F. Gesztesy, L. L. Littlejohn, I. Michael, M. M. H. Pang, Radial and logarithmic refinements of Hardy's inequality, Алгебра и анализ, 2018, том 30, выпуск 3, 55–65

Dedicated, with great admiration, to the memory of
Michael Solomyak (May 16, 1931 – July 31, 2016).

RADIAL AND LOGARITHMIC REFINEMENTS OF HARDY'S INEQUALITY

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Versions of Hardy's inequality involving radial derivatives and logarithmic refinements are deduced.

§1. Introduction

To describe the principal aim of this note, we start by recalling the classical Hardy inequality

$$\int_{\Omega} |(\nabla f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x \geqslant \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_{\Omega} |x|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \, d^n x, \tag{1.1}$$

valid for $f \in C_0^\infty(\Omega)$, $\Omega \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ open, $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $n \geqslant 2$ (interpreting the right-hand side of (1.1) as zero if $n = 2$, and hence rendering it trivial in that case). The following extension of Hardy's inequality (in the special case where Ω equals $B_n(x_0; \rho)$, the open ball in $\mathbb{R}^n$ of radius $\rho > 0$ centered at $x_0 \in \mathbb{R}^n$), involving logarithmic refinements, was derived in [7],

$$\int_{\Omega} |(\nabla f)(x)|^2 d^n x$$
$$\geqslant \int_{\Omega} |x - x_0|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \left\{ \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k (\gamma / |x - x_0|)]^{-2} \right\} d^n x, \tag{1.2}$$

valid for $f \in C_0^\infty(\Omega)$, assuming that $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^n$, $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $n \geqslant 2$, Ω is open and bounded with $x_0 \in \Omega$, $m \in \mathbb{N}$, and the logarithmic terms $\ln_k(\gamma / |x - x_0|)$, $k \in \mathbb{N}$,

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Key words: Hardy's inequality, factorizations of differential operators, radial and logarithmic refinements.

are recursively given by

$$\ln_1(\gamma/|x-x_0|) := \ln(\gamma/|x-x_0|), \quad 0 < |x-x_0| < \gamma,$$
$$\ln_{k+1}(\gamma/|x-x_0|) := \ln(\ln_k(\gamma/|x-x_0|)), \quad 0 < |x-x_0| < \gamma/e_{k+1}, \quad k \in \mathbb{N}, \tag{1.3}$$

for $\gamma > 0$, $x \in \mathbb{R}^n \setminus \{x_0\}$, $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $n \geqslant 2$, with $0 < |x - x_0| < \mathrm{diam}(\Omega) < \gamma/e_m$, where

$$e_1 := 1, \quad e_{k+1} := e^{e_k}, \quad k \in \mathbb{N}. \tag{1.4}$$

We denote $\sum_{j=1}^0 (\,\cdot\,) := 0$ and $\prod_{k=1}^0 (\,\cdot\,) := 1$, so when $m = 0$, $x_0 = 0$, (1.2) formally agrees with (1.1).

Due to the incredible amount of work on the classical Hardy inequality, we cannot possibly do justice to the existing literature and hence only refer to some of the standard monographs on the subject such as [3, 15, 16], and [17]. In addition, we note that factorizations in the context of Hardy's inequality in balls with optimal constants and logarithmic correction terms were already studied in [6, 10], based on prior work in [12, 13], and [14], although this appears to have gone unnoticed in the recent literature on this subject. Higher-order logarithmic refinements of the multi-dimensional Hardy–Rellich-type inequality appeared in [1, Theorem 2.1], and a sequence of such multi-dimensional Hardy–Rellich-type inequalities, with additional generalizations, appeared in [19, Theorems 1.8–1.10].

Our principal goal in this paper is to offer an improvement of (1.2) by replacing the gradient with the radial derivative ∂_r, given by

$$\partial_r := |x|^{-1} x \cdot \nabla, \qquad x \in \mathbb{R}^n \setminus \{0\}, \quad r = |x|, \quad n \in \mathbb{N}, \quad n \geqslant 2. \tag{1.5}$$

Obviously,

$$|(\nabla f)(x)| \geqslant |(\partial_r f)(x)|, \quad x \in \mathbb{R}^n \setminus \{0\}, \quad f \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n). \tag{1.6}$$

With (1.6) in mind, we will show that (1.1), (1.2) still hold when ∇ is replaced by ∂_r. More precisely, we will prove the inequality

$$\int_\Omega |(\partial_r f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x \geqslant \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_\Omega |x|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \, d^n x, \tag{1.7}$$

valid for $f \in C_0^\infty(\Omega)$, $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $n \geqslant 2$ (again, interpreting the right-hand side of (1.7) as zero in the case where $n = 2$), and

$$\int_\Omega |(\partial_r f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x$$
$$\geqslant \int_\Omega |x - x_0|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \left\{ \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{j=1}^m \prod_{k=1}^j [\ln_k(\gamma/|x-x_0|)]^{-2} \right\} d^n x, \tag{1.8}$$

valid for $f \in C_0^\infty(\Omega)$, assuming that $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^n$, $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $n \geqslant 2$, Ω is open and bounded with $x_0 \in \Omega$, and $\gamma > 0$ satisfies $0 < |x - x_0| < \operatorname{diam}(\Omega) < \gamma/e_m$, $m \in \mathbb{N}$.

While (1.7) is well known, see, for instance, [2, p. 19], [3, Theorem 1.2.5] (in the case where $p = 2$, $\varepsilon = 0$), [5, 7], and [18], inequality (1.8) is the principal result of this paper.

§2. Refinements of Hardy's inequality

In this section we present our radial and logarithmic refinements of Hardy's inequality.

We start with some preliminary results. We introduce differential operators, T_0 on $C_0^\infty(\Omega)$ if $0 \notin \Omega$, respectively, $C_0^\infty(\Omega \setminus \{0\})$ if $0 \in \Omega$, $\Omega \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ open, and T_m, $m \in \mathbb{N}$, on $C_0^\infty(B_n(0; \rho) \setminus \{0\})$, $n \geqslant 2$, as follows:

$$T_0 := \partial_r + [(n-2)/2]|x|^{-1}, \quad m = 0, \tag{2.1}$$

$$T_m := \partial_r + [(n-2)/2]|x|^{-1} + (1/2)|x|^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}, \quad m \in \mathbb{N}. \tag{2.2}$$

Then their formal adjoints (with respect to $L^2(\Omega) := L^2(\Omega; d^n x)$), denoted by T_0^+ and defined on $C_0^\infty(\Omega)$, respectively, on $C_0^\infty(\Omega \setminus \{0\})$, and T_m^+, $m \in \mathbb{N}$, defined on $C_0^\infty(B_n(0; \rho) \setminus \{0\})$, are given by (cf. (1.3), (1.4))

$$T_0^+ = -\partial_r - (n/2)|x|^{-1}, \quad m = 0, \tag{2.3}$$

$$T_m^+ = -\partial_r - (n/2)|x|^{-1} + (1/2)|x|^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}, \quad m \in \mathbb{N}. \tag{2.4}$$

Remark 2.1. In the following we will employ a standard convention when repeated use of differential expressions is involved: given differential expressions S_j, $j = 1, 2$, their product $S_1 S_2$ is used in the usual (operator) sense, that is,

$$(S_1 S_2 f)(x) = (S_1(S_2 f))(x), \tag{2.5}$$

for f in the underlying function space, and similarly for products of three and more differential expressions. $\diamond$

Next, arguing inductively, we obtain

$$\partial_r |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} - |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \partial_r$$

$$= -|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} + |x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m-1} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}$$

$$+ |x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2}, \quad m \in \mathbb{N}_0 := \mathbb{N} \cup \{0\}, \tag{2.6}$$

where again $\sum_{j=1}^{0}(\,\cdot\,) := 0$, $\prod_{k=1}^{0}(\,\cdot\,) = 1$.

Identity (2.6) allows us to prove the following lemma, which will be useful in establishing Theorem 2.4.

Lemma 2.2. *Let $n \in \mathbb{N}, n \geqslant 2$, and let $m \in \mathbb{N}_0$. Then*

$$T_m^+ |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} + |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} T_m$$

$$= -|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2}. \tag{2.7}$$

Proof. First, we have

$$T_m^+ |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} = -\partial_r |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}$$

$$- (n/2)|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \tag{2.8}$$

$$+ (1/2)|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1},$$

and

$$|x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} T_m = |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \partial_r$$

$$+ [(n-2)/2]|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \tag{2.9}$$

$$+ (1/2)|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}.$$

Thus, applying (2.6) yields

$$T_m^+ |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} + |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} T_m$$

$$= \left(- \partial_r |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} + |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \partial_r \right)$$

$$- |x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} + |x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}.$$

$$= \left(|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} - |x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \right.$$

$$\left. - |x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2} \right) - |x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}$$

$$+ |x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}$$

$$= -|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2}. \tag{2.10}$$

$\square$

Lemma 2.3. *Let* $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $n \geqslant 2$, *and let* $m \in \mathbb{N}_0$. *Then*

$$T_m^+ T_m = -\partial_r^2 - (n-1)|x|^{-1} \partial_r - [(n-2)/2]^2 |x|^{-2}$$

$$- (1/4)|x|^{-2} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2}. \tag{2.11}$$

Proof. We use induction on $m \in \mathbb{N}$. For $m = 0$, we have

$$T_0^+ T_0 = \left(- \partial_r - (n/2)|x|^{-1} \right) \left(\partial_r + [(n-2)/2]|x|^{-1} \right)$$

$$= -\partial_r^2 - (n-1)|x|^{-1} \partial_r - [(n-2)/2]^2 |x|^{-2}. \tag{2.12}$$

For $m = 1$, a direct computation employing (2.6) yields

$$T_1^+ T_1 = \left(T_0^+ + (1/2)|x|^{-1} [\ln(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \right) \left(T_0 + (1/2)|x|^{-1} [\ln(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \right)$$

$$= T_0^+ T_0 - (1/2)|x|^{-2} [\ln(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2} + (1/4)|x|^{-2} [\ln(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2} \tag{2.13}$$

$$= -\partial_r^2 - (n-1)|x|^{-1} \partial_r + [(n-2)/2]^2 |x|^{-2} - (1/4)|x|^{-2} [\ln(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2}.$$

Assuming that (2.11) is true for $m \in \mathbb{N}$, we then apply Lemma 2.2, obtaining

$$T_{m+1}^+ T_{m+1} = \left(T_m^+ + (1/2)|x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} \right)$$

$$\times \Big(T_m + (1/2)|x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}\Big)$$

$$= T_m^+ T_m + (1/2)\Big(T_m^+ |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1}$$

$$+ |x|^{-1} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-1} T_m\Big) + (1/4)|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2}$$

$$= T_m^+ T_m - (1/2)|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2} + (1/4)|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2}$$

$$= T_m^+ T_m - (1/4)|x|^{-2} \prod_{k=1}^{m+1} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2}$$

$$= -\partial_r^2 - (n-1)|x|^{-1}\partial_r - [(n-2)/2]^2 |x|^{-2} \tag{2.14}$$

$$- (1/4)|x|^{-2} \sum_{j=1}^{m+1} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2}. \qquad \square$$

Given these preliminaries, now we can show the following result.

Theorem 2.4. *Let* $\Omega \subseteq \mathbb{R}^n$ *be open,* $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $n \geqslant 2$.
(i) *Then, for all* $f \in C_0^\infty(\Omega)$,

$$\int_\Omega |(\nabla f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x \geqslant \int_\Omega |(\partial_r f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x \geqslant \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_\Omega |x|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \, d^n x. \tag{2.15}$$

(ii) *Let* $m \in \mathbb{N}$, *and suppose in addition that* $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ *is bounded with* $x_0 \in \Omega$. *Assume that* $\gamma > 0$ *is such that* $0 < \mathrm{diam}(\Omega) < \gamma/e_m$, *where* e_m *is as in* (1.4), *and let* $\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)$, $k \in \mathbb{N}$, *be as in* (1.3), (1.4). *Then for all* $f \in C_0^\infty(\Omega)$ *we have*

$$\int_\Omega |(\nabla f)(x)|^2 d^n x \geqslant \int_\Omega |(\partial_r f)(x)|^2 d^n x$$

$$\geqslant \int_\Omega |x - x_0|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \Big\{ \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x-x_0|)]^{-2} \Big\} d^n x. \tag{2.16}$$

Proof. It suffices to focus on item (ii) only. As a first step we establish the latter in the special case where $\Omega = B_n(0;\rho)$, $x_0 = 0$, with $\rho, \gamma > 0$ and

$\rho < \gamma/e_m$. Thus, we will prove that, for all $f \in C_0^\infty(B_n(0;\rho))$,

$$\int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |(\nabla f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x \geqslant \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |(\partial_r f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x$$

$$\geqslant \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |x|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \left\{ \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{j=1}^m \prod_{k=1}^j [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2} \right\} d^n x. \tag{2.17}$$

Define T_m and T_m^+ as in (2.1)–(2.4), respectively. For simplicity, we will work with $f \in C_0^\infty(B_n(0;\rho) \setminus \{0\})$ for $m \in \mathbb{N}$. However, all integrals extend to $f \in C_0^\infty(B_n(0;\rho))$.

By Lemma 2.3,

$$0 \leqslant \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |(T_m f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x$$

$$= \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} \overline{f(x)} (T_m^+ T_m f)(x) \, d^n x$$

$$= - \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} \overline{f(x)} (\partial_r^2 f)(x) \, d^n x - (n-1) \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |x|^{-1} \overline{f(x)} (\partial_r f)(x) \, d^n x$$

$$- [(n-2)/2]^2 \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |x|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \, d^n x$$

$$- (1/4) \sum_{j=1}^m \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |x|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \prod_{k=1}^j [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2} \, d^n x. \tag{2.18}$$

Using the identity

$$\int_{B_n(0;\rho)} \overline{f(x)} (\partial_r^2 f)(x) \, d^n x = - \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |(\partial_r f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x$$

$$- (n-1) \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |x|^{-1} \overline{f(x)} (\partial_r f)(x) \, d^n x, \quad f \in C_0^\infty(B_n(0;\rho)), \tag{2.19}$$

we see that (2.18) becomes

$$0 \leqslant \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |(T_m f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x$$

$$= \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |(\partial_r f)(x)|^2 \, d^n x - [(n-2)/2]^2 \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |x|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \, d^n x \qquad (2.20)$$

$$- (1/4) \sum_{j=1}^{m} \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |x|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2} \, d^n x,$$

implying

$$\int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |(\partial_r f)(x)|^2 d^n x$$

$$\geqslant \int_{B_n(0;\rho)} |x|^{-2} |f(x)|^2 \left\{ \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x|)]^{-2} \right\} d^n x. \qquad (2.21)$$

Next, let $\Omega = B_n(x_0; \rho) \subset \mathbb{R}^n$. The proof of (2.16) is entirely similar to that of (2.17), upon replacing T_m by

$$T_{m,x_0} := \partial_r + [(n-2)/2]|x - x_0|^{-1}$$

$$+ (1/2)|x - x_0|^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x - x_0|)]^{-1}, \qquad (2.22)$$

and similarly, replacing T_m^+ by

$$T_{m,x_0}^+ = -\partial_r - (n/2)|x - x_0|^{-1}$$

$$+ (1/2)|x - x_0|^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x - x_0|)]^{-1}. \qquad (2.23)$$

Then it follows that

$$T_{m,x_0}^+ T_{m,x_0} = -\partial_r^2 - (n-1)|x - x_0|^{-1}\partial_r - [(n-2)/2]^2 |x - x_0|^{-2}$$

$$- (1/4)|x - x_0|^{-2} \sum_{j=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{j} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x - x_0|)]^{-2}, \qquad (2.24)$$

and continuing as in the proof of (2.17) yields (2.16) for $\Omega = B_n(x_0; \rho)$.

For an arbitrary bounded domain $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ with some fixed $x_0 \in \Omega$, we pick some $\rho > 0$ such that $0 < \operatorname{diam}(\Omega) < \rho < \gamma/e_m$. Since $C_0^\infty(\Omega) \subseteq C_0^\infty(B_n(x_0; \rho))$ (extending functions in $C_0^\infty(\Omega)$ by zero outside Ω), inequality (2.16) follows. $\qquad \square$

Remark 2.5. (i) Upon referring to the spherically symmetric case and oscillation theory for the second order differential expression

$$-\frac{d^2}{dr^2} - \frac{1}{4r^2} - \frac{1}{4r^2}\sum_{j=1}^{m}\prod_{k=1}^{j}[\ln_k(\gamma/r)]^{-2}, \qquad (2.25)$$

with $r > 0$ for $m = 0$ and $0 < r < \gamma/e_m$ for $m \in \mathbb{N}$, discussed in [11], one verifies that the constants $(n-2)^2/4$ and $1/4$ in (2.16) are optimal.

(ii) We note that our proof of (2.17), most likely, is not the shortest possible one, but brevity was not the point we had in mind. Instead, as was demonstrated in [7] (see also [18]), the value of our strategy of proof, relying on factorizations as in (2.11), lies in the wide applicability of this approach to higher-order inequalities, such as the well-known Rellich inequality and beyond. This will be more systematically explored elsewhere [8]. $\diamond$

We conclude with some applications of (2.15), (2.16) to Schrödinger operators with strongly singular potentials. Let $J \subseteq \mathbb{N}$ be an index set, and let $\{x_j\}_{j \in J} \subset \mathbb{R}^n$, $n \in \mathbb{N}$, $n \geqslant 2$, be a set of points such that

$$\inf_{\substack{j,j' \in J \\ j \neq j'}} |x_j - x_{j'}| \geqslant \varepsilon_0 \qquad (2.26)$$

for some $\varepsilon_0 > 0$. In addition, let $m \in \mathbb{N}$, let $\xi_j, \eta_j \in \mathbb{R}$, $j \in J$, and let $\delta, \gamma, \xi, \eta \in (0, \infty)$ with

$$|\xi_j| \leqslant \xi < (n-2)^2/4, \quad |\eta_j| \leqslant \eta < 1/4, \quad j \in J, \quad 0 < \varepsilon_0 < 4\gamma/e_m, \quad n \geqslant 3. \quad (2.27)$$

Next, we introduce the potential

$$W(x) = \sum_{j \in J} e^{-\delta|x-x_j|}\left[\frac{\xi_j}{|x - x_j|^2} + \eta_j \chi_{B_n(x_j;\varepsilon_0/4)}(x)\sum_{\ell=1}^{m}\prod_{k=1}^{\ell}[\ln_k(\gamma/|x-x_j|)]^{-2}\right],$$

$$x \in \mathbb{R}^n \setminus \{x_j\}_{j \in J}, \ n \geqslant 3, \quad (2.28)$$

with χ_M the characteristic function of $M \subset \mathbb{R}^n$.

Then an application of (2.16) (actually, (2.17) with $\rho = \varepsilon_0/4$) combined with [9, Theorem 3.2] shows that W (and hence, any scalar potential V satisfying $|V| \leqslant |W| + W_0$ a.e. on $\mathbb{R}^n$, with $0 \leqslant W_0 \in L^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$) is form bounded with respect to $H_0 = -\Delta$, $\text{dom}(H_0) = H^2(\mathbb{R}^n)$ in $L^2(\mathbb{R}^n)$, $n \geqslant 3$, with form bound strictly less than one (cf. also [4, p. 28–29], and the example in [9, p. 1033–1034]). In this context we recall that $\text{dom}\left(H_0^{1/2}\right) = H^1(\mathbb{R}^n)$, and that $C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$ is a form core for H_0.

Finally, when we replace (2.28) by

$$W(x) = \sum_{j \in J} e^{-\delta|x-x_j|} \eta_j \chi_{B_n(x_j;\varepsilon_0/4)}(x) \sum_{\ell=1}^{m} \prod_{k=1}^{\ell} [\ln_k(\gamma/|x-x_j|)]^{-2},$$

$$x \in \mathbb{R}^2 \setminus \{x_j\}_{j \in J}, \qquad (2.29)$$

with $\delta, \gamma, \eta \in (0, \infty)$ and $|\eta_j| \leqslant \eta < 1/4$, $j \in J$, $0 < \varepsilon_0 < 4\gamma/e_m$, these form boundedness considerations with respect to $H_0 = -\Delta$, $\mathrm{dom}(H_0) = H^2(\mathbb{R}^2)$ in $L^2(\mathbb{R}^2)$, with form bound strictly less than one, extend to the case where $n = 2$.

Acknowledgments. We are indebted to Gerald Teschl for inquiring whether (1.8) is true, which initiated the present note. Also, we are grateful to the anonymous referee for a very careful reading of our manuscript.

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