (on an equal footing with the real PSCz data), the major part pertaining to the galactic zone of avoidance were used only in a diminished capacity (See Section 2.3). Similarly, the same diminished role is played by the small part of the PSCz data with \( |b| < 10^\circ \).

2.1 Nominal Distance and Luminosity

We now have an all-sky catalogue of 17477 galaxies, each with a flux value and a redshift value. The next thing we do is to convert the redshifts into distances. For our purpose we can simply use a “nominal” distance, given by

\[
r = \frac{cz}{100}(r \text{ in Mpc}, \, cz \text{ in km/s})
\]  

This is because the subject-matter of our analysis, the number distributions of \( n_1 \) and of \( \tau \), ultimately depend only on the numbers of galaxies located inside a given (rhombic) cell and inside its twelve neighboring cells, so if we adopt a certain cosmology and use sophisticated formulae (of comoving distance for the cells, and of luminosity distance for the galaxies), the effect of so doing on the \( n_1 \)- and \( \tau \)-distributions can be expected to be quite small, considering that PSCz only extends to \( z \sim 0.1 \).

With \( r \) so defined, we evaluate, for each galaxy, its usual rectangular coordinates \( x = r \cos b \cos l, y = r \cos b \sin l, z = r \sin b \), and then, together with its
flux \( f \), its (nominal) luminosity \( L \) defined simply as \( L = f \cdot r^2 \) (other authors may prefer to add a factor of \( 4\pi \) here), or

\[
\log L = \log f + 2 \log r ,
\]

where \( f \) is in Jy, and \( r \) is in Mpc.

### 2.2 Distance and luminosity limited Samples

In Paper I, the analysis was applied to the CfA catalogue, regarded as a single sample. At the end of that paper, the hope was expressed that with larger survey results becoming available, much finer analysis can be made. The PSCz has provided just such an opportunity.

PSCz is flux-limited. This means that within a distance-limited sample taken from PSCz, the coverage in luminosity is not uniform: it decreases with increasing distance. For uniformity, then, we should not take all the galaxies up to a certain distance \( r^* \), but only those with luminosities greater than the corresponding limiting luminosity \( L^* \), given by

\[
\log L^* = \log 0.60 + 2 \log r^* .
\]

Thus, each basic unit sample of our analysis satisfies two conditions, \( r < r^* \) and \( L > L^* \). In the \( \log L \sim 2 \log r \) plane, such a sample is represented by a rectangular box with its lower right corner on the limiting diagonal. Such boxes generally overlap.

Our analysis is applied to 8 such samples (Table 1). Each sample is identified by its limiting distance \( r^* \), e.g., S-75, S-150, S-250 (Column 1). Their defining limiting luminosities are listed in Column 2. The eight samples cover a range of 0.52 dex in \( r^* \), and a range of 1.04 dex (or 2.6 magnitudes) in \( L^* \).

| Sample | \( \log L^* \) | \( a_0 \) | \( N_{bc} = N_{ec} \) | \( a_{0,\text{min}} - a_{0,\text{max}} \) | \( \rho \) (10\(^{-6}\) Mpc\(^{-3}\)) |
|--------|---------------|---------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| S-75   | 3.53          | 7.173   | 780            | 7.072–7.296     | 1441.0         |
| S-100  | 3.78          | 9.140   | 948            | 8.970–9.140     | 631.0          |
| S-125  | 3.97          | 11.137  | 1020           | 11.034–11.204   | 301.0          |
| S-150  | 4.13          | 13.856  | 925            | 13.730–14.220   | 150.0          |
| S-175  | 4.26          | 16.762  | 797            | 16.393–16.762   | 84.9           |
| S-200  | 4.38          | 19.750  | 737            | 19.340–19.982   | 49.3           |
| S-225  | 4.48          | 22.970  | 660            | 22.898–23.340   | 29.4           |
| S-250  | 4.57          | 27.620  | 492            | 27.070–27.620   | 18.3           |

### 2.3 An Illustrative Example

We take S-150 to illustrate the various steps in our calculation. First, to improve homogeneity of data, we define “actual used cells” by imposing, beside the condition \( r < 150 \), two further restrictions on the coordinates of the cell centres. 1) To avoid the large uncertainties in the inferred distances of the galaxies in our local “swimming pool”, we require \( r > 25 \). 2) To reduce undue influence of the mock galaxies in the galactic zone of avoidance, we require all
the cells should be completely above latitude $10^\circ$. Now, our cells which can each be imagined as consisting of a cube of sides $a_0$ with its six faces covered by six pyramids of height $a_0/2$, are arranged along the galactic coordinate axes, so the second condition reads,

$$|z| > z_{\text{lim}} + a_0,$$

where $z_{\text{lim}} = r \sin 10^\circ$.

Thus, of the mock galaxies below $10^\circ$ galactic latitudes, we made use of only those located in cells that share a common face with some cells completely inside the boundary, and then only in so far as they contribute to the definition of the like/unlike status of the common face. This remark applies also to those PSCz galaxies below latitude $10^\circ$.

With respect to the “outer” boundary of $r = 150$ in the present example of S-150, the need is obviously not so compelling that the actual used cells should be completely inside that boundary;—to require this would mean a substantial drop in the number of usable cells. So we define usable cells as those whose centres are within the $r = 150$ limit. Then our usable cells on the boundary will have parts outside that boundary, and moreover, the status of the “boundary” faces will further depend on the presence or absence of galaxies inside cells in the next shell out. It is easy to show that, for a given $a_0$, if we consider all galaxies to a distance of $150 + (\sqrt{2}+1)a_0$, then we will have included all relevant galaxies.

We find, by trial and error, the value of $a_0$ that will give equal numbers (or as equal as possible) of filled cells and empty cells, $N_{fc}$ and $N_{ec}$ of the actual usable cells. It is understandable that the two numbers are highly discontinuous functions of $a_0$, and often a coarse adjustment succeeds where a fine-tuning fails. In the present case we found that $a_0 = 13.856$ succeeded in giving $N_{fc} = N_{ec} = 925$ (Table 1, Cols. 3,4).

We can now summarise the various steps in this particular example of S-150. We start with the ‘filled-out PSCz catalogue’ of 17477 galaxies, and pick out those with $\log L \geq 4.13$ (Table 1, Line 4, Column 2). Then, for each trial value of $a_0$, we determine the filled/empty status of all the cells with centres out to distance $150 + \sqrt{2}a_0$. Then, for the “actual used cells” with centres satisfying the three conditions, $25 \leq r \leq 150$, and the inequality (4), we count the number of filled cells, $N_{fc}$, and the number of empty cells, $N_{ec}$. We vary $a_0$ until $N_{fc}$ and $N_{ec}$ are equal (or as nearly equal as possible). Then for this optimal value of $a_0$, we finally obtain the object of our analysis, the separate $n_1$- and $r$-distributions for the filled and empty cells.

The actual results in the present example are displayed in Figs. 1 and 2. They can be compared with the Figures 1 and 2 of Paper I. The final results of the present paper will be based on $8 \times 16 = 128$ such pairs of figures.

The values of the optimal $a_0$ for all the eight samples are given in Column 3 of Table 1. It happened that in all cases we had $N_{fc} = N_{ec}$. These equal values are listed in Column 4.

3 Statistical Indices
Fig. 1 The $n_1$-distribution of the Illustrative Example. Histogram is the binomial distribution for the case of pure random mixture of filled and empty cells.
Fig. 2  The $\tau$-distribution of the Illustrative Example. Histogram corresponds to the case of pure random mixture of filled and empty cells
Our aim being comparison between the filled and empty regions of the universe based on their \( n_1 \)- and \( \tau \)-distributions, it is obviously advantageous if we can summarise the most salient features of the distributions by some numerical indices. We have singled out one index, dubbed the “flocking index”, for the \( n_1 \)-distribution and three “\( \chi \)-type” indices for the \( \tau \)-distribution.

### 3.1 The Flocking Index \( \eta \)

It was pointed out in Paper I (Section 3.2.1) that, because of the imposed condition \( N_{fc} = N_{ec} \), we must use some function of the observed \( n_1 \)-frequencies other than the mean value \( \langle n_1 \rangle \) as the “flocking index” \( \eta \) that quantifies the degree to which cells of the same kind (filled or empty) flock together.

Let us first rationalize the \( n_1 \)-distribution as follows: (i) We re-center the distribution at 0, i.e., we use a new independent variable, \( k = n_1 - 6, \) \( k = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2 \cdots, \pm 6 \). (ii) Because the frequency in the two end boxes \( (k = \pm 6) \) is usually very small, we put it into the next box, and regard the combined frequency as located at the “binomial” mean of the two, so now we have the rationalised distribution \( N(k) \), defined for \( k = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \pm 3, \pm 4, \pm 5, 228 \).

Now, consider the five differences, \( d_k \equiv N(|k|) - N(-|k|), |k| = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 228 \). Naturally, we would want our \( \eta \) to be positive when the \( d_k \) are generally more positive than negative; however, a straight sum of the five \( d_k \) would not be proper: they should each first be standardized by their expected random error. It seems reasonable, as a first approximation, to regard \( N(|k|) \) and \( N(-|k|) \) as two independent Poisson variables; then the variance of their difference would just be equal to their sum. Hence we standardize each difference by the square root of their sum, thus, \( D(k) \equiv (N(|k|) - N(-|k|))/\sqrt{N(|k|) + N(-|k|)} \). But a straight sum of the \( D(k) \) still does not seem quite right. Recalling the meaning of \( k \), it seems reasonable that these standardized differences should each be given a weight equal to \( k \). Thus, we finally arrive at our adopted formula for the flocking index \( \eta \):

\[
\eta = \frac{\sum kD(k)}{\sum k}, \quad k = 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 228.
\]

In words, \( \eta \) is a weighted average of standardized difference between the observed frequencies at equal and opposite distances from the centre of the \( n_1 \)-distribution, standardized with the expected random error of the difference, and weighted according to the distance from the centre. Note, the observed central frequency at \( k = 0 \) (or \( n_1 = 6 \)) does not enter into the calculation of \( \eta \).

### 3.2 The Three \( \chi \)-type Indices

Our \( \tau \)-distribution, being the number distribution of a two-parametered variable \( \tau(m_1, m_2) \), does not lend itself to be similarly summarised by a single statistic. However, as was pointed out in Paper I, at the present stage of development of the rhombic cell analysis, we should perhaps concentrate on just 2 of the entries, namely, the two pertaining to \( \tau(2,1) \) and \( \tau(1,2) \), for these are respective signatures of one-ply strings and monolayers (Paper I, 3.2.2). Writing
for short, the observed frequency of $\tau(2,1)$ as $N(2,1)$, and its expected frequency (expected on the assumption of a thorough mixture of filled and empty cells) as $E(2,1)$, we define statistic

$$\chi_1 = \frac{(N(2,1) - E(2,1))}{\sqrt{E(2,1)}},$$

(6)

as a measure of the degree to which the observed frequency of one-ply string cells exceeds its random expectation.

Similarly, we define statistic

$$\chi_2 = \frac{(N(1,2) - E(1,2))}{\sqrt{E(1,2)}},$$

(7)

in regard to the observed frequency of monolayer cells.

We have found it useful to introduce a third statistic that quantities the difference $N(1,2) - N(2,1)$. Regarding the two as independent random variables, the proper standardized difference is

$$\chi_{21} = \frac{(N(1,2) - N(2,1))}{\sqrt{N(1,2) + N(2,1)}},$$

(8)

which can be taken as a measure of the excess of “sheet cells” over “string cells”.

4 ZERO OFFSETS OF THE GRID OF CELLS

The present, more detailed application of rhombic cell analysis revealed a most important fact, which had no occasion of emerging in the preliminary application reported in Paper I. Namely, the $n_1$- and $\tau$- distributions are highly sensitive to the exact placing of the grid of rhombic cells, that is, to the zero offset. To explain, recall that our rhombic cells are defined in the following manner: space is first partitioned into a three-dimensional chessboard of black and white cubes of sides $a_0$, all the white cubes are each cut into six pyramids, and a rhombic cell consists of a black cube with six white pyramids stuck on its faces. The centre of the rhombic cell coincides with the centre of the black cube. We label the cells by integer triplets $(i,j,k)$, with $i, j, k = 0, \pm 1, \pm 2, \cdots$, subject to $i + j + k = 0 \mod(2)$. We imagine the cells to form a rigid 3-d frame. We start our calculations by placing the centre of our zeroth cell (0,0,0) at galactic coordinates (0,0,0). What we found was that if we displace our entire grid of cells by an amount up to and including one unit of $a_0$, in any combination of the three directions, then the resulting $n_1$- and $\tau$- distributions will generally be different, sometimes greatly so.

Now, the maximum displacement is one unit of $a_0$ either along one of the three axes, or along all three axes, (but NOT along two of the axes, which would reproduce the original grid). We denote this maximum displacement by (1,1,1), and the original grid by (0,0,0).

Let us now consider displacements involving half-units of $a_0$, either positive or negative, in either 1, 2, or 3 of the 3 directions. There are altogether $3 \times 3 \times 3 - 1 = 26$ such displacements or offsets. But not all 26 are independent: some reproduce the same displacement of the grid. More precisely, the same
displacement is obtained if we reverse the signs of any two non-zero displace-
ments, e.g., the displacements or offsets (+,0,-) and (-,0,+) are duplicates of
each other, and so are (+,+,+) and (-,+,+), and so on. In sum, 12 out of the 26
are duplicates, and 14 are independents. \(^{1}\) Adding the original grid (0,0,0)
and the single whole-unit displacement (1,1,1), we have a total of 16 independent
displacements or zero offsets.

Of course, so far we have been considering only displacements that involve
half-units of \(a_0\). If, for example, we consider displacements involving quarter-
units of \(a_0\), the number of independent displacements will then be much greater.

| Table 2 | Smallest and Largest Values Among the 16 Independent Offsets |
|---------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sample  | \(\log L_*\) | \(t/e\) | \(\eta\) min | \(\eta\) max | \(\chi_{21}\) min | \(\chi_{21}\) max |
|---------|---------------|--------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| S- 100  | 3.78          | f      | 2.12        | 3.63        | 3.14            | 7.40            |
|         | e             |        | 2.81        | 4.23        | 2.80            | 5.80            |
| S- 200  | 4.38          | f      | -1.17       | 0.54        | -2.96           | 2.96            |
|         | e             |        | -0.57       | 1.56        | -0.92           | 2.60            |

Each displacement or offset calls for a new evaluation of the optimal \(a_0\). We
list, in Column (5) of Table 1, the largest and smallest \(a_0\) among the 16 offsets
for each of the considered samples. Each fresh value of \(a_0\) results in fresh \(n_1\)-
and \(\tau\)-distributions, and hence in fresh values of the indices \(\eta, \chi_1, \chi_2, \chi_{21}\). Just
to illustrate the effect of the offsets, we display in Table 2, the smallest and
largest values of \(\eta\) and \(\chi_{21}\) found among the 16 offsets, for the two samples
S-100 and S-200, and for the filled and empty cells on separate lines marked “f”
and “e”. We note that, in each case, the range is quite large.

### 4.1 Irreducible Scatter

On reflection, we should not be surprised by the fact that displacing the
grid of cells slightly may result in drastically different \(n_1\)- and \(\tau\)- distributions.
Consider, for example, two galaxies that are close together in space. Then,
for one particular placement of the grid, the two may belong to one and same
cell, while slightly shifting the grid may put them in two different cells; and
the \(n_1\)- and \(\tau\)-distributions ultimately depend simply on how many galaxies
go into which cells. We must now recognize the following fact of life: because
of the ultimately discontinuous nature of the galaxy distribution in space, and
because of the way the rhombic cell analysis works, a given sample of galaxies
does not correspond to some one “true” value of an index, rather, it corresponds
to a whole probability distribution of the index. In other words, each index has
an irreducible scatter represented by some probability distribution, and the 16
values we get from the 16 independent offsets must be regarded as so many
independent random samples taken from that parent distribution. And the
most we can do is to estimate the mean and standard deviation (s.d.) of the
parent distributions. Assuming normal distribution, the unbiased estimates of

\(^{1}\) The 14 independent offsets can be taken as (0,0,0), (0,0,+), (0,+0), (0,-0), (+,0,0), (-,0,0),
(0,+,-), (0,+0), (+,0,-), (+,0,+), (+,-0), (+,+,0), (+,-,+) and (+,-,-).
the mean and s.d. are given by the usual formulae, 2.

\[ \langle x \rangle = \frac{\sum x_i}{n}, \quad \sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x_i - \langle x \rangle)^2}{n-1}}, \quad (n = 16). \quad (9) \]

Here, \( x \) stands for any one of the four indices and the summation is over the 16 observed values \( x_i \). We emphasize that, here, \( \sigma \) is an unbiased estimate of the s.d. of the hypothetical parent distribution; it is NOT the s.d. of the sample mean \( \langle x \rangle \), usually known as “s.e.” (standard error). The latter would be equal to \( \sigma/\sqrt{n} \), and so could be made very small by considering much larger values of \( n \) pertaining to displacements at smaller steps: its size thus largely depending on some man-made circumstance, it is inappropriate as an indicator of some objective scatter. On the other hand, the \( \sigma \) defined in (9), is an estimate of the irreducible scatter.

Our results, then, consist of the estimated mean and s.d. of the hypothetical distributions of the four indices, \( \eta, \chi_1, \chi_2, \chi_{21} \), separately for the filled and empty cells of the eight selected distance/luminosity-limited samples. The results are listed in Table 3.

| Sample log \( L^* \) | \( t/e \) | \( \eta \) mean | s.d. | \( \chi_1 \) mean | s.d. | \( \chi_2 \) mean | s.d. | \( \chi_{21} \) mean | s.d. |
|-------------------|---------|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|----------------|-----|
|                |         |                |     |                |     |                |     |                |     |
| S - 75          | f        | 4.21           | 0.37| -4.49          | 0.91| 3.00           | 0.78| 5.46           | 1.02|
| e                | 4.18     | 0.46           |     | -4.11          | 0.80| 0.95           | 0.85| 3.80           | 0.78|
| S- 100          | f        | 2.84           | 0.40| -3.97          | 0.72| 3.34           | 1.34| 3.37           | 1.09|
| e                | 3.51     | 0.41           |     | -3.54          | 0.69| 2.17           | 0.81| 4.26           | 0.84|
| S- 125          | f        | 1.70           | 0.48| -2.62          | 1.34| 1.83           | 0.70| 2.75           | 0.96|
| e                | 3.06     | 0.40           |     | -2.58          | 1.11| 2.18           | 1.22| 3.38           | 1.46|
| S- 150          | f        | 1.39           | 0.54| -2.02          | 0.85| 1.38           | 0.83| 2.29           | 1.13|
| e                | 1.79     | 0.48           |     | -2.21          | 0.82| 1.68           | 0.78| 2.72           | 0.79|
| S- 175          | f        | 0.72           | 0.54| -0.68          | 1.15| 0.32           | 0.83| 0.72           | 1.07|
| e                | 1.78     | 0.35           |     | -2.01          | 0.73| 1.16           | 0.92| 2.24           | 0.96|
| S- 200          | f        | -0.40          | 0.55| 0.29           | 1.19| -0.17          | 1.03| -0.32          | 1.34|
| e                | 0.77     | 0.53           |     | -0.38          | 0.77| 0.46           | 0.64| 0.61           | 0.76|
| S- 225          | f        | -0.73          | 0.51| 0.22           | 0.98| -0.66          | 0.94| -0.51          | 0.66|
| e                | 1.13     | 0.58           |     | -0.64          | 0.93| 0.92           | 1.02| 1.39           | 0.80|
| S- 250          | f        | -0.31          | 0.57| 0.04           | 0.90| -0.08          | 0.91| -0.14          | 1.02|
| e                | 1.08     | 0.55           |     | -0.85          | 1.07| 0.65           | 0.84| 1.12           | 1.14|

5 RESULTS INTERPRETATION

5.1 Formal Results

Remarkable trends emerge when the mean indices of Table 3 are plotted as functions of the sample depth \( r_* \). See Figures 3, 4, 5. In all the figures, filled triangles refer to filled cells, and open symbols, to empty cells. The error bars mark one unit of \( \sigma \), the s.d. of the parent distribution defined at (9). In all cases, a trend is unmistakable despite the fact that each index for a given sample has quite a scatter as indicated by the size of the error bars.

\[ ^2 \text{In a more strict notation, } \langle x \rangle \text{ would be written as } \hat{\mu}, \text{ and } \sigma, \text{ as } \hat{\sigma} \]
5.1.1 The $\langle \eta \rangle \sim r_\star$ Curve

Fig. 3 shows the mean $\eta$ versus sample depth curve, separately for the filled cells (filled triangles) and empty cells (open squares). There are two remarkable features. 1) Both curves start with definitely positive values at the smallest sample depth (75 Mpc), then both steadily fall with increasing depth. By 200 Mpc or so, the “filled curve” is marginally below the zero level of nil flocking, while the “empty curve”, marginally above. 2) While both curves fall steadily, the empty curve remains consistently above the filled curve. Thus, for both the filled region and the empty region, there is a definite degree of likes flocking together at smaller depths, but the flocking decreases to insignificance around 200 Mpc. And, at any depth, the tendency of likes flocking together is stronger for the empty cells than for the filled cells.

Incidentally, for the single (inhomogeneous) CfA sample studied in Paper I, we have $\langle \eta \rangle = 2.09$ for the filled cells, and 4.02 for the empty cells. These can be seen to be entirely consistent with the curves of Fig. 1 at depths 75 $\sim$ 100 and with the last statement.

5.1.2 The Three $\langle \chi \rangle \sim r_\star$ Curves

Figs. 4, 5, 6 show how each of the three $\chi$-indices for the $\tau$-distribution varies with the sample depth. First, Fig. 4 which refers to $\chi_2$, the degree to which the
observed frequency of cells belonging to thin sheets (strictly, monolayers) exceed the random expectations (Eq. (7)).

Fig. 4 shows: at small depths, both the filled and empty curves are significantly positive, with the filled lying definitely above the empty. This last feature is consistent with a conclusion reached in Paper I, namely, the filled cells, but not the empty cells, show a tendency of occurring in sheets. In fact, we find, for the CfA data, \( \langle \chi_2 \rangle = +2.38 \) (filled), and -0.92 (empty). As the sample depth increases, both curves fall, the filled curve falling faster, so that at depths around 200 Mpc and beyond, the filled curve becomes entirely non-significant, while the empty curve remains marginally significant. The situation at large depths mimics the behaviour of the \( \eta \)-curves of Fig. 3; note, however, the larger error bars in Fig. 4.

Next, we consider the mean \( \chi_1 \) versus depth curves shown in Fig. 5. Recall that \( \chi_1 \) is a measure of the excess above random of the observed frequency of cells belonging to thin (one-ply) strings (Eq. (6)).

The \( \chi_1 \) curves look like some mirror images of the \( \chi_2 \) curves: they start significantly below the zero level and gradually rise to reach it around 200 Mpc, with the filled curve first below, then eventually above the empty curve. The values we found for the CfA data are \( \langle \chi_1 \rangle = -3.81 \) (filled) and -3.28 (empty), entirely consistent with the initial portions of the curves of Fig. 5.
Fig. 5 Mean $\chi_1$ as a function of the sample depth. Same symbols as in Fig. 3.
The contrary behaviors of $\chi_2$ and $\chi_1$ suggested to us that an index for their difference may be of interest. Hence the index $\chi_{21}$ defined at (8). It could be called the “sheet-string differential index”: it measures the excess of cells belonging to thin sheets over those belonging to thin strings, with no reference to their common random expectations.

The variation of mean $\chi_{21}$ with the sample depth is shown in Fig. 6. For the filled cells, we see that there is a considerable excess of “sheet cells” over “string cells” at small sample depths. As the sample depth increases, this excess becomes less and less, and eventually vanishes altogether at around 200 Mpc. For the empty cells, there is also a definite, though smaller, excess of “sheet cells” over “string cells” at the start, but the decrease with increasing depth is gentler in this case, such that even at the largest sample depths, there is still a small residual excess. Except for a short stretch at the beginning, the empty curve lies consistently above the filled curve, reminiscent of the $\langle \eta \rangle$-curves of Fig. 3.

5.2 Interpretation of Results

So far we have described the trends of the indices as variations with the sample depth, or the limiting distance of the sample. But this is for verbal convenience only. We have throughout this paper emphasized that each of our
distance-limited samples is also a luminosity-limited sample, that as we consider
deeper and deeper samples we are also considering samples of more and more
luminous galaxies. Indeed, for the X-axis of our last four figures, we could
equally have used the limiting luminosity instead of the limiting distance. So
we must now address the question, “which of the two, limiting distance or
limiting luminosity, is the the parameter the morphology correlates with?”

This question is easily settled. All we have to do is to consider the intersection
of two of our samples, and see how its results compare with those of the
two original samples. We chose the intersection of S-100 and S-200. We call it
S*-100, that is, the sample S*-100 has the same limiting distance as S-100 (100
Mpc) and the same limiting luminosity as S-200 (log $L_*$ = 4.38).

Table 4 compares the mean indices from S*-100 with those from S-100 and
S-200 lifted from Table 3, separately for the filled regions (upper three lines)
and the empty regions (lower three lines). It is clear that the results of S*-100
are much closer to those of S-200 than to those of S-100: the parameter that the
morphology correlates with is not the sample depth; it is the limiting luminosity.

We must now re-state the empirical results obtained in the present study in
the following terms. The morphology of the filled and empty regions defined by a
given distance-and-luminosity-limited sample of galaxies is essentially a function
of the limiting luminosity. As we consider samples of more and more luminous
galaxies at ever decreasing space densities, the morphology degrades: the degree
of like cells flocking together steadily decreases and so does the excess of cells
belonging to thin sheets over those belonging to thin strings. And the degrading
is generally stronger for the filled than for the empty region, so that one could
say, at any luminosity level, the universe is always more like loose collections
of lakes in a land than groups of islands and archipelagos in an ocean.

Recall that our luminosity is based on infrared flux and that its definiti-
on at (3) is purely nominal, it may be useful for future comparisons with results
from other datasets to introduce a more objective parameter than the limiting
luminosity $L_*$. We propose the space number density of galaxies more luminous
than $L_*$, to be denoted by $\rho(L_*)$. This quantity is easily calculated: for it is
simply the number of galaxies in the “filled-out PSCz Catalogue” (Section 2)
with $r < r_*$ and $L > L_*$, divided by $(4/3)\pi r_*^3$. The results (in galaxies per
(100 Mpc)$^3$) are given in the last column of Table 1.

5.3 A Density Effect or a Random Selection Effect?

It was suggested to us by the Referee that we should look into the possibility
that the observed variation in the indices across the samples be a density effect
(since, e.g., S-200 has a smaller density than S-100) and that, for testing this possibility, we should use a random sample of S-100, labelled S**-100, with the same number of galaxies as S*-100.

As might be expected, the resulting indices varied much from one random selection to the next. So we took 10 such random selections. From now on, for simplicity, we shall restrict the discussion to one of the indices, and we choose the flocking index \( \eta \) for the filled region. We found, for the 10 random selections, \( \eta \) ranges from -0.85 to +0.45, with mean -0.24 and standard deviation 0.33. Let us denote this mean value by \( \eta^{**} \); we have \( \eta^{**} = -0.24 \). This value is significantly smaller than the mean \( \eta \) for S-100, (which we now simply write as \( \eta_1 \) (from Table 3, \( \eta_1 = 2.63 \)).

Before interpreting this result \( \eta^{**} \ll \eta_1 \), we should recall the reasoning behind our interpretation of a previous, formally similar inequality, we mean the inequality \( \eta^* \ll \eta_1 \), where \( \eta^* \) stands for the mean \( \eta \) for the sample S*-100 (according to Table 3, \( \eta^* = 0.02 \)). And we interpreted this latter inequality as a luminosity effect because S*-100 simply consists of the more luminous members of S-100. Now, S**-100 is generated out of S-100 quite differently: we just pick out a certain prescribed number of its members, purely at random, without any regard to any individual properties. Hence, just as we interpreted the inequality \( \eta^* \ll \eta_1 \) as a luminosity effect, we must now interpret the inequality \( \eta^{**} \ll \eta_1 \) as an effect of random selection.

In fact, it seems quite plausible that any random selection of a population will be less “structured” than the population itself. Let us quantify the “degree of structuredness” by the ratio \( F_2/F_1 \), with \( F_1 \) the fraction of isolated members and \( F_2 \) the fraction of members belonging to groups of 2 or more. Then it seems obvious that if we make a random selection of the population, with each member, whether isolated or belonging to a group, having the same chance of being selected, then the resulting \( F_2/F_1 \) will be smaller. This point that random selection destroys structure does not seem to have been noticed before in the literature; it provides a natural interpretation of our present finding, \( \eta^{**} \ll \eta_1 \).

**Brief Summary** The present study carries out one of the programs outlined at the end of Paper I, the application of rhombic cell analysis to a large size data. But more has been done. Statistical indices, particularly a “flocking index”, have been introduced to summarize much of the essential information and, after emphasising the discrete nature of the analysis and of the space distribution of galaxies, these indices for any given sample of galaxies are shown each to have an irreducible scatter. Despite the scatter, the indices showed remarkable variation with the limiting luminosity of the sample, leading to the conclusion stated above. It is planned to carry out further programs mentioned in Paper I, particularly the raising of the threshold of the filled cell.

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