

# FIBONACCI MANIFOLDS AS TWO-FOLD COVERINGS OF THE THREE-DIMENSIONAL SPHERE AND THE MEYERHOFF–NEUMANN CONJECTURE†)

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The present article is devoted to studying geometric properties of three-dimensional compact orientable hyperbolic manifolds with fundamental group a Fibonacci group.

The Fibonacci groups  $F(2, m)$  were introduced by Conway [1] and have the following presentation:

$$F(2, m) = \langle x_1, x_2, \dots, x_m : x_i x_{i+1} = x_{i+2}, i \bmod m \rangle.$$

Algebraic properties of the groups  $F(2, m)$  and their generalizations were studied in [2–4]. From a geometric point of view, the Fibonacci groups  $F(2, 2n)$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , with an even number of generators are most interesting. It was shown in [5] that for  $n \geq 4$  the group  $F(2, 2n)$  is isomorphic to the fundamental group of a three-dimensional compact orientable hyperbolic manifold. The group  $F(2, 6)$  is isomorphic to the fundamental group of a three-dimensional compact orientable Euclidean manifold [6]. The group  $F(2, 4)$  is finite and isomorphic to the fundamental group of the lens space  $L(5, 2)$  which is a three-dimensional compact orientable spherical manifold. Thus, the group  $F(2, 2n)$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , is realizable as a co-compact discrete group of isometries acting without fixed points on the space  $X_n$ , where  $X_2 = \mathbb{S}^3$  is the spherical 3-space,  $X_3 = \mathbb{E}^3$  is the Euclidean 3-space, and for  $n \geq 4$   $X_n = \mathbb{H}^3$  is the Lobachevskii 3-space.

A three-dimensional manifold  $M_n = X_n/F(2, 2n)$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , uniformized by a Fibonacci group is referred to as a *Fibonacci manifold*.

We point out that hyperbolic Fibonacci manifolds  $M_n$ ,  $n \geq 4$ , were studied in [7–9].

In the present article we demonstrate that each manifold  $M_n$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , can be represented as a two-fold branched covering of the three-dimensional sphere. As a consequence, the Meyerhoff–Neumann conjecture [10] is proven on arithmeticity and volume of the manifold  $N = W(3, -2; 6, -1)$  obtained in [10] by Dehn surgeries with parameters  $(3, -2)$  and  $(6, -1)$  on the components of the Whitehead link  $W$ .

## § 1. Fibonacci Manifolds as Two-Fold Coverings

To describe geometric properties of the Fibonacci manifolds, we introduce the following family of knots and links. Denote by  $Th_n$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , the closure of the 3-string braid  $(\sigma_1 \sigma_2^{-1})^n$  given in canonical generators [11]. Observe that  $Th_n$  is a three-component link if  $n$  is divisible by three, while it is a knot otherwise. In particular,  $Th_2$  is the figure-eight knot,  $Th_3$  is the Borromean rings, and  $Th_4$  is the Turk's head knot. It was shown in [12] that the manifolds  $S^3 \setminus Th_n$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , are hyperbolic. In [9] we established that the hyperbolic volumes of the manifolds  $S^3 \setminus Th_n$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , coincide with the volumes of the Fibonacci manifolds  $M_{2n}$ . The properties of compact manifolds obtained by Dehn surgery on the knots  $Th_n$  were studied in [13]. The symmetry groups of the knots and links  $Th_n$  are described in [14].

Further we use the terminology of the theory of orbifolds as in [12, Chapter 13].

The main result of this section is the following

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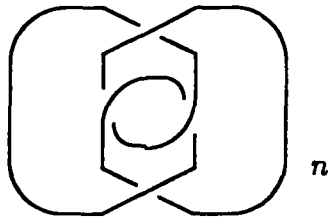


Fig. 1

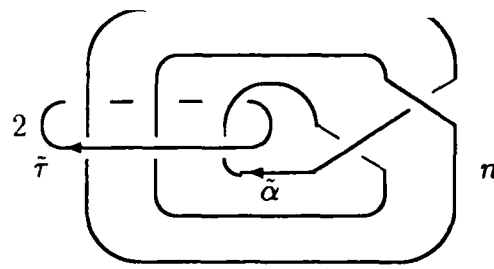


Fig. 2

**Theorem 1.** Each Fibonacci manifold  $M_n$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , can be represented as a two-fold covering of the three-dimensional sphere branched over the link  $Th_n$ .

**PROOF.** In virtue of [8], the manifold  $M_n$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , can be represented as a cyclic  $n$ -fold covering of the orbifold  $\mathcal{O}(n)$  whose underlying space is the three-dimensional sphere and whose singular set is the figure-eight knot with index  $n$  (Fig. 1).

It is easy to see that the orbifold  $\mathcal{O}(n)$  has a rotation symmetry of order two which acts on the singular set of the orbifold  $\mathcal{O}(n)$  without fixed points. Factoring the orbifold  $\mathcal{O}(n)$  by this symmetry, we obtain an orbifold whose underlying space is the three-dimensional sphere and whose singular set is a two-component link, pictured in Fig. 2, with indices 2 and  $n$  on its components.

It was shown in [12, Chapter 13] that the singular set of this orbifold is equivalent to the two-component link  $6_2^2$ , with the notation of [15] (Fig. 3). Therefore, henceforth this orbifold will be symbolized by  $6_2^2(2, n)$ .

Observe that the above-introduced space  $X_n$ ,  $n \geq 2$ , is the universal covering of the manifold  $M_n$  and the orbifolds  $\mathcal{O}(n)$  and  $6_2^2(2, n)$ . Denote the respective fundamental groups of the manifold  $M_n$  and the orbifolds  $\mathcal{O}(n)$  and  $6_2^2(2, n)$  by  $\Gamma_n = F(2, 2n)$ ,  $\Omega_n$ , and  $\Pi_n$ . Thus, the groups  $\Gamma_n$ ,  $\Omega_n$ , and  $\Pi_n$  act on  $X_n$  as discrete subgroups of the isometry group. Moreover, the following canonical isomorphisms hold:  $M_n = X_n/\Gamma_n$ ,  $\mathcal{O}(n) = X_n/\Omega_n$ , and  $6_2^2(2, n) = X_n/\Pi_n$ . Therefore, the sequence of the above-described coverings

$$M_n \xrightarrow{n} \mathcal{O}(n) \xrightarrow{2} 6_2^2(2, n) \quad (1)$$

induces the sequence of group embeddings

$$\Gamma_n \triangleleft \Omega_n \triangleleft \Pi_n, \quad (2)$$

where  $|\Pi_n : \Omega_n| = 2$  and  $|\Omega_n : \Gamma_n| = n$ .

We now use the following presentation of the fundamental group  $\pi_1(S^3 \setminus 6_2^2)$  of the link  $6_2^2$  which was computed in [9]:

$$\langle \tilde{\alpha}, \tilde{\tau} \mid (\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\alpha}^{-1}\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\alpha}\tilde{\tau}^{-1}\tilde{\alpha}\tilde{\tau}^{-1}) (\tilde{\tau}^2\tilde{\alpha}^{-1}\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\alpha}\tilde{\tau}^{-1}\tilde{\alpha}\tilde{\tau}^{-2}) (\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\alpha}^{-1}\tilde{\tau}\tilde{\alpha}\tilde{\tau}^{-1}\tilde{\alpha}\tilde{\tau}^{-1})^{-1} = \tilde{\alpha} \rangle. \quad (3)$$

Here the generative loops  $\tilde{\alpha}$  and  $\tilde{\tau}$  are canonically determined from the diagram of the link  $6_2^2(2, n)$  in Fig. 2; they correspond to the arcs of the diagram which are denoted by  $\tilde{\alpha}$  and  $\tilde{\tau}$  [16].

In view of the results of [17] and presentation (3), the fundamental group  $\Pi_n$  of the orbifold  $6_2^2(2, n)$  has the following presentation:

$$\langle \alpha, \tau \mid (\tau\alpha^{-1}\tau\alpha\tau^{-1}\alpha\tau^{-1}) (\tau^2\alpha^{-1}\tau\alpha\tau^{-1}\alpha\tau^{-2}) (\tau\alpha^{-1}\tau\alpha\tau^{-1}\alpha\tau^{-1})^{-1} = \alpha, \alpha^n = \tau^2 = 1 \rangle, \quad (4)$$

where the generators  $\alpha$  and  $\tau$  correspond to the loops  $\tilde{\alpha}$  and  $\tilde{\tau}$  in the group  $\pi_1(S^3 \setminus 6_2^2)$ .

Consider the group  $\mathbb{Z}_n \oplus \mathbb{Z}_2 = \langle a \mid a^n = 1 \rangle \oplus \langle t \mid t^2 = 1 \rangle$  and, given an  $n$ , define an epimorphism  $\theta : \Pi_n \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_n \oplus \mathbb{Z}_2$  by the rule

$$\theta(\alpha) = a, \quad \theta(\tau) = t. \quad (5)$$

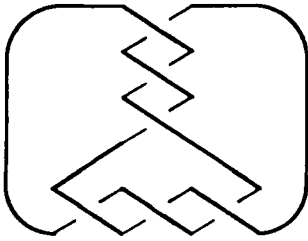


Fig. 3

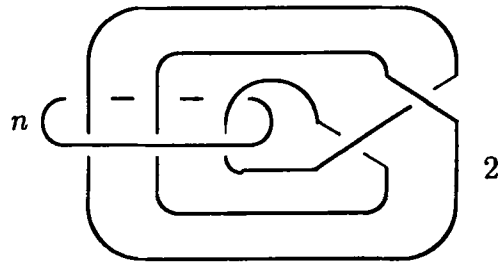


Fig. 4

Observe that under the two-fold covering  $\mathcal{O}(n) \rightarrow 6_2^2(2, n)$  the loop  $\tau$  in the fundamental group of the orbifold  $6_2^2(2, n)$  lifts to a trivial loop in the fundamental group  $\Omega_n$  of the orbifold  $\mathcal{O}(n)$ , while the loop  $\alpha$  lifts to some loop that generates a cyclic subgroup of order  $n$  in the group  $\Omega_n$ . Therefore,

$$\Omega_n = \theta^{-1}(\mathbb{Z}_n) = \theta^{-1}(\langle a \mid a^n = 1 \rangle). \quad (6)$$

Since under the  $2n$ -fold covering  $M_n \rightarrow 6_2^2(2, n)$  the loops  $\alpha$  and  $\tau$  lift to trivial loops in the group  $\Gamma_n$ , we have

$$\Gamma_n = \theta^{-1}(1) = \text{Ker } \theta. \quad (7)$$

For the subgroup  $\mathbb{T}_n$  in  $\Pi_n$  defined by

$$\mathbb{T}_n = \theta^{-1}(\mathbb{Z}_2) = \theta^{-1}(\langle t \mid t^2 = 1 \rangle), \quad (8)$$

we obtain the sequence of group embeddings

$$\Gamma_n \triangleleft \mathbb{T}_n \triangleleft \Pi_n, \quad (9)$$

where  $|\Pi_n : \mathbb{T}_n| = n$  and  $|\mathbb{T}_n : \Gamma_n| = 2$ .

The group  $\mathbb{T}_n$ , as a subgroup of the group  $\Pi_n$ , acts by isometries on the universal covering  $X_n$  and determines the orbifold  $X_n/\mathbb{T}_n$ . Relations (9) induce the following sequence of orbifold coverings:

$$M_n = X_n/\Gamma_n \xrightarrow{2} X_n/\mathbb{T}_n \xrightarrow{n} 6_2^2(2, n) = X_n/\Pi_n. \quad (10)$$

We will demonstrate that the underlying space of the orbifold  $X_n/\mathbb{T}_n$  is the three-dimensional sphere and that the singular set of the orbifold is the above-defined link  $Th_n$ . First, we prove that the covering

$$p : X_n/\mathbb{T}_n \xrightarrow{n} 6_2^2(2, n) = X_n/\Pi_n \quad (11)$$

is cyclic. To this end, we use the following trivial lemma:

**Lemma.** Given groups  $G$ ,  $K$ , and  $L$  and an epimorphism  $\theta : G \rightarrow K \oplus L$ , suppose that  $H = \theta^{-1}(L)$ . Then  $H \triangleleft G$  and  $G/H \cong K$ .

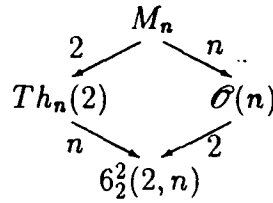
We apply this lemma to the epimorphism  $\theta : \Pi_n \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_n \oplus \mathbb{Z}_2$  defined by conditions (5). Since  $\mathbb{T}_n = \theta^{-1}(\mathbb{Z}_2)$ , we have  $\mathbb{T}_n \triangleleft \Pi_n$  and  $\Pi_n/\mathbb{T}_n \cong \mathbb{Z}_n$ . These conditions amount to the fact that the covering  $p$  is a regular  $n$ -fold cyclic covering. In view of (8), the covering  $p$  is branched over the component of the singular set of the orbifold  $6_2^2(2, n)$  which is labelled by the index  $n$ .

We note [18] that in the symmetry group of the link  $6_2^2$  there is an involution (easily seen in Fig. 3) which interchanges the components of the link. Therefore, the singular set of the orbifold  $6_2^2(2, n)$  can also be represented in the form pictured in Fig. 4.

As we see from Fig. 4, the component of the link with the index  $n$  is unknotted. Thus,  $p$  is a standard cyclic covering of the three-dimensional sphere, the underlying space of the orbifold  $6_2^2(2, n)$ , branched over an unknotted circle. Therefore, the underlying space of the orbifold  $X_n/\mathbb{T}_n$  is the three-dimensional sphere. Observe that the component of the singular set of the orbifold  $6_2^2(2, n)$  which is

labelled in Fig. 4 by the index 2 is the closure of the 3-string braid  $\sigma_1\sigma_2^{-1}$ . Therefore, its lift to the  $n$ -fold cyclic covering  $X_n/\mathbb{T}_n$  is the closure of the braid  $(\sigma_1\sigma_2^{-1})^n$ , i.e. coincident with the link  $Th_n$  considered above. So, the underlying space of the orbifold  $X_n/\mathbb{T}_n$  is the three-dimensional sphere and the singular set of the orbifold is the link  $Th_n$  labelled with index 2. Further we use the notation  $Th_n(2) = X_n/\mathbb{T}_n$  for this orbifold.

Comparing sequences (1) and (10), we come to the following diagram:



As we see from the diagram, the Fibonacci manifold  $M_n$  is a two-fold covering of the orbifold  $Th_n(2)$ , which completes the proof of Theorem 1.

We recall [19] that a  $\pi$ -orbifold is an orbifold whose underlying space is the three-dimensional sphere and whose singular set is a knot or a link whose every component has index 2. Theorem 1 enables us to prove the following assertion whose particular instance in the case of  $n = 4$  was noted in [20].

**Corollary.** For  $n \geq 4$  the  $\pi$ -orbifold  $Th_n(2)$  is hyperbolic.

Indeed, in virtue of the results of [5], for  $n \geq 4$  the universal covering  $X_n$  is the Lobachevskii space  $\mathbb{H}^3$ . Thus,  $\mathbb{T}_n$  is a discrete group of isometries of the space  $\mathbb{H}^3$  and hence  $Th_n(2) = \mathbb{H}^3/\mathbb{T}_n$ ,  $n \geq 4$ , is a hyperbolic orbifold.

## § 2. The Hyperbolic Meyerhoff–Neumann Manifold

In [10] some closed orientable three-dimensional hyperbolic manifold, denoted by  $N = W(3, -2; 6, -1)$ , was constructed by Dehn surgeries with parameters  $(3, -2)$  and  $(6, -1)$  on the components of the Whitehead link  $W$ . The volume of the manifold  $N$  has been shown to coincide to within  $10^{-50}$  with the volume of the regular ideal tetrahedron in Lobachevskii space. The authors of [10] raised the question of exact equality between these volumes. In the same article the conjecture was formulated of arithmeticity of the manifold  $N$  over the field  $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$  [21]. Below the validity of both hypotheses will be established.

First, we reveal some relationship between the Meyerhoff–Neumann manifold  $N$  and the hyperbolic Fibonacci manifold  $M_4$ .

**Theorem 2.** The Fibonacci manifold  $M_4$  is a two-fold unbranched covering of the Meyerhoff–Neumann manifold  $N$ .

**PROOF.** Consider the hyperbolic  $\pi$ -orbifold  $Th_4(2) = \mathbb{H}^3/\mathbb{T}_4$  defined at the end of Section 1. Its underlying space is the three-dimensional sphere and its singular set is the Turk’s head knot  $Th_4$  pictured in Fig. 5. The orbifold has a rotation symmetry  $\rho$  of order 4 which keeps the singular set invariant. After factorizing the orbifold  $Th_4(2)$  by the involution  $\rho^2$  we obtain a  $\pi$ -orbifold  $D(2, 2)$  whose singular set is the two-component link pictured in Fig. 6.

Using the Wirtinger presentation and the results of [17], we write down the presentation for the fundamental group  $\Delta$  of the orbifold  $D(2, 2)$ :

$$\Delta = \langle \alpha, \beta, \tau \mid (\tau\alpha\tau\beta)^2\alpha(\beta\tau\alpha\tau)^2 = \tau\beta\tau, (\beta\alpha)^2\tau\beta\tau(\alpha\beta)^2 = \tau\alpha\tau, \alpha^2 = \beta^2 = \tau^2 = 1 \rangle, \quad (12)$$

where the generators  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\tau$  are canonically determined from the diagram of the link pictured in Fig. 6.

By the Mostow rigidity theorem, the involution  $\rho^2$  is isotopic to some isometry of the hyperbolic orbifold  $Th_4(2)$ . Thus the group  $\Delta$  can be realized as a discrete subgroup of the isometry group of the Lobachevskii space  $\mathbb{H}^3$ . In this case  $\tau$  is the lifting of the involution  $\rho^2$  to the universal covering.

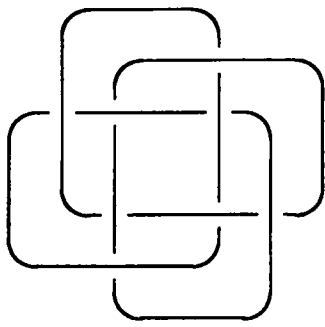


Fig. 5

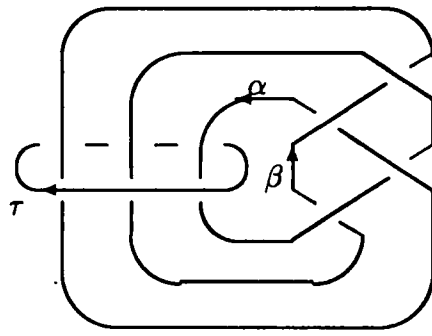


Fig. 6

It follows from Theorem 1 that the Fibonacci manifold  $M_4 = \mathbb{H}^3/\Gamma_4$  is a two-fold covering of the orbifold  $Th_4(2) = \mathbb{H}^3/\mathbb{T}_4$ . By the construction of the orbifold  $D(2,2) = \mathbb{H}^3/\Delta$  we thus have the following sequence of orbifold coverings

$$M_4 \xrightarrow{2} Th_4(2) \xrightarrow{2} D(2,2), \quad (13)$$

which induces the sequence of group embeddings

$$\Gamma_4 \triangleleft \mathbb{T}_4 \triangleleft \Delta, \quad (14)$$

where  $|\Delta : \mathbb{T}_4| = 2$  and  $|\mathbb{T}_4 : \Gamma_4| = 2$ .

Consider the epimorphism

$$\theta : \Delta \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_2 \oplus \mathbb{Z}_2 = \langle a \mid a^2 = 1 \rangle \oplus \langle t \mid t^2 = 1 \rangle$$

defined by the following rule

$$\theta(\alpha) = \theta(\beta) = a, \quad \theta(\tau) = t. \quad (15)$$

Observe that under the orbifold covering  $Th_4(2) \rightarrow D(2,2)$  the loop  $\tau$  in the fundamental group  $\Delta$  of the orbifold  $D(2,2)$  lifts to a trivial loop in the fundamental group  $\mathbb{T}_4$  of the orbifold  $Th_4(2)$ , while the loops  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$  lift to loops generating cyclic subgroups of order two in the group  $\mathbb{T}_4$ . Thus,

$$\mathbb{T}_4 = \theta^{-1}(\mathbb{Z}_2) = \theta^{-1}(\langle a \mid a^2 = 1 \rangle). \quad (16)$$

Since the loops  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\tau$  lift to trivial loops in the group  $\Gamma_4$  under the 4-fold covering  $M_4 \rightarrow D(2,2)$ , we have

$$\Gamma_4 = \theta^{-1}(1) = \text{Ker } \theta. \quad (17)$$

It is obvious that the group

$$\mathbb{Z}_2 \oplus \mathbb{Z}_2 = \langle a \mid a^2 = 1 \rangle \oplus \langle t \mid t^2 = 1 \rangle$$

includes the cyclic subgroup of order 2 generated by the element  $d = a + t$ . Define a natural epimorphism  $\lambda : \mathbb{Z}_2 \oplus \mathbb{Z}_2 \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_2$  by setting

$$\lambda(a) = \lambda(t) = d. \quad (18)$$

For the composition  $\varphi = \lambda \circ \theta$  of the epimorphisms we infer that the epimorphism

$$\varphi : \Delta \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_2 = \langle d \mid d^2 = 1 \rangle \quad (19)$$

satisfies the relations

$$\varphi(\alpha) = \varphi(\beta) = \varphi(\tau) = d. \quad (20)$$

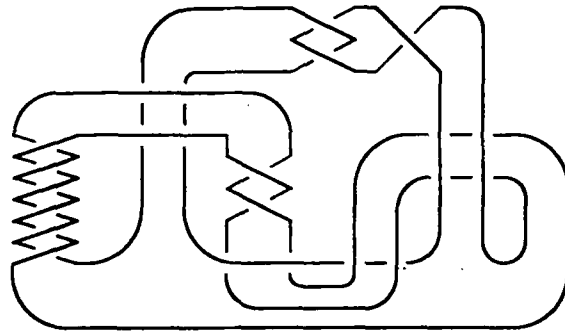


Fig. 7

Put  $\Phi = \text{Ker } \varphi$  and consider the orbifold  $U = \mathbb{H}^3/\Phi$ . By the construction of the epimorphism  $\varphi$  the orbifold covering

$$U = \mathbb{H}^3/\Phi \xrightarrow{2} D(2, 2) = \mathbb{H}^3/\Delta \quad (21)$$

is branched over the two components of the singular set of the orbifold  $D(2, 2)$ . Under this covering the loops  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ , and  $\tau$  lift to trivial loops in the group  $\Phi$ . Thus,  $U$  is a hyperbolic orbifold with the empty singular set; i.e., a hyperbolic manifold.

Demonstrate that  $U = N$ . To this end, we use the Montesinos algorithm [22], which makes it possible to represent each manifold obtained by a Dehn surgery on a strongly-invertible link as a branched two-fold covering of the three-dimensional sphere. Applying this algorithm to the Whitehead link we in particular infer that the Meyerhoff–Neumann manifold  $N = W(3, -2; 6, -1)$  is the two-fold covering branched over the two-component link pictured in Fig. 7.

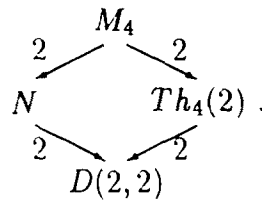
Using Reidemeister moves [16] we directly check that the links pictured in Fig. 6 and 7 are equivalent. Thus, the hyperbolic manifolds  $U$  and  $N$  are represented as two-fold coverings of the three-dimensional sphere branched over the same link. Therefore, they are homeomorphic and, by the Mostow rigidity theorem, they are isometric. We thus can assume that  $N = \mathbb{H}^3/\Phi$ . In view of the relation  $\varphi = \lambda \circ \theta$  the following group embedding holds

$$\Phi = \text{Ker } \varphi > \Gamma_4 = \text{Ker } \theta \quad (22)$$

which induces the covering of the manifolds

$$M_4 = \mathbb{H}^3/\Gamma_4 \xrightarrow{2} N = \mathbb{H}^3/\Phi. \quad (23)$$

Comparing the sequences of coverings (13), (21), and (23) we come to the following diagram



The groups  $\Gamma_4$  and  $\Phi$  are the fundamental groups of the hyperbolic manifolds  $M_4$  and  $N$  and so they do not contain elements of finite order. This implies that covering (23) induced by the group embedding (22) is unbranched. The proof of Theorem 2 is complete.

From the above connection between manifolds  $M_4$  and  $N$  we derive the following theorem.

**Theorem 3.** *The hyperbolic Meyerhoff–Neumann manifold  $N = W(3, -2; 6, -1)$  is arithmetic over the field  $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$  and its volume equals the volume of the regular ideal tetrahedron in Lobachevskii space.*

**PROOF.** Indeed, as shown in [9], the hyperbolic volume of the Fibonacci manifold  $M_4$  equals the doubled volume of the regular ideal tetrahedron in Lobachevskii space. It follows from Theorem 2 that the volume of the manifold  $N$  is half of the volume of the manifold  $M_4$  and therefore coincides with the volume of the regular ideal tetrahedron. Moreover, in view of (23), the manifolds  $M_4$  and  $N$  are commensurable. According to [5], the manifold  $M_4$  is arithmetic over the field  $\mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{-3})$ . Hence, the same is true for the manifold  $N$ .

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