PROJECTIONS IN NONCOMMUTATIVE TORI
AND GABOR FRAMES

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Abstract. We describe a connection between two seemingly different problems: (a) the construction of projections in noncommutative tori and (b) the construction of tight Gabor frames for $L^2(\mathbb{R})$. The present investigation relies on interpretation of projective modules over noncommutative tori in terms of Gabor analysis. The main result demonstrates that Rieffel’s condition on the existence of projections in noncommutative tori is equivalent to the Wexler-Raz biorthogonality relations for tight Gabor frames. Therefore we are able to invoke results on the existence of Gabor frames in the construction of projections in noncommutative tori. In particular, the projection associated with a Gabor frame generated by a Gaussian turns out to be Boca’s projection. Our approach to Boca’s projection allows us to characterize the range of existence of Boca’s projection. The presentation of our main result provides a natural approach to the Wexler-Raz biorthogonality relations in terms of Hilbert $C^*$-modules over noncommutative tori.

1. Introduction

Projections in $C^*$-algebras and von Neumann algebras are of great relevance for the exploitation of its structures. Von Neumann algebras contain an abundance of projections. The question of existence of projections in a $C^*$-algebra is a nontrivial task and the answer to this question has many important consequences, e.g. for the $K$-theory of $C^*$-algebras. Therefore many contributions to $C^*$-algebras deal with the existence and construction of projections in various classes of $C^*$-algebras. In the present investigation we focus on the construction of projections in noncommutative tori $A_\theta$ for a real number $\theta$. Recall that $A_\theta$ is the universal $C^*$-algebra generated by two unitaries $U_1$ and $U_2$ which satisfy the commutation relation

$$U_2 U_1 = e^{2\pi i \theta} U_1 U_2.$$  \hfill (1)

In the seminal paper [30], Rieffel constructed projections for noncommutative tori $A_\theta$ with $\theta$ irrational and drew some consequences for the $K$-theory of $A_\theta$, e.g. that the projections in $A_\theta$ generate $K_0(A_\theta)$.

The main goal of this study is to show that Rieffel’s construction of projections in noncommutative tori is intimately related to the existence of Gabor frames for
A Gabor system is a collection of functions $\mathcal{G}(g, \Lambda) = \{\pi(\lambda)g : \lambda \in \Lambda\}$ in $L^2(\mathbb{R})$, where $g$ is a function in $L^2(\mathbb{R})$, $\Lambda$ is a lattice in $\mathbb{R}^2$, and $\pi(\lambda)g$ is the time-frequency shift by $\lambda \in \Lambda$ of $g$. For $z = (x, \omega)$ in $\mathbb{R}^2$ we denote by $\pi(z) = M_\omega T_x$ the time-frequency shift, where $T_x$ denotes the translation operator $T_x g(t) = g(t-x)$ and $M_\omega$ denotes the modulation operator $M_\omega g(t) = e^{2\pi i \omega \cdot t} g(t)$. A Gabor system $\mathcal{G}(g, \Lambda)$ is a Gabor frame for $L^2(\mathbb{R})$ if there exist $A, B > 0$ such that

$$A\|f\|^2 \leq \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} |\langle f, \pi(\lambda)g \rangle|^2 \leq B\|f\|^2$$

holds for all $f \in L^2(\mathbb{R})$. The field of Gabor analysis is a branch of time-frequency analysis that has its origins in the seminal paper [12] of the Nobel laureate D. Gabor. We refer the interested reader to [13] for an excellent introduction to Gabor analysis.

Gabor frames $\mathcal{G}(g, \mathbb{Z} \times \theta \mathbb{Z})$ are intimately related to noncommutative tori $\mathcal{A}_\theta$. Namely the two unitaries $U_1 = T_1$ and $U_2 = M_\theta$ provide a faithful representation of $\mathcal{A}_\theta$ on $\ell^2(\mathbb{Z}^2)$, because $T_1$ and $M_\theta$ satisfy the commutation relation from (1):

$$M_\theta T_1 = e^{2\pi i \theta} T_1 M_\theta.$$  

The construction of projections in [30] relies on the existence of a $C^*$-algebra $\mathcal{B}$ that is Morita-Rieffel equivalent to $\mathcal{A}_\theta$ through an equivalence bimodule $\mathcal{A}_\theta V \mathcal{B}$. In [2] and [30] Connes and Rieffel determined the class of $C^*$-algebras that are Rieffel-Morita equivalent to $\mathcal{A}_\theta$. Most notably the opposite algebra of $\mathcal{A}_{1/\theta}$ is Morita-Rieffel equivalent to $\mathcal{A}_\theta$. In [21, 22] we were able to link this important result with Gabor analysis, which allows us to interpret Rieffel’s condition on the existence of projections in $\mathcal{A}_\theta$ as the Wexler-Raz duality biorthogonality relations for tight Gabor frames.

The Wexler-Raz duality biorthogonality relations were first discussed in the finite-dimensional setting [34]. The extension of the results in [34] to the infinite-dimensional setting was the main impetus of several groups of mathematicians in time-frequency analysis and it led to the development of the duality theory of Gabor analysis [15, 16, 22]. We follow the work of Janssen in [16], since it provides the most natural link to Rieffel’s work on projective modules over noncommutative tori [31].

The projections in $\mathcal{A}_\theta$ generated by Gaussians were studied by Boca in [1]. Manin showed that Boca’s projections are quantum theta functions [26, 27] and a better understanding of these projections is of great relevance for Manin’s real multiplication program [26]. Recently we presented a time-frequency approach to quantum theta functions in [23].

The paper is organized as follows: In Section 2 we present our approach to equivalence bimodules between noncommutative tori and its link to Gabor analysis. We continue with a discussion of Rieffel’s projections in noncommutative tori and prove our main results in Section 3. In the final section we extend the results of Section 3 to the setting of higher-dimensional noncommutative tori.

2. Projective modules over noncommutative tori

In this section we present the construction of projective modules over noncommutative tori [2, 31], its interpretation in terms of Gabor analysis and its extension demonstrated in [22].
2.1. Basics on noncommutative tori. We start with the observation that \( z \mapsto \pi(z) \) is a projective representation of \( \mathbb{R}^2 \) on \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \); i.e. we have

\[
\pi(z)\pi(z') = e^{2\pi i x \cdot \eta} \pi(z + z') \quad \text{for} \quad z = (x, \omega), z' = (y, \eta) \quad \text{in} \quad \mathbb{R}^2.
\]

We denote the 2-cocycle in the preceding equation by \( c(z, z') = e^{2\pi i y \cdot \omega - x \cdot \eta} \). The relation in (4) relies on the canonical commutation relation for \( M_\omega \) and \( T_x \):

\[
M_\omega T_x = e^{2\pi i x \cdot \omega} T_x M_\omega \quad \text{for} \quad z = (x, \omega) \in \mathbb{R}^2.
\]

An application of (5) to the left-hand side of (4) gives a commutation relation for time-frequency shifts:

\[
\pi(z)\pi(z') = c_{\text{symp}}(z, z')\pi(z')\pi(z), \quad z = (x, \omega), z' = (y, \eta) \in \mathbb{R}^2,
\]

where \( c_{\text{symp}}(z, z') = c(z, z')\overline{c(z', z)} = e^{2\pi i (y \omega - x \eta)} \) denotes the symplectic bicharacter. The term in the exponential of \( c_{\text{symp}} \) is the standard symplectic form \( \Omega \) of \( z = (x, \omega) \) and \( z' = (y, \eta) \).

For our purpose it is useful to view the noncommutative torus \( \mathcal{A}_\theta \) as the twisted group \( C^* \)-algebra \( C^*(\Lambda, c) \) of a lattice \( \Lambda \) in \( \mathbb{R}^2 \). Recall that \( C^*(\Lambda, c) \) is the enveloping \( C^* \)-algebra of the involutive twisted group algebra \( \ell^1(\Lambda, c) \), which is \( \ell^1(\Lambda) \) with twisted convolution \( \ast \) as multiplication and \( \ast \) as involution. More precisely, let \( a = (a(\lambda))_{\lambda} \) and \( b = (b(\lambda))_{\lambda} \) be in \( \ell^1(\Lambda) \). Then the twisted convolution of \( a \) and \( b \) is defined by

\[
a \ast b(\lambda) = \sum_{\mu \in \Lambda} a(\mu)b(\lambda - \mu)c(\mu, \lambda - \mu) \quad \text{for} \quad \lambda, \mu \in \Lambda,
\]

and involution \( a^* = (a^*(\lambda)) \) of \( a \) is given by

\[
a^*(\lambda) = c(\lambda, \lambda)a(-\lambda) \quad \text{for} \quad \lambda \in \Lambda.
\]

Let \( \Lambda \) be a lattice in \( \mathbb{R}^2 \). Then the restriction of the projective representation to \( \Lambda \) in \( \mathbb{R}^2 \) gives that \( \lambda \mapsto \pi(\lambda) \) is a projective representation of \( \Lambda \) on \( \ell^2(\Lambda) \). Furthermore, this projective representation of a lattice \( \Lambda \) in \( \mathbb{R}^2 \) gives a nondegenerate involutive representation of \( \ell^1(\Lambda, c) \) on \( \ell^2(\Lambda) \) by

\[
\pi_\Lambda(a) := \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} a(\lambda)\pi(\lambda) \quad \text{for} \quad a = (a(\lambda)) \in \ell^1(\Lambda),
\]

i.e. \( \pi_\Lambda(a \ast b) = \pi_\Lambda(a)\pi_\Lambda(b) \) and \( \pi_\Lambda(a^*) = \pi_\Lambda(a)^* \). Moreover, this involutive representation of \( \ell^1(\Lambda, c) \) is faithful: \( \pi_\Lambda(a) = 0 \) implies \( a = 0 \) for \( a \in \ell^1(\Lambda) \); see e.g. [31].

In Rieffel’s classification of projective modules over noncommutative tori [31] a key insight was the relevance of a lattice \( \Lambda^0 \) associated to \( \Lambda \):

\[
\Lambda^0 = \{(x, \omega) \in \mathbb{R}^2 : c_{\text{symp}}((x, \omega), \lambda) = 1 \quad \text{for all} \quad \lambda \in \Lambda\}
\]

or equivalently by

\[
\Lambda^0 = \{z \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \pi(\lambda)\pi(z) = \pi(z)\pi(\lambda) \quad \text{for all} \quad \lambda \in \Lambda\}.
\]

Following Feichtinger and Kozek we call \( \Lambda^0 \) the adjoint lattice [10]. The lattices \( \Lambda \) and \( \Lambda^0 \) are the key players in the duality theory of Gabor analysis, i.e. the Janssen representation of Gabor frames, Wexler-Raz biorthogonality relations and the Ron-Shen duality principle [5] [10] [16] [32].
In the following we want to study weighted analogues of the twisted group algebra. For \( s \geq 0 \) let \( \ell^1_s(\Lambda) \) be the space of all sequences \( a \) with \( \|a\|_{\ell^1_s} = \sum |a(\lambda)|(1 + |\lambda|^2)^{s/2} < \infty \). We consider \( (\ell^1_s(\Lambda); \zeta, \ast) \). More explicitly,
\[
\mathcal{A}^1_s(\Lambda, c) = \{ A \in \mathcal{B}(L^2(\mathbb{R})) : A = \sum \lambda a(\lambda) \pi(\lambda), \|a\|_{\ell^1_0} < \infty \}
\]
is an involutive Banach algebra with respect to the norm
\[
\|A\|_{\mathcal{A}^1_s(\Lambda)} = \sum \lambda |a(\lambda)|(1 + |\lambda|^2)^{s/2}.
\]
Note that \( \mathcal{A}^1_s(\Lambda, c) \) is a dense subalgebra of \( C^*(\Lambda, c) \). The smooth noncommutative torus \( \mathcal{A}^\infty(\Lambda, c) = \bigcap_{s \geq 0} \mathcal{A}^1_s(\Lambda, c) \) and \( \mathcal{A}^\infty(\Lambda, c) \) is an involutive Frechet algebra with respect to \( \ast \) and \( \ast \) whose topology is defined by a family of submultiplicative norms \( \{\|\cdot\|_{\mathcal{A}^1_s} : s \geq 0\} \):
\[
\|A\|_{\mathcal{A}^1_s(\Lambda)} = \sum \lambda |a(\lambda)|(1 + |\lambda|^2)^{s/2} \text{ for } A \in \mathcal{A}^\infty_s(\Lambda, c).
\]
In other words \( \mathcal{A}^\infty(\Lambda, c) \) is the image of \( a \mapsto \pi_A(a) \) for \( a \in \mathcal{S}(\Lambda) \), where \( \mathcal{S}(\Lambda) \) denotes the space of rapidly decreasing sequences on \( \Lambda \). The smooth noncommutative torus \( \mathcal{A}^\infty(\Lambda, c) \) is the prototype example of a noncommutative manifold \([2, 4]\).

Recall that a unital subalgebra \( \mathcal{A} \) of a unital \( C^* \)-algebra \( \mathcal{B} \) with common unit is called spectrally invariant if for \( A \in \mathcal{A} \) with \( A^{-1} \in \mathcal{B} \) one actually has that \( A^{-1} \in \mathcal{A} \).

**Proposition 2.1.** Let \( \Lambda \) be a lattice in \( \mathbb{R}^2 \). Then \( \mathcal{A}^1_s(\Lambda, c) \) and \( \mathcal{A}^\infty(\Lambda, c) \) are spectrally invariant subalgebras of \( C^*(\Lambda, c) \). Consequently, \( \mathcal{A}^1_s(\Lambda, c) \) and \( \mathcal{A}^\infty(\Lambda, c) \) are invariant under holomorphic function calculus.

The spectral invariance of \( \mathcal{A}^\infty(\Lambda, c) \) in \( C^*(\Lambda, c) \) was demonstrated by Connes in \([2]\), and the case of \( \Lambda = \alpha \mathbb{Z} \times \beta \mathbb{Z} \) for rational lattice constants \( \alpha \) and \( \beta \) was rediscovered by Janssen in the content of Gabor analysis \([10]\). The connection between the work of Connes and Janssen was pointed out in \([19]\). The extension of Janssen’s result to lattices with irrational lattice constants was the motivation of Gröchenig and Leinert to prove the spectral invariance of \( \mathcal{A}^1_s(\Lambda, c) \) in \( C^*(\Lambda, c) \) in \([14]\); see also \([15]\).

### 2.2. Modulation spaces and Hilbert \( C^*(\Lambda, c) \)-modules

The construction of Hilbert \( C^*(\Lambda, c) \)-modules is based on a class of function spaces introduced by Feichtinger in \([8]\), the so-called **modulation spaces**. In the last two decades modulation spaces have found many applications in harmonic analysis and time-frequency analysis; see the interesting survey article \([9]\) for an extensive bibliography. We briefly recall the definition and basic properties of a special class of modulation spaces, \( M^1_s(\mathbb{R}) \), since these provide the correct framework for our investigation.

If \( g \) is a window function in \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \), then the **short-time Fourier transform** (STFT) of a function or distribution \( f \) is defined by
\[
V_g f(x, \omega) = \langle f, \pi(x, \omega)g \rangle = \int_{\mathbb{R}} f(t) \overline{g}(t-x) e^{-2\pi i x \cdot \omega} dt.
\]
The STFT \( V_g f \) of \( f \) with respect to the window \( g \) measures the time-frequency content of a function \( f \). Modulation spaces are classes of function spaces, where the norms are given in terms of integrability or decay conditions of the STFT.
If the window function is the Gaussian $\varphi(t) = e^{-\pi t^2}$, then the modulation space $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ is the space

$$M_s^1(\mathbb{R}) = \{ f \in L^2(\mathbb{R}) : \| f \|_{M_1} := \int_{\mathbb{R}} |V_{\varphi} f(x, \omega)|(1 + |x|^2 + |\omega|^2)^{s/2} dx d\omega < \infty \}. $$

The space $M_0^1(\mathbb{R})$ is the well-known Feichtinger algebra, which was introduced in \[7\] as the minimal strongly character invariant Segal algebra and is often denoted by $S_0(\mathbb{R})$. In time-frequency analysis the modulation space $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ has turned out to be a good class of windows for Gabor frames, pseudo-differential operators and time-varying channels. In \[21\][22] we emphasized that these function spaces provide a convenient class of pre-equivalence $C^*(\Lambda, c)$-modules. To link our approach to Rieffel’s work we rely on a description of Schwartz’s class of test functions $S(\mathbb{R})$ or $S(\mathbb{R})$. Therefore one has to impose some extra conditions to get Schur-type orthogonality relations. This fact underlies the Wexler-Raz biorthogonality relations, which we discuss in the following section.

To motivate the left and right actions of the noncommutative torus on $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ or $S(\mathbb{R})$ the following identity holds:

$$\sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} \langle f, \pi(\lambda) g \rangle \langle \pi(\lambda) h, k \rangle = \text{vol}(\Lambda)^{-1} \sum_{\lambda^0 \in \Lambda^0} \langle f, \pi(\lambda^0) h \rangle \langle \pi(\lambda^0) g, k \rangle, $$

where vol$(\Lambda)$ denotes the volume of a fundamental domain of $\Lambda$.

Note that $\lambda \mapsto \pi(\lambda)$ and $\lambda^0 \mapsto \pi(\lambda^0)$ are reducible projective representations of $\Lambda$ and $\Lambda^0$, respectively. Therefore FIGA expresses a relation between the matrix coefficients of these reducible projective representations:

$$\langle V_s f(\lambda), V_k h(\lambda) \rangle_{\ell^2(\Lambda)} = \text{vol}(\Lambda)^{-1} \langle V_s f, V_k h \rangle_{\ell^2(\Lambda^0)}. $$

Therefore one has to impose some extra conditions to get Schur-type orthogonality relations. This fact underlies the Wexler-Raz biorthogonality relations, which we discuss in the following section.

We write FIGA in the following form:

$$\langle \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} \langle f, \pi(\lambda) g \rangle \pi(\lambda) h, k \rangle = \langle \text{vol}(\Lambda)^{-1} \sum_{\lambda^0} \pi(\lambda^0)^* f \langle \pi(\lambda^0)^* g, h \rangle, k \rangle. $$

The preceding equation indicates a left action of $A_s^1(\Lambda, c)$ and a right action of $A_s^1(\Lambda^0, c^*)$ on functions $g \in M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ by

$$\pi_A(\alpha) \cdot g = \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} a(\lambda) \pi(\lambda) g \quad \text{for } \alpha \in \ell^1(\Lambda),$$

$$\pi_{A^0}(\beta) \cdot g = \text{vol}(\Lambda)^{-1} \sum_{\lambda^0 \in \Lambda^0} \pi(\lambda^0)^* g b(\lambda^0) \quad \text{for } \beta \in \ell^1(\Lambda^0),$$

where $b(\lambda^0) = \int_{\mathbb{R}} e^{ix\lambda^0} b_0(x) dx$.
and additionally the $A^1_s(\Lambda, c)$-valued inner product $\langle \cdot , \cdot \rangle_{\Lambda^s}$ and $A^1_s(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$-valued inner product $\langle \cdot , \cdot \rangle_{\Lambda^s}$ by
\begin{align}
\Lambda \langle f, g \rangle &= \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} \langle f, \pi(\lambda)g \rangle \pi(\lambda), \\
\langle f, g \rangle_{\Lambda^s} &= \text{vol}(\Lambda)^{-1} \sum_{\lambda^s \in \Lambda^s} \pi(\lambda^s)^* \langle \pi(\Lambda^s f), g \rangle,
\end{align}
for $f, g \in M^1(\mathbb{R})$. Consequently, we have that $\Lambda \langle f, g \rangle$ and $\langle f, g \rangle_{\Lambda^s}$ are elements of $A^1_s(\Lambda, c)$ and of $A^1_s(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$. The crucial observation is that $\Lambda \langle f, g \rangle$ is an $A^1_s(\Lambda, c)$-valued inner product. In [22], we have demonstrated that $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ becomes a full left Hilbert $C^*(\Lambda, c)$-module $\Lambda V$ when completed with respect to the norm $\Lambda \| f \| = \| \Lambda \langle f, f \rangle \|^{1/2}$ for $f \in M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$.

In addition, we have an analogous result for the opposite $C^*$-algebra of $C^*(\Lambda, c)$, i.e. $C^*(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$. Here $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ becomes a full right Hilbert $C^*(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$-module $V_{\Lambda^s}$ for the right action of $A^1_s(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$ on $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ when completed with respect to the norm $\| f \|_{\Lambda^s} = \| \langle f, f \rangle_{\Lambda^s} \|_{\text{op}}^{1/2}$.

Most notably the $\Lambda^s$-valued inner products $\Lambda \langle \cdot , \cdot \rangle$ and $\langle \cdot , \cdot \rangle_{\Lambda^s}$ satisfy Rieffel’s associativity condition:
\begin{equation}
\Lambda \langle f, g \rangle \cdot h = f \cdot \langle g, h \rangle_{\Lambda^s}, \quad f, g, h \in M_s^1(\mathbb{R}).
\end{equation}

The identity (19) is equivalent to
\[ \langle \Lambda \langle f, g \rangle \cdot h, k \rangle = \langle f \cdot \langle g, h \rangle_{\Lambda^s}, k \rangle \]
for all $k \in M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$. More explicitly, the associativity condition reads as follows:
\[ \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} \langle f, \pi(\lambda)g \rangle \pi(\lambda)h, k \rangle = \text{vol}(\Lambda)^{-1} \sum_{\lambda^s \in \Lambda^s} \langle f, \pi(\lambda^s)k \rangle \langle \pi(\lambda^s)h, g \rangle. \]

In other words, the associativity condition is the fundamental identity of Gabor Analysis.

Furthermore, we have that $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ is a right pre-inner product module over $A^1_s(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$ for the adjoint lattice $\Lambda^\circ$ of $\Lambda$. Consequently, we get that $\Lambda V_{\Lambda^s}$ is an equivalence bimodule between $C^*(\Lambda, c)$ and $C^*((\Lambda^\circ, \tau))$. By a result of Connes we have that $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ is an equivalence bimodule between $A^1_s(\Lambda, c)$ and $A^1_s(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$. We summarize these observations and result in the following theorem, which is a special case of the main result in [22] and which provides the setting for our investigation.

**Theorem 2.3.** Let $\Lambda$ be a lattice in $\mathbb{R}^2$. For any $s \geq 0$ we have that $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ is an equivalence bimodule between $A^1_s(\Lambda, c)$ and $A^1_s(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$ and $\mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R})$ is an equivalence bimodule between $A^\infty(\Lambda, c)$ and $A^\infty(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$. Consequently, $M_s^1(\mathbb{R})$ is a finitely generated projective left $A^1_s(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$-module and $\mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R})$ is a finitely generated projective left $A^1_s(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$-module.

The statement about $\mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R})$ was proved by Connes in [2]. Another way of expressing the content of the preceding theorem is to say that $A^1_s(\Lambda, c)$ and $A^1_s(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$ are Morita-Rieffel equivalent and also $A^\infty(\Lambda, c)$ and $A^\infty(\Lambda^\circ, \tau)$ are Morita-Rieffel equivalent.
3. Projections in noncommutative tori

In this section we revisit the construction of projections in $C^*(\Lambda, c)$ presented in 30 in terms of Gabor analysis. We start with some observations on $C^*(\Lambda, c)$-module rank-one operators on $\Lambda V$, i.e. operators of the form

$$\Theta^A_{g,h}f = \lambda(f, h) \cdot h = \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} (f, \pi(\lambda)g) \pi(\lambda)h \text{ for } f, g, h \in \Lambda V.$$  

The operators $\Theta^A_{g,h}$ are adjointable operators on $\Lambda V$, i.e. $\lambda(\Theta^A_{g,h}f, k) = \lambda(f, \Theta^A_{h,g}k)$. Since $\lambda V$ is a finitely generated projective $C^*(\Lambda, c)$-module, every adjointable operator on $\Lambda V$ is a finite sum of rank-one operators $\Theta^A_{g,h}$, i.e. a finite rank $C^*(\Lambda, c)$-module operator.

We collect some elementary observations on projections in $C^*(\Lambda, c)$, i.e. operators $P$ such that $P = P^* = P^2$.

**Lemma 3.1.** Let $g, h$ be in $\Lambda V$ with $\|g\|_{\Lambda} = 1$. Then the following hold:

1. $\Theta^A_{g,g}$ and $\Theta^A_{h,h}$ are self-adjoint projections and $\Theta^A_{g,h}$ is a partial isometry.
2. If $\|g - h\|_{\Lambda} < 1/2$, then there exists a unitary adjointable $\Lambda V$ module operator $U$ such that $Ug = h$ and therefore $\Theta^A_{g,g}$ and $\Theta^A_{h,h}$ are unitarily equivalent.

**Proof.** Assertion (a) can be deduced from a series of elementary computations. Assertion (b) may be derived from the fact that $\Theta^A_{g,g}$ and $\Theta^A_{h,h}$ are unitarily equivalent if $\|\Theta^A_{g,g} - \Theta^A_{h,h}\|_{\Lambda} < 1$ and the following inequalities:

$$\|\Theta^A_{g,g} - \Theta^A_{h,h}\|_{\Lambda} \leq \|\Theta^A_{g,g} - \Theta^A_{g,h}\|_{\Lambda} + \|\Theta^A_{g,h} - \Theta^A_{h,h}\|_{\Lambda} \leq 2\|g - h\|_{\Lambda}.$$  

Finally we want to describe the unitary module operators for $\Lambda V$, i.e. those $U$ such that $\lambda(Uf, g) = \lambda(f, Ug)$. More explicitly, this means that $U$ is a unitary operator on $L^2(\mathbb{R})$ such that $\pi(\lambda)U = U\pi(\lambda)$ for all $\lambda \in \Lambda$. In 10 operators such as $U$ are called $\Lambda$-invariant. \hfill $\square$

Note that we have for $f, g$ that $\|f - g\|_{\Lambda}^2 \leq \|V_{f-g}(f - g)\|_{\ell^1}$ by

$$\|f\|_{\Lambda}^2 \leq \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} |V_{f}(\lambda)| (1 + |\lambda|^2)^{s/2}.$$  

In our setting we actually have an equivalence bimodule $\Lambda V_{\Lambda^\circ}$ between $C^*(\Lambda, c)$ and $C^*(\Lambda^\circ, \pi)$ that provides an additional form to express under which conditions $g \in \Lambda V_{\Lambda^\circ}$ yields a projection $\lambda(g, g)$ in $C^*(\Lambda, c)$ as pointed out in 30.

**Lemma 3.2.** Let $g$ be in $\Lambda V_{\Lambda^\circ}$. Then $P_g := \lambda(g, g)$ is a projection in $C^*(\Lambda, c)$ if and only if $g(g, g)_{\Lambda^\circ} = g$. If $g \in M^1_{\Lambda} (\mathbb{R})$ or $\mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R})$, then $P_g$ gives a projection in $\Lambda^1_{\Lambda}(\Lambda, c)$ or $\Lambda^\infty(\Lambda, c)$, respectively.

**Proof.** First we assume that $g(g, g)_{\Lambda^\circ} = g$ for some $g$ in $\Lambda V_{\Lambda^\circ}$. Then we have that

$$P^2_g = \lambda(g, g)\lambda(g, g) = \lambda(g, g)g, g) = \lambda(g, g, g)_{\Lambda^\circ} = g = \lambda(g, g) = P_g$$

and $P^*_g = P_g$.

Now we suppose that $\lambda(g, g)$ is a projection in $C^*(\Lambda, c)$. Then the following elementary computation yields the assertion:

$$\lambda(g, g)_{\Lambda^\circ} - g, g)_{\Lambda^\circ} = \lambda(g, g)g - g, g(\lambda(g, g)g) = \lambda(g, g, g)_{\Lambda^\circ} = g = \lambda(g, g)^2.$$  

$$\lambda(g, g)g, g)_{\Lambda^\circ} - g, g)_{\Lambda^\circ} = \lambda(g, g)g, g) - \lambda(g, g)g, g) = \lambda(g, g)g, g) + \lambda(g, g) = 0.$$  

In the case where \( g \in M_1^1(\mathbb{R}) \) or \( \mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R}) \), the condition \( g(g,g)_{\Lambda^c} = g \) holds in \( g \in M_1^1(\mathbb{R}) \) or \( \mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R}) \). Consequently the preceding computations remain valid in \( A_1^1(\Lambda, c) \) or \( A^\infty(\Lambda, c) \).

There is a class of \( g \in V_{\Lambda^c} \) where the condition \( g(g,g)_{\Lambda^c} = g \) is fulfilled, namely those \( g \in V_{\Lambda^c} \) such that \( \langle g,g \rangle_{\Lambda^c} = 1 \). We call the set of all these \( g \)'s the unit sphere \( S(V_{\Lambda^c}) \) of \( V_{\Lambda^c} \). The unit sphere \( S(V_{\Lambda^c}) \) has an intrinsic description in terms of Gabor frames and goes by the name of Wexler-Raz biorthogonality relations.

The link between the rank-one module operators \( \Theta_{g,h} \) and Gabor analysis is the observation that these are the so-called Gabor frame-type operators \( \Theta_{g,h}^A \) and that \( \Theta_{g,g}^A \) is the Gabor frame operator of the Gabor systems \( G(g, \Lambda) \). If \( \Theta_{g,g}^A \) is invertible on \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \), then \( G(g, \Lambda) \) is a Gabor frame for \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \); i.e. there exist \( A, B > 0 \) such that

\[
A \| f \|^2_2 \leq \langle \Theta_{g,g}^A f, f \rangle_{L^2(\mathbb{R})} = \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} |\langle f, \pi(\lambda)g \rangle|^2 \leq B \| f \|^2_2
\]

for all \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \). An important consequence of the invertibility of the Gabor frame operator is the existence of discrete expansions for \( f \in L^2(\mathbb{R}) \):

\[
f = \Theta_{g,h}^A f = \sum_{\lambda \in \Lambda} \langle f, \pi(\lambda)g \rangle \pi(\lambda)h
\]

for some \( h \in L^2(\mathbb{R}) \), a so-called dual Gabor atom. Among the various dual Gabor atoms there exists a canonical dual Gabor atom \( h \) that is determined by the equation \( \langle \Theta_{g,g}^A h, h \rangle_0 = g \), i.e. \( h_0 = S^{-1}g \). In the case where \( Cg = h_0 \) for some constant \( C \), the (dual) Gabor frame \( G(g, \Lambda) \) is a tight Gabor frame for \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \) and \( h_0 \) is often referred to as tight Gabor atom.

**Theorem 3.3.** Let \( G(g, \Lambda) \) be a Gabor system on \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \) with \( g \) in \( M_1^1(\mathbb{R}) \) or \( \mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R}) \). Then \( P_g = \Lambda(g,g) \) is a projection in \( A_1^1(\Lambda, c) \) or \( A^\infty(\Lambda, c) \) if and only if one of the following conditions holds:

(i) \( G(g, \Lambda) \) is a tight Gabor frame for \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \).

(ii) \( G(g, \Lambda^o) \) is an orthogonal system.

(iii) \( g \in S(V_{\Lambda^c}) \).

(iv) \( \langle g, \pi(\lambda)g \rangle = \text{vol}(\Lambda) \delta_{\lambda^o,0} \) for all \( \lambda^o \in \Lambda^o \).

**Proof.** Recall that there are traces \( \text{tr}_{\Lambda} \) and \( \text{tr}_{\Lambda^c} \) on \( C^*(\Lambda, c) \) and \( C^*(\Lambda^o, \pi) \), where \( \text{tr}_{\Lambda}(A) = a_0 \) and \( \text{tr}_{\Lambda^c}(B) = \text{vol}(\Lambda)^{-1}b_0 \) for \( A = \sum a(\lambda)\pi(\lambda) \) and \( B = \sum b(\lambda^o)\pi(\lambda^o) \).

(i)\(\Leftrightarrow\)(ii) The assumption that \( g, h \) are in \( M_1^1(\mathbb{R}) \) implies the boundedness of the Gabor frame operators \( \Theta_{g,g}^A \) on \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \). Furthermore \( \Theta_{g,g}^A \) has a Janssen representation

\[
\Theta_{g,g}^A f = \Lambda(f,g) \cdot g = f \cdot \langle g, g \rangle_{\Lambda^c} = \Theta_{f,g}^{\Lambda^o} g.
\]

In other words, the Janssen representation of Gabor frame-type operators is the associativity condition for \( \Lambda(.,.) \) and \( \Lambda^o(.,.) \). Here \( G(g, \Lambda) \) is a tight Gabor frame if and only if \( \Theta_{g,g}^A \) is a multiple of the identity operator on \( L^2(\mathbb{R}) \) if and only if \( G(g, \Lambda) \) is an orthogonal system.

(ii)\(\Leftrightarrow\)(iii) This is just a reformulation of (i) in terms of the \( \Lambda(.,.) \) inner product.

(iii)\(\Leftrightarrow\)(iv) By taking the trace of the assertion (iii) we get that

\[
\text{tr}_{\Lambda}(\langle g, g \rangle) = \langle g, g \rangle = \text{vol}(\Lambda)^{-1} \delta_{\lambda^o,0}.
\]

\(\square\)
The equivalence between (i) and (iv) goes by the name of Wexler-Raz biorthogonality relations. In the case of finite-dimensional Gabor frames this result was formulated by the engineers Raz and Wexler in [34]. The extension to the infinite-dimensional case was undertaken by several researchers [5, 16, 32] and led to the duality theory of Gabor frames. We followed the approach of Janssen to duality theory. The Wexler-Raz biorthogonality condition may be considered as a Schur-type orthogonalization relation for the reducible representation πΛ of Λ since it forces the representation πΛc of Λc to be a multiple of the trivial representation.

In the preceding theorem we demonstrated that g ∈ S(VΛc) is equivalent to the tightness of the Gabor frame G(g, Λ). As noted before there is a canonical tight Gabor frame G(h0, Λ) for ˜g = (ΘΛg)−1/2g. Janssen and Strohmer have shown in [17] that the canonical tight Gabor atom has the following characterization: Let G(g, Λ) be a Gabor frame for L2(ℝ). Then the canonical tight Gabor atom ˜g minimizes ∥g − h∥2 among all h generating a normalized tight Gabor frame. Note that trΛ(Λ(g − h, ˜g − h)) = ⟨f, g⟩, i.e. ∥g − h∥2 = trΛ(Λ(g − h, ˜g − h)).

**Theorem 3.4.** Let G(g, Λ) be a Gabor frame for L2(ℝ). If g is in M1(L(R)) or in H(L(R)), then Λ(g, ˜g) is a projection in A1(L, c) or in A∞(L, c), respectively. Furthermore, h0 minimizes ∥g − h∥2 among all tight Gabor atoms h.

**Proof.** By the spectral invariance of A1(Λc, c) and A∞(Λc, c) in C*(Λc, c) and by the Janssen representation of the Gabor frame operator ΘΛg, we get (ΘΛg)−1/2 in A1(Λc, c) and A∞(Λc, c), respectively. Consequently (ΘΛg)−1/2g is in M1(L(R)) and H(L(R)), respectively. Observe that ˜g ∈ S(VΛc) and an application of the preceding theorem yields the desired assertion. □

Before we are able to draw some conclusions on projections in noncommutative tori, we have to recall some well-known results about Gabor systems for the Gabor atoms g1, g2, g3, where g1(t) = 21/4e−πt2 is the Gaussian, g2(t) = (2π)1/2 exp(−πt2)/cosh(πt) is the hyperbolic secant and g3(t) = e−|t| is the two-sided exponential.

**Proposition 3.5.** The Gabor systems G(g1, Z × θZ), G(g2, Z × θZ) and G(g3, Z × θZ) are Gabor frames for L2(ℝ) if and only if θ < 1.

Lyubarskij and Seip proved the result for the Gaussian g1 in [24, 33]. The statement for g2 was obtained by Janssen and Strohmer in [18]. Later Janssen was able to settle the case of g3 in [19].

The main result allows us to link the existence of Gabor frames to the construction of projections in noncommutative tori, which is based on the seminal contribution of Janssen in [16]. Namely the Janssen representation of Gabor operators, i.e. the associativity condition for the noncommutative tori-valued inner products, turns the problem of the construction of Gabor frames into a problem about the invertibility of operators in C*(Λc, c). Following Janssen’s work [16], Gröchenig and Leinert interpreted Janssen’s result in terms of spectral invariant subalgebras of C*(Λc, c) [14]. In the following theorem we show that results in Gabor analysis provide a way to smooth projections in noncommutative tori and we give an example of a function, g3, that does not give a projection in the smooth noncommutative torus. Namely g3 is in Feichtinger’s algebra M1(ℝ) but not in H(ℝ).
Let $\theta$ be the Gaussian, $g_2$ the hyperbolic secant and $g_3$ the one-sided exponential. Then $\theta(g_1, g_1)$ and $\theta(g_2, g_2)$ are projections in $A^\infty_\theta$ if and only if $\theta < 1$. Furthermore the $\theta(g_1, g_1)$ and only if $\theta < 1$.

**Proof.** Note that $g_1, g_2$ are elements of $\mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R})$. Therefore $(g_1, \pi(\lambda)g_1)$ is a sequence of rapid decay for $i = 1, 2$. By the Janssen representation $S_{g_1, g_2}$ is a Gabor frame if and only if $(g_1, g_1)_\Lambda$ is invertible in $A_{1/\theta}$ for $i = 1, 2$. By the spectral invariance of $A_{1/\theta}$ in $A_{1/\theta}$ we actually have that $(g_1, g_1)_\Lambda$ is an element of $A_{1/\theta}$ for $i = 1, 2$. Consequently, $\theta(g_1, g_1)$ and $\theta(g_2, g_2)$ are projections in $A^\infty_{1/\theta}$.

The final assertion is that $\theta(g_3, g_3)$ is a projection in $A^\infty_\theta$ if and only if $\theta < 1$. We have to check that $g_3$ is not a Schwartz function, but it is an element of Feichtinger’s algebra $M^1(\mathbb{R})$. An elementary calculation yields that $g_3$ is not in $\mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R})$. The fact that $g_3$ is in $M^1(\mathbb{R})$ can be established in various ways. We want to refer to a result of Okoudjou. In [29] he proved that $g, g', g'' \in L^1(\mathbb{R})$ implies that $g \in M^1(\mathbb{R})$. Now straightforward calculations yield that $g_3, g'_3, g''_3$ are in $L^1(\mathbb{R})$ and therefore $g_3$ is in $M^1(\mathbb{R})$. Consequently $\theta(g_3, g_3)$ is a projection in $A^\infty_\theta$ but not in the smooth noncommutative torus $A^\infty_{\theta}$. \hfill \qed

Since $g_1$ and $g_2$ are invariant with respect to the Fourier transform, i.e. $Fg_1 = g_1, Fg_2 = g_2$, the associated projections fit into the framework of Boca in [1]. Our approach to projections in noncommutative tori $C^*(\Lambda, c)$ provides that $\theta(g_1, g_1)$ is invertible for $\theta < 1$, which improves the result in [1] where the invertibility is established for $\theta < 0.948$, and on the other hand it shows that this actually characterizes the invertibility of $\theta(g_1, g_1)$. Boca’s proof relies on a series of results on theta functions that does not allow one to conclude if the result in [1] holds if and only if $\theta < 1$.

4. Final remarks

In the preceding section we constructed projections in $A_\theta$, because in this case we can apply results of Janssen, Lyubarskij and Seip on Gabor frames for $L^2(\mathbb{R})$. The link between tight Gabor frames and projections in noncommutative tori remains valid in the higher-dimensional case. Recall that the higher-dimensional torus $A_\theta$ is defined via a $d \times d$ skew-symmetric matrix $\Theta$ instead of the real number $\theta$. Note that $A_\theta$ may be considered as twisted group $C^*$-algebra $C^*(\Lambda, c)$ for a lattice $\Lambda$ in $\mathbb{R}^{2d}$. The higher-dimensional variants of $A_\theta^1(\Lambda, c)$ and $A_\infty(\Lambda, c)$ for $\Lambda$ in $\mathbb{R}^{2d}$ are defined as in the two-dimensional case. The higher-dimensional variant of Theorem 3.3 holds:

**Theorem 4.1.** Let $\mathcal{G}(g, \Lambda)$ be a Gabor system on $L^2(\mathbb{R}^d)$ for $g \in M^1(\mathbb{R}^d)$ or $\mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R}^d)$. Then $P_g = \mathcal{G}(g, \Lambda)$ is a projection in $A^1_\theta(\Lambda, c)$ or $A_\infty(\Lambda, c)$ if and only if one of the following condition holds:

(i) $\mathcal{G}(g, \Lambda)$ is a tight Gabor frame for $L^2(\mathbb{R}^d)$.

(ii) $\mathcal{G}(g, \Lambda^o)$ is an orthogonal system.

(iii) $g \in S(V_{\Lambda^o})$.

(iv) $\langle g, \pi(\lambda^o)g \rangle = \text{vol}(\Lambda)\delta_{\lambda^o, \theta}$ for all $\lambda^o \in \Lambda^o$. 


Furthermore we have that Theorem 3.4 holds in the higher-dimensional case.

**Theorem 4.2.** Let $G(g, \Lambda)$ be a Gabor frame for $L^2(\mathbb{R}^d)$. If $g$ is in $M_1^d(\mathbb{R}^d)$ or in $\mathcal{S}(\mathbb{R}^d)$, then $\Lambda(g, \hat{g})$ is a projection in $\mathcal{A}_1^d(\Lambda, c)$ or in $\mathcal{A}_1^\infty(\Lambda, c)$.

A tensor product type argument allows one to extend Lyubarskij-Seip’s result to lattices of the form $\alpha_1 \mathbb{Z} \times \cdots \times \alpha_n \mathbb{Z} \times \beta_1 \mathbb{Z} \times \cdots \times \beta_n \mathbb{Z}$.

**Theorem 4.3.** Let $g_1(t) = 2^{d/4} e^{-\pi t^2}$ and $\Lambda = \alpha_1 \mathbb{Z} \times \cdots \times \alpha_n \mathbb{Z} \times \beta_1 \mathbb{Z} \times \cdots \times \beta_n \mathbb{Z}$. Then $\Lambda(g_1, g_1)$ is invertible if and only if $\alpha_i \beta_i < 1$ for all $i = 1, \ldots, n$. Consequently $\Lambda(g_1, g_1)$ is a projection in $\mathcal{A}_1^\infty(\Lambda, c)$.

The preceding theorem characterizes the existence of quantum theta functions for $C^*(\alpha_1 \mathbb{Z} \times \cdots \times \alpha_n \mathbb{Z} \times \beta_1 \mathbb{Z} \times \cdots \times \beta_n \mathbb{Z}, c)$. We refer the reader to Manin’s papers [25, 26, 27], Marcšilji’s book [28], and [23] for the definition and basic properties of quantum theta functions, as well as a look at their relevance to problems in number theory and their interpretation in terms of Gabor analysis.

All results, with the exception of those involving the functions $g_1, g_2, g_3$, hold in much greater generality (see [24]), namely, in the case where $\Lambda$ is a lattice in $G \times \widehat{G}$ for $G$ a locally compact abelian group and $\widehat{G}$ its Pontryagin dual of $G$.

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