

ON COVERINGS OF SIMPLE ABELIAN VARIETIES

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ABSTRACT. — To any finite covering $f : Y \rightarrow X$ of degree d between smooth complex projective manifolds, one associates a vector bundle E_f of rank $d - 1$ on X whose total space contains Y . It is known that E_f is ample when X is a projective space ([9]), a Grassmannian ([11]), or a Lagrangian Grassmannian ([7]). We show an analogous result when X is a simple abelian variety and f does not factor through any nontrivial isogeny $X' \rightarrow X$. This result is obtained by showing that E_f is M -regular in the sense of Pareschi-Popa, and that any M -regular sheaf is ample.

RÉSUMÉ (*Sur les revêtements des variétés abéliennes simples*). — On associe à tout revêtement fini $f : Y \rightarrow X$ de degré d entre variétés projectives lisses complexes un fibré vectoriel E_f de rang $d - 1$ sur X dont l'espace total contient Y . On sait que E_f est ample lorsque X est un espace projectif ([9]), une grassmannienne ([11]) ou une grassmannienne lagrangienne ([7]). Nous montrons un résultat analogue lorsque X est une variété abélienne simple et que f ne se factorise par aucune isogénie non triviale $X' \rightarrow X$. Ce résultat est obtenu en montrant que E_f est M -régulier au sens de Pareschi-Popa, puis que tout faisceau M -régulier est ample.

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1. Introduction

We work over the complex numbers. Let $f : Y \rightarrow X$ be a finite surjective morphism of degree d between smooth projective varieties of the same dimension n . The morphism f is flat, hence the sheaf $f_*\mathcal{O}_Y$ is locally free. We may define a locally free sheaf E_f of rank $d - 1$ on X as the dual of the kernel of the trace map $\mathrm{Tr}_{Y/X} : f_*\mathcal{O}_Y \rightarrow \mathcal{O}_X$, so that

$$f_*\mathcal{O}_Y = \mathcal{O}_X \oplus E_f^*$$

By duality for a finite flat morphism, we have

$$f_*\omega_{Y/X} = \mathcal{O}_X \oplus E_f$$

Our aim is to prove the following statement conjectured in [1].

THEOREM 1.1. — *Let X be a simple abelian variety, let Y be a smooth connected projective variety, and let $f : Y \rightarrow X$ be a finite cover. If f does not factor through any nontrivial isogeny $X' \rightarrow X$, the vector bundle E_f is ample.*

For a more general statement, see Theorem 4.1. See also the remarks at the end of this article for more comments. Even if X is not simple, the vector bundle E_f is known to be nef (see [14, Theorem 1.17], [10, Example 6.3.59]) and its restriction to a general complete intersection curve in X to be ample (see [6, Lemma 2.7]).

The ampleness of E_f has a number of consequences, as explained in [10, Example 6.3.56]. In our case, one new statement beyond the Fulton-Hansen-type results already obtained in [1] is the following: under the hypotheses of the theorem, the induced morphism

$$H^i(f, \mathbb{C}) : H^i(X, \mathbb{C}) \longrightarrow H^i(Y, \mathbb{C})$$

is bijective for $i \leq n - d + 1$ (see [10, Theorem 7.1.16]).

When moreover $d \leq n$, the morphism $\pi_1(f) : \pi_1(Y) \rightarrow \pi_1(X)$ is bijective.⁽¹⁾ In particular, the group $H_1(Y, \mathbb{Z})$ is isomorphic to $H_1(X, \mathbb{Z})$, hence is torsion-free, and so is $H^2(Y, \mathbb{Z})$ by the universal coefficient theorem.

When $d \leq n - 1$, the morphism $H^2(f, \mathbb{Z}) : H^2(X, \mathbb{Z}) \rightarrow H^2(Y, \mathbb{Z})$ is injective with finite cokernel, hence so is $\mathrm{Pic}(f) : \mathrm{Pic}(X) \rightarrow \mathrm{Pic}(Y)$. It seems likely that those two maps are bijective.

The proof is a simple application of the results of [13] about global generation of sheaves on an abelian variety. More precisely, it is based on the remark that any M -regular sheaf (§ 3) on an abelian variety is ample (Corollary 3.2).

⁽¹⁾For algebraic fundamental groups, this is [1, Corollaire 6.2]; for topological fundamental groups, this is [2, Exercice VIII.5], where the hypothesis $d \leq n$ is unfortunately missing.

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2. Ample sheaves

To any coherent sheaf \mathcal{F} on a scheme X of finite type over \mathbb{C} , one associates the X -scheme

$$\mathbf{P}(\mathcal{F}) = \text{Proj} \left(\bigoplus_{m \geq 0} \mathbf{Sym}^m \mathcal{F} \right)$$

and an invertible sheaf $\mathcal{O}_{\mathbf{P}(\mathcal{F})}(1)$ on $\mathbf{P}(\mathcal{F})$. The sheaf \mathcal{F} is said to be ample if $\mathcal{O}_{\mathbf{P}(\mathcal{F})}(1)$ is.

Well-known properties of ampleness for locally free sheaves (see for example [10, Chapter 6]) still hold in this general setting:

- a) the sheaf \mathcal{F} is ample if and only if, for any coherent sheaf \mathcal{G} on X , the sheaf $\mathcal{G} \otimes \mathbf{Sym}^m \mathcal{F}$ is globally generated for all $m \gg 0$ (see [8, Theorem 1]);
- b) any quotient of an ample sheaf is ample (see [8, Proposition 1]);
- c) if $\pi : Y \rightarrow X$ is a finite morphism, \mathcal{F} is ample if and only if $\pi^* \mathcal{F}$ is (this is because $\mathbf{P}(\pi^* \mathcal{F}) = \mathbf{P}(\mathcal{F}) \times_X Y$ and $\mathcal{O}_{\mathbf{P}(\mathcal{F})}(1)$ pulls back, by a finite morphism, to $\mathcal{O}_{\mathbf{P}(\pi^* \mathcal{F})}(1)$);
- d) if X is proper and \mathcal{F} is globally generated, \mathcal{F} is ample if and only if, for any curve C in X , the restriction $\mathcal{F} \otimes \mathcal{O}_C$ has no trivial quotient (Gieseker's Lemma).

3. Continuously generated sheaves

Following [13, Definition 2.10], we say that a coherent sheaf \mathcal{F} on an irreducible projective variety X is *continuously globally generated* if, for any nonempty subset U of $\text{Pic}^0(X)$, the sum of the twisted evaluation maps

$$\bigoplus_{\xi \in U} H^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi) \otimes P_\xi^\vee \longrightarrow \mathcal{F}$$

is surjective, where, for any element ξ of $\text{Pic}^0(X)$, we denote by P_ξ the corresponding numerically trivial line bundle on X . This property is equivalent to the existence of a positive integer N such that for (ξ_1, \dots, ξ_N) general in $\text{Pic}^0(X)^N$, the analogous map

$$(1) \quad \bigoplus_{i=1}^N H^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_{\xi_i}) \otimes P_{\xi_i}^\vee \longrightarrow \mathcal{F}$$

is surjective. Being a quotient of a direct sum of numerically trivial line bundles, a continuously globally generated sheaf is nef. Our aim is to show that under certain circumstances, it is ample.

PROPOSITION 3.1. — *A coherent sheaf \mathcal{F} on an irreducible projective variety X is continuously globally generated if and only if there exists a connected abelian Galois étale cover $\pi : Y \rightarrow X$ such that $\pi^*(\mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi)$ is globally generated for all $\xi \in \text{Pic}^0(X)$.*

Proof. — Assume \mathcal{F} is continuously globally generated and let $\xi \in \text{Pic}^0(X)$. Since torsion points are dense in $\text{Pic}^0(X)^N$, the open subset of $\text{Pic}^0(X)^N$ of points for which the map (1) is surjective and all $h^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_{\xi_i})$ are minimal contains a point of the type

$$(\xi + \eta_1(\xi), \dots, \xi + \eta_N(\xi))$$

where $(\eta_1(\xi), \dots, \eta_N(\xi))$ is torsion, hence contains also $U_\xi + (\eta_1(\xi), \dots, \eta_N(\xi))$, where U_ξ is a neighborhood of ξ in $\text{Pic}^0(X)$. Since $\text{Pic}^0(X)$ is quasi-compact, it is covered by finitely many such neighborhoods, say $U_{\xi_1}, \dots, U_{\xi_M}$.

Let $\pi : Y \rightarrow X$ be a connected abelian Galois étale cover such that the kernel of $\text{Pic}^0(\pi) : \text{Pic}^0(X) \rightarrow \text{Pic}^0(Y)$ contains all $\eta_i(\xi_j)$, for $i \in \{1, \dots, N\}$ and $j \in \{1, \dots, M\}$. Fix $j \in \{1, \dots, M\}$; the map

$$\bigoplus_{i=1}^N H^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi \otimes P_{\eta_i(\xi_j)}) \otimes \pi^* P_\xi^\vee \otimes \pi^* P_{\eta_i(\xi_j)}^\vee \longrightarrow \pi^* \mathcal{F}$$

is surjective for all $\xi \in U_{\xi_j}$. But this map is

$$\bigoplus_{i=1}^N H^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi \otimes P_{\eta_i(\xi_j)}) \otimes \pi^* P_\xi^\vee \longrightarrow \pi^* \mathcal{F}$$

and since each $H^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi \otimes P_{\eta_i(\xi_j)})$ is a vector subspace of $H^0(Y, \pi^*(\mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi))$, the sheaf $\pi^*(\mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi)$ is globally generated for all $\xi \in U_{\xi_j}$, hence for all ξ in $\text{Pic}^0(X)$.

For the converse, assume that there exists a connected abelian Galois étale cover $\pi : Y \rightarrow X$ such that the evaluation map

$$H^0(Y, \pi^*(\mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi)) \otimes \mathcal{O}_Y \longrightarrow \pi^*(\mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi)$$

is surjective for all $\xi \in \text{Pic}^0(X)$. Since π is finite, the map

$$H^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi \otimes \pi_* \mathcal{O}_Y) \otimes \pi_* \mathcal{O}_Y \longrightarrow \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi \otimes \pi_* \mathcal{O}_Y$$

is also surjective. If we let $\text{Ker}(\text{Pic}^0(\pi)) = \{\eta_1, \dots, \eta_N\}$, we have $\pi_* \mathcal{O}_Y = \bigoplus_{i=1}^N P_{\eta_i}$, the map

$$\left(\bigoplus_{i=1}^N H^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi \otimes P_{\eta_i}) \right) \otimes \left(\bigoplus_{i=1}^N P_{\eta_i} \right) \longrightarrow \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi \otimes \left(\bigoplus_{i=1}^N P_{\eta_i} \right)$$

is surjective, and so is

$$\bigoplus_{i=1}^N H^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi \otimes P_{\eta_i}) \otimes P_{\eta_i}^\vee \longrightarrow \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi.$$

In other words, the map (1) is surjective for $(\xi_1, \dots, \xi_N) = (\xi + \eta_1, \dots, \xi + \eta_N)$, for all $\xi \in \text{Pic}^0(X)$. Choosing ξ_0 such that $h^0(X, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_{\xi_0 + \eta_i})$ takes the general (minimal) value for each i in $\{1, \dots, N\}$, we obtain that the map (1) is still surjective for (ξ_1, \dots, ξ_N) in a neighborhood of $(\xi_0 + \eta_1, \dots, \xi_0 + \eta_N)$. This proves that \mathcal{F} is continuously globally generated. \square

COROLLARY 3.2. — *Let X an irreducible projective variety with a finite map to an abelian variety. Any continuously globally generated coherent sheaf on X is ample.*

Proof. — Let \mathcal{F} be a continuously globally generated coherent sheaf on X . By Proposition 3.1, there exists a connected abelian Galois étale cover $\pi : Y \rightarrow X$ such that $\pi^*(\mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi)$ is globally generated for all $\xi \in \text{Pic}^0(X)$.

Let C be a curve in Y . If there is a trivial quotient $\pi^*\mathcal{F}|_C \twoheadrightarrow \mathcal{O}_C$, we have also surjections $\pi^*(\mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi)|_C \twoheadrightarrow \pi^*P_\xi|_C$ for each $\xi \in \text{Pic}^0(X)$. Since $\pi^*(\mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi)$ is globally generated, so is $\pi^*P_\xi|_C$. This implies that the composition $\text{Pic}^0(X) \rightarrow \text{Pic}^0(Y) \rightarrow \text{Pic}^0(C)$ is zero, hence that $\pi(C)$ is contracted by any map from X to an abelian variety. This contradicts our hypothesis, hence $\pi^*\mathcal{F}|_C$ has no trivial quotient.

By Gieseker’s Lemma, $\pi^*\mathcal{F}$ is ample, and so is \mathcal{F} (§ 2). \square

4. The main theorem

Following [13, Definition 2.1], we say that a coherent sheaf \mathcal{F} on an abelian variety A is *M-regular* if

$$\text{codim}_{\text{Pic}^0(A)} \text{Supp}(R^i \widehat{\mathcal{S}}(\mathcal{F})) > i$$

for all $i > 0$ ($R^i \widehat{\mathcal{S}}$ is the i th Fourier-Mukai functor). This is the case if

$$\text{codim}_{\text{Pic}^0(A)} \{\xi \in \text{Pic}^0(A) \mid H^i(A, \mathcal{F} \otimes P_\xi) \neq 0\} > i$$

for all $i > 0$. We refer to [12] and [13] for more details. For our purposes, the main result of [13] (Proposition 2.13) is that *an M-regular coherent sheaf on an abelian variety is continuously globally generated.*

THEOREM 4.1. — *Let X be a smooth connected projective variety with a finite map to a simple abelian variety, let Y be a smooth connected projective variety with a finite surjective map $f : Y \rightarrow X$. If f factors through no nontrivial connected abelian Galois étale covering of X , the vector bundle $E_f \otimes \omega_X$ is ample.*

Proof. — Let n be the common dimension of X and Y , and let $\alpha : X \rightarrow A$ be a finite map to a simple abelian variety such that $\text{Pic}^0(\alpha) : \text{Pic}^0(A) \rightarrow \text{Pic}^0(X)$ is injective. Set $g = \alpha \circ f$. By [4, Theorem 1], [5, Theorem 0.1], and [3, Remark 1.6] (see also [3, Theorem 1.2]), every irreducible component of the set

$$V_i = \{ \xi \in \text{Pic}^0(A) \mid H^{n-i}(Y, g^*P_\xi^\vee) \neq 0 \}$$

is a translated abelian subvariety of $\text{Pic}^0(A)$ of codimension at least i . In particular, since A is simple, V_i is finite for $i > 0$.

Since Y is connected, we have

$$\begin{aligned} V_n &= \{ \xi \in \text{Pic}^0(A) \mid H^0(Y, g^*P_\xi^\vee) \neq 0 \} \\ &= \{ \xi \in \text{Pic}^0(A) \mid g^*P_\xi^\vee \simeq \mathcal{O}_Y \} \\ &= \text{Ker}(\text{Pic}^0(g) : \text{Pic}^0(A) \rightarrow \text{Pic}^0(Y)), \end{aligned}$$

hence $V_n = \{0\}$ since both $\text{Pic}^0(\alpha)$ and $\text{Pic}^0(f)$ are injective (f factors through no nontrivial abelian étale covering of X). Consider now

$$\begin{aligned} W_i &= \{ \xi \in \text{Pic}^0(A) \mid H^i(X, E_f \otimes \omega_X \otimes \alpha^*P_\xi) \neq 0 \} \\ &= \{ \xi \in \text{Pic}^0(A) \mid H^i(A, \alpha_*(E_f \otimes \omega_X) \otimes P_\xi) \neq 0 \}. \end{aligned}$$

By Serre duality on Y ,

$$\begin{aligned} V_i &= \{ \xi \in \text{Pic}^0(A) \mid H^i(Y, \omega_Y \otimes g^*P_\xi) \neq 0 \} \\ &= \{ \xi \in \text{Pic}^0(A) \mid H^i(X, f_*\omega_Y \otimes \alpha^*P_\xi) \neq 0 \}. \end{aligned}$$

Since $f_*\omega_Y = f_*\omega_{Y/X} \otimes \omega_X = \omega_X \oplus (E_f \otimes \omega_X)$, we have $W_i \subset V_i$ and $W_n = \emptyset$. It follows that W_i is finite, hence $\text{codim}(W_i) > i$ for each $i > 0$, so that the sheaf $\alpha_*(E_f \otimes \omega_X)$ on A is M -regular, hence continuously globally generated. It is therefore ample by Corollary 3.2, and, since α is finite, so are $\alpha^*(\alpha_*(E_f \otimes \omega_X))$ and its quotient $E_f \otimes \omega_X$ (§2). \square

In the following remarks, we keep the hypotheses and notation of the theorem and its proof.

REMARK 4.2. — The proof of the theorem shows that the sheaf $\alpha_*(E_f \otimes \omega_X)$ is continuously globally generated. In particular, if f is not an isomorphism, $E_f \otimes \omega_X$ has nonzero sections, hence $p_g(Y) > p_g(X)$.

REMARK 4.3. — The simplicity of the abelian variety in the theorem is essential: if B is an abelian variety and $g = (f, \text{Id}_B) : Y \times B \rightarrow X \times B$, we have $E_g = p^*E_f$, where $p : X \times B \rightarrow X$ is the first projection, hence $E_g \otimes \omega_{X \times B} = p^*(E_f \otimes \omega_X)$ is not ample if B is nonzero. The locus W_i for g contains $\text{Pic}^0(A) \times \{0\}$ for $i \leq \dim(B)$; in particular, for $i = \dim(B)$, it is an abelian subvariety of codimension i of $\text{Pic}^0(A \times B)$.

Note however that if A is not simple but $\alpha(X)$ is not ruled by nonzero abelian subvarieties of A , the end of the proof of Theorem 3 of [3] implies $\text{codim}(V_i) > i$

for each $i > 0$. The proof above shows that the conclusion of Theorem 4.1 still holds.

REMARK 4.4. — If X is not an abelian variety, ω_X is already ample (see, e.g., [1, Théorème 6.9]) and one can show that the hypothesis that f does not factor through a nontrivial connected abelian Galois étale covering of X is unnecessary. If X is a (simple) abelian variety, any finite cover $Y \rightarrow X$ factorizes as $Y \xrightarrow{f} X' \xrightarrow{\rho} X$ where ρ is an isogeny and f satisfies the hypotheses of the theorem.

REMARK 4.5. — Assume $X = A$ and let d be the degree of f . We want to prove that for all $i \geq d - 1$, the set W_i is empty, i.e.,

$$(2) \quad H^i(A, E_f \otimes P_\xi) = 0 \quad \text{for all } \xi \in \text{Pic}^0(A).$$

By a theorem of Simpson [15], all points of V_i , hence *a fortiori* all points of W_i , are torsion points. As explained in the introduction, Theorem 4.1 implies that the morphism

$$H^{n-i}(f, \mathbb{C}) : H^{n-i}(A, \mathbb{C}) \longrightarrow H^{n-i}(Y, \mathbb{C})$$

is bijective for $i \geq d - 1$. Using the Hodge decomposition, this implies $0 \notin W_i$. For any isogeny $\pi : A' \rightarrow A$, the smooth variety $Y' = Y \times_A A'$ is connected and if $f' : Y' \rightarrow A'$ is the second projection, we have $E_{f'} = \pi^* E_f$. It follows that for $i \geq \text{deg}(f') - 1 = d - 1$, we have

$$0 = H^i(A', E_{f'}) = H^i(A, E_f \otimes \pi_* \mathcal{O}_{A'}) = \bigoplus_{\xi \in \text{Ker}(\text{Pic}^0(\pi))} H^i(A, E_f \otimes P_\xi).$$

In particular, W_i contains no torsion points, hence is empty.

Equality (2) does not hold in general for $0 \leq i < d - 1$, as shown by the following example. Take an elliptic curve C , with origin o_C . Let L be a very ample line bundle on A and let $Y \subset C \times A$ be a general (smooth) element of $|\mathcal{O}_C((n + 1)o_C) \boxtimes L|$. Following the proof of [10, Lemma 6.3.43], one sees that the second projection $f : Y \rightarrow A$ is finite (of degree $d = n + 1$). By the Lefschetz theorem, the induced morphism

$$H^{n-i}(C \times A, \mathcal{O}_{C \times A}) \longrightarrow H^{n-i}(Y, \mathcal{O}_Y)$$

is bijective for $i > 0$ and injective for $i = 0$. In particular, $H^{n-i}(f, \mathcal{O})$ is not surjective for $0 \leq i < n$, hence $0 \in W_i$, i.e.,

$$H^i(A, E_f) \neq 0 \quad \text{for } 0 \leq i < d - 1 = n.$$

In particular, $H^{n-1}(A, E_f) \neq 0$, and it follows from [12, Proposition 2.7], that the M -regular vector bundle E_f does not satisfy Mukai's condition WIT_0 when $n > 1$ (sheaves that satisfy condition WIT_0 are M -regular).

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