The Ceiling at P_{33}: Why the First-Half Ladder Stops at the 33rd Prime

Pedro Henrique Correa Garcia
Joinville, Santa Catarina, Brazil
garcia.pedro.wow@gmail.com

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Abstract

The prime ladder of the first-half series terminates at P_{33}. We derive the ceiling arithmetically, from the meta-label count of the rung-R_{13} meta-manifold. The count is 32 independent labels plus one ceiling slot, and the ceiling slot lands on the 33rd prime. This article is a counting argument. Its content is the explicit enumeration of the labels, the proof that the enumeration is exhaustive, and the identification of the bounding prime by index rather than by any external measurement. We make no physical claim. We count what the meta-manifold admits.

1 Introduction

Article 4 constructed the rung-R_{13} meta-manifold as a 2×2 block matrix whose entries are the rung-R_{12} polarity matrix of Article 3. Article 6 identified the archival layer $\mathcal{A}$ as the collection of dimensions contributed by primes P_n with $n \geq 14$, and proved that the archival layer has a discrete ceiling inherited from the meta-manifold.

This article fills in the ceiling: it counts the independent meta-labels of the rung-R_{13} meta-manifold, shows that the count is 32, and therefore shows that the 33rd prime is the first prime whose entry into the ladder has nowhere to land. The ceiling of the first-half ladder is then P_{33}, by counting alone.

> *Key idea*
>
> P_{33} is the ceiling because the rung-R_{13} meta-manifold admits exactly 32 independent labels, and the 33rd prime has no label left to enter.

2 Counting meta-labels

The rung-R_{13} meta-manifold is the 2×2 block

$$\mathrm{M}_{R_{13}} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathrm{LM}^{+} & \mathrm{LM}^{-} \\ \mathrm{NLM}^{+} & \mathrm{NLM}^{-} \end{pmatrix},$$

in which each block position carries the four entries of the rung-R_{12} polarity matrix

$$\mathrm{M}_{R_{12}} = \begin{pmatrix} N^+N^+ & N^+N^- \\ N^-N^+ & N^-N^- \end{pmatrix}.$$

We count the independent labels supported by $\mathrm{M}_{R_{13}}$.

Definition 2.1 (Meta-label)**.** *A* meta-label *of* $\mathrm{M}_{R_{13}}$ *is an ordered pair* (b, ℓ) *in which* $b \in \{\mathrm{LM}^+, \mathrm{LM}^-, \mathrm{NLM}^+, \mathrm{NLM}^-\}$ *is a block position and* $\ell \in \{N^+N^+, N^+N^-, N^-N^+, N^-N^-\}$ *is a local polarity. Two meta-labels are* independent *if they differ in at least one coordinate.*

Naively the number of ordered pairs (b, ℓ) is $4 \times 4 = 16$. This naive count is not the correct one. Two additional constraints act on the pairs.

Proposition 2.2 (Collapse constraint)**.** *A meta-label* (b, ℓ) *is* collapsed *if the block polarity* b *agrees with the local polarity* ℓ *in both of its two sign bits. A collapsed meta-label is not independent: it reduces to its local content and contributes no new address beyond what the rung-*R_{12} *polarity matrix already provides.*

Proof. The block position carries two sign bits (LM/NLM and $\pm$). The local polarity carries two sign bits ($\pm$ for the multiplicative axis and $\pm$ for the additive axis). If both pairs of bits agree simultaneously, the label (b, ℓ) is just the local polarity labeled by its own projection onto the block; the block position adds no information. Such labels are indistinguishable from their local content and are therefore not counted as independent meta-labels. □

Proposition 2.3 (Inconsistency constraint)**.** *A meta-label* (b, ℓ) *is* inconsistent *if the block polarity* b *disagrees with the local polarity* ℓ *in both of its two sign bits. An inconsistent meta-label does not correspond to any accessible configuration of the meta-manifold.*

Proof. A complete double-disagreement means the block polarity and the local polarity are antipodal. Antipodal pairs of polarities cannot be simultaneously realized by the meta-manifold without violating the closure of Article 4: the meta-manifold is defined by requiring that the block and local structures cohere modulo exactly one sign bit. Configurations that fail this coherence lie outside the image of the meta-manifold construction and contribute no label. □

Theorem 2.4 (Meta-label count)**.** *The rung-*R_{13} *meta-manifold supports exactly* 32 *independent meta-labels.*

Proof. There are 4 block positions and 4 local polarities, giving 16 naive pairs (b, ℓ). By Proposition 2.2, the 4 collapsed pairs (one per block position, matching both sign bits) are removed, leaving $16 - 4 = 12$ surviving pairs. By Proposition 2.3, the 4 inconsistent pairs (one per block position, disagreeing on both sign bits) are removed, leaving $12 - 4 = 8$ independent meta-labels per *half-meta-manifold.*

The full meta-manifold has two halves — the "archive" half corresponding to the $\emptyset^-$ pole of the archival axis of Article 6, and the "instantiate" half corresponding to the $(\emptyset^-)^{-1}$ pole. These two halves are distinct but exchanged by the R_{12} multiplicative polarity, and each supports its own 8 independent meta-labels, with no cross-label identification because the archive and instantiate operations are mutually inverse rather than equal (Proposition 3 (*Archive and instantiate are inverse*) of Article 6). The total is $8 + 8 = 16$ labels from the half-meta-manifolds alone.

Finally, each label carries a branching polarity ("currently instantiated" or "currently branched") inherited from the branching-futures reading of Article 6, which doubles the count a second time: $16 \times 2 = 32$. □

Remark 2.5 (Where the factor of two comes from, twice)**.** *The count doubles twice: once because the archival axis has two poles (archive and instantiate), and once because each pole carries a branching bit (instantiated or branched). The first doubling is forced by Proposition 3 (*Archive and instantiate are inverse*) of Article 6; the second is forced by Proposition 4 (*Branches live in $\mathcal{A}$*) of Article 6. Neither doubling is optional: removing either collapses the meta-manifold to a smaller structure that fails to close the local degrees of freedom.*

3 The 33rd slot

Theorem 2.4 says the meta-manifold has 32 independent labels. We now identify which primes those labels absorb, and which prime the 33rd slot falls on.

Definition 3.1 (Absorption queue)**.** *The* absorption queue *is the sequence of primes $P_1, P_2, P_3, \ldots$ paired with meta-labels in order of introduction: P_n is assigned to the n-th meta-label in a fixed enumeration of the* 32*. Once all* 32 *labels are assigned, the absorption queue is full.*

Theorem 3.2 (Ceiling at P_{33})**.** *The smallest index n for which P_n has no available meta-label in the rung-R_{13} absorption queue is $n = 33$. The corresponding prime is P_{33}.*

Proof. By Theorem 2.4 the meta-manifold has exactly 32 meta-labels. The absorption queue assigns each of $P_1, \ldots, P_{32}$ to a distinct label, exhausting the supply. The next prime in the sequence, P_{33}, finds no empty label and therefore cannot be absorbed into the first-half meta-manifold. It is the first prime beyond the ceiling. □

Key idea

P_{33} is the ceiling because 32 labels fit 32 primes, and the 33rd prime is the first with no label to enter.

4 The residual at $P_{33} + P_{33}^{-1} \cdot \epsilon$

The ceiling at P_{33} is not a hard wall. The rung-R_{12} polarity matrix acts multiplicatively on the archival layer (Proposition 1 (*Three structural properties of $\mathcal{A}$*), R_{12}, of Article 6), so a configuration at the ceiling has a small multiplicative leakage into the next absorption slot, which would have belonged to P_{34}. We estimate the leakage as a ratio of two primes.

Proposition 4.1 (Leakage ratio)**.** *The first-order multiplicative leakage of the ceiling at P_{33} into the slot of P_{34} is the ratio $1/P_{34}$ weighted by the number of meta-labels, giving the estimate*

$$\epsilon \approx \frac{\text{(meta-label count)}}{P_{34}} = \frac{32}{P_{34}}.$$

Proof. The multiplicative action of the polarity matrix contributes a factor of the reciprocal of the target prime per unit of source content. The source content at the ceiling is the full meta-label count 32; the target prime is P_{34}. The first-order estimate is the product, which is the stated ratio. Higher-order corrections require the detailed leakage calculation which is not developed in this article. □

Remark 4.2 (The residual is positive, small, and set by the prime gap $P_{34} - P_{33}$)**.** *The estimate of Proposition 4.1 has three properties we emphasise, because they distinguish the present derivation from a numerical fit:*

- *The residual ϵ is forced* positive*: the leakage is a multiplicative factor greater than one, corresponding to P_{33} borrowing mass from the unused P_{34} slot.*
- *The residual is forced* small*: it is of order $32/P_{34}$, which is $O(1/4)$ of the natural unit $1/P_{34}$, and $P_{34} = 139$ is large.*
- *The residual is set by the ratio P_{33}/P_{34}, which is fixed by arithmetic alone and has nothing to do with any external measurement. Any measurement of the ceiling with fractional part $O(32/P_{34})$ is consistent with the derivation; measurements with larger or differently signed fractional parts are not.*

Takeaway

The ceiling of the first-half ladder is P_{33} plus a multiplicative leakage of order $32/P_{34}$. The integer part is the label count; the fractional part is the prime-gap bleed-through.

5 Why this is a counting argument, not an empirical one

The derivation above lands on P_{33} for specific counting reasons, and the reasons chain back to the rung-structure of the ladder of Articles 0 through 6. It is worth stating explicitly what makes this different from numerology.

- **The index is not chosen.** The meta-manifold was constructed in Article 4 from the closure of the local arithmetic at rung R_{12} and the forced split at rung R_{11}, independently of any knowledge of the specific value of P_{33}. The count of 32 meta-labels follows from that construction, not from an attempt to match a target.
- **The residual is predicted, not fit.** A numerological derivation would give a fixed integer with no fractional part. The present derivation gives an integer plus a residual of forced sign and forced order of magnitude.
- **The ceiling is compulsory.** Every configuration of the first-half ladder terminates at or below rung P_{33} because nothing above it has a label. Any claim of a first-half result above the ceiling is a category error.

Remark 5.1 (What lives above P_{33})**.** *Above P_{33} is the second-half series, which treats primes up to P_{64} or P_{65} and is deferred. The second-half meta-manifold is not a doubling of the first-half meta-manifold: it is a distinct construction with a distinct label count, and its ceiling prime is not determined by the arithmetic of this article. The present article makes no claim about anything above P_{33}.*

6 The ceiling as a counting invariant

The central result of this article can be phrased as an arithmetic identity between three independently defined quantities.

Theorem 6.1 (Ceiling identity)**.** *Let L be the meta-label count of the rung-R_{13} meta-manifold (Theorem 2.4). Let C be the index of the smallest prime that the first-half ladder cannot absorb (Theorem 3.2). Let K be the number of primes P_n with $n \leq L+1$. Then*

$$L = 32, \qquad C = 33, \qquad K = 33.$$

In particular $C = K = L + 1$.

Proof. The three values are computed independently: $L = 32$ from the label count, $C = 33$ from the ceiling theorem, and $K = 33$ from the definition $K = L + 1 = 33$. The three match tautologically because the ceiling is the first slot past the label count. □

Remark 6.2. *The identity $C = L + 1$ is the cleanest statement of the ceiling: the first-half ladder stops at the prime whose index is one greater than the meta-label count. No external constant enters. The identity is arithmetic.*

Takeaway

The ceiling of the first-half ladder is the prime whose index is one more than the rung-R_{13} meta-label count. Both numbers are counted by arithmetic, and the counting matches.

7 Summary

The first-half ladder terminates at P_{33}. The ceiling is derived from the label count of the rung-R_{13} meta-manifold: 4 block positions times 4 local polarities, minus 4 collapsed labels and 4 inconsistent labels, times two for the archival poles, times two for the branching bit, gives 32. The 33rd slot falls on P_{33}, which is the smallest prime with no label to enter. A first-order multiplicative leakage into the next slot, of order $32/P_{34}$, gives the residual fractional part. The integer and fractional parts together are the ceiling of the first-half series, arithmetically counted and arithmetically corrected.

Nothing in this article refers to any external measurement. The derivation is a counting argument on a structure built in Articles 0 through 6.