

Tensor ranks: from asymptotic spectrum duality
to quantum functionals and moment polytopes

Jeroen Zuiddam

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- Key insight: complexity characterized by tensor rank and asymptotic behaviour

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- Key insight: complexity characterized by tensor rank and asymptotic behaviour
- Recent years: many tensor rank notions with various applications
(talk by Derksen in previous workshop)

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Christandl-Vrana-Zuiddam (2018)

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Christandl-Vrana-Zuiddam (2018)

- We construct such spectral points: quantum functionals
- Using representation theory (Schur-Weyl duality, moment polytopes)
and quantum information (talk by Christandl in prev. workshop)

Matrix
multiplication $\rightarrow$ Tensor ranks

:

R, Q, SR

(Strassen 1987-1991)

Matrix
multiplication



Tensor ranks



Asymptotic
behaviour

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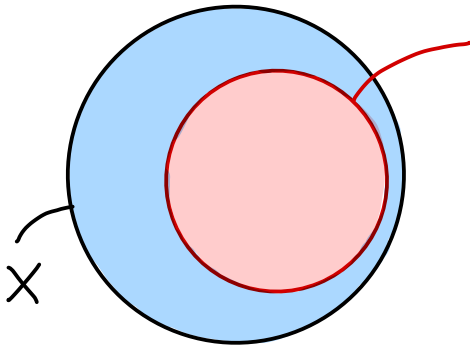
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Christandl-Vrana-Z 2018



Quantum
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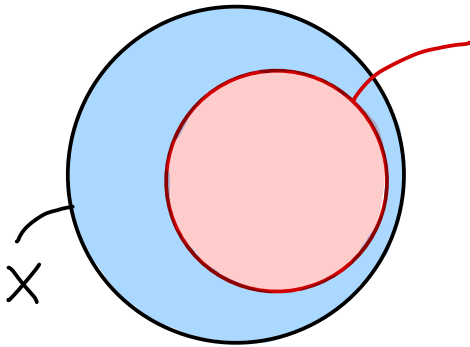


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Quantum
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Moment
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Christandl-Vrana-Z 2018

van den Berg - C - Lysikov
- Nieuwboer - Walter - Z 2025

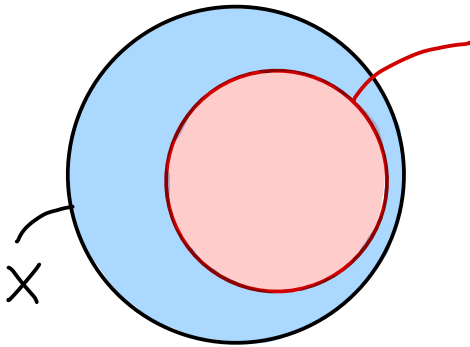
Quantum
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Moment
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Algorithms,
explicit constructions



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Christandl - Vrana - Z 2018

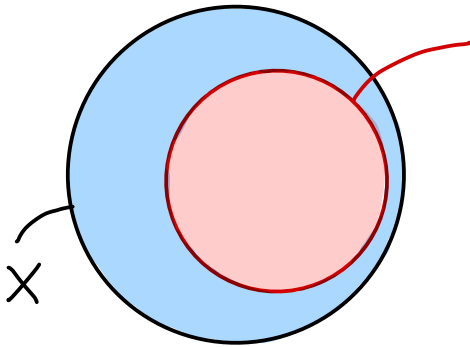
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Survey: Wigderson - Z 2025, Trento lectures 2025

1. Tensor ranks
2. Asymptotic spectrum duality
3. Quantum functionals

Intermezzo. Representation theory

4. Moment polytopes
5. Practical algorithm, explicit moment polytopes,
explicit quantum functionals, explicit "hard" tensors

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tensor $T \in \mathbb{C}^n \otimes \mathbb{C}^n \otimes \mathbb{C}^n$

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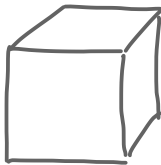
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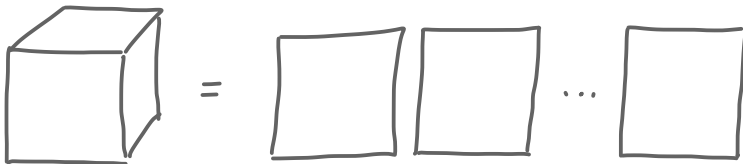
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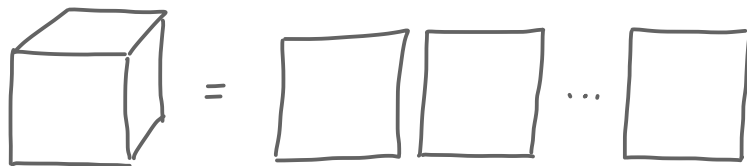
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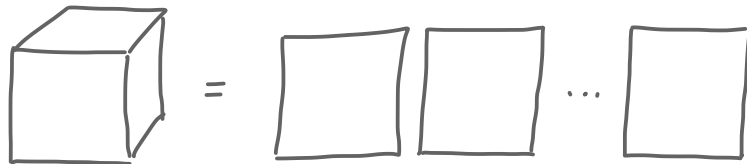


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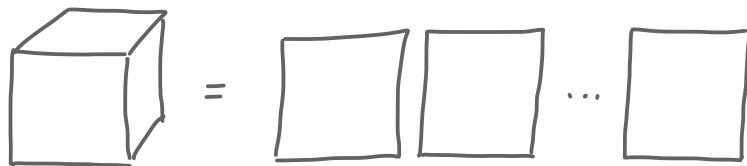
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Generic tensor has rank $\sim n^2$

Best known explicit construction has rank $c \cdot n$

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Lemma $2^\omega = \tilde{R}(\langle 2, 2, 2 \rangle)$

Problem Is there any $T \in \mathbb{C}^n \otimes \mathbb{C}^n \otimes \mathbb{C}^n$ such that $\tilde{R}(T) > n$

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More ranks:

subrank

slice rank

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$\mathcal{Q}$ $\triangleleft$

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slice rank $SR(T) = \min \{ a+b+c : \exists g \in GL,$

$$\text{supp}(g \cdot T) \subseteq [a] \times [n] \times [n]$$

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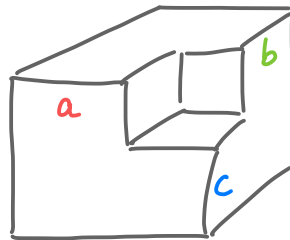
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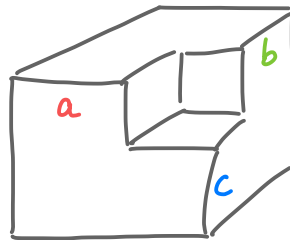
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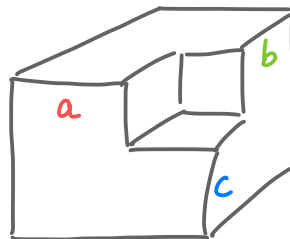
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$Q \leq \underline{Q} \leq SR$



Applications:

- combinatorics
- barriers

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Asymptotic spectrum $X := \{ \phi : \text{tensors} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_{\geq 0} : \forall S, T, \forall n \in \mathbb{N}, \\ \phi(S \otimes T) = \phi(S) \phi(T), \phi(S \oplus T) = \phi(S) + \phi(T), \phi(\langle n \rangle) = n, S \leq T \Rightarrow \phi(S) \leq \phi(T) \}$

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Problem What is X ? Ex: Flattening ranks $R_1, R_2, R_3 \in X$

Algebraic geometry

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challenge: Find X !

Calvin Laboratory History

Calvin Laboratory History

Geometric Complexity Theory

Program

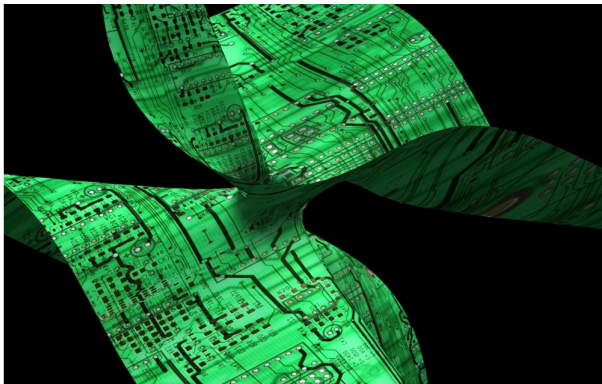
Algorithms and Complexity in Algebraic Geometry

Location

Calvin Lab Auditorium

Date

Monday, Sept. 15 – Friday, Sept. 19, 2014



Calvin Laboratory History

Geometric Complexity Theory

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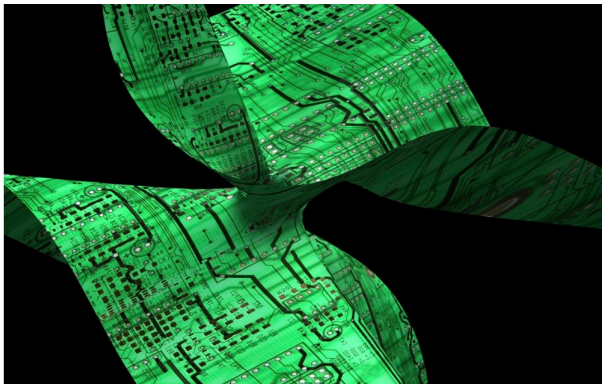
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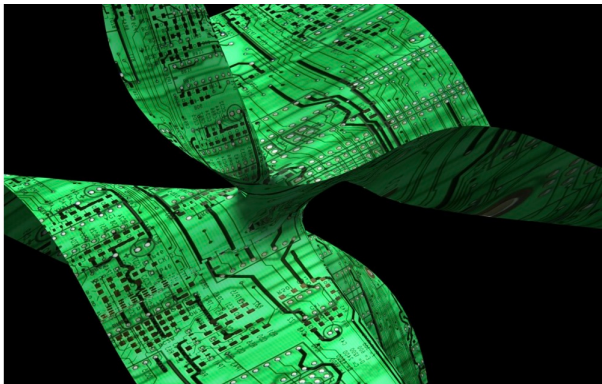
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Asymptotic Spectra: Old and New Insights

Video

Markus Bläser, Universität des Saarlandes

3. Quantum functionals (Christandl-Vrana-Z 2018)

Construction of spectral points (elements in X) :

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R_2

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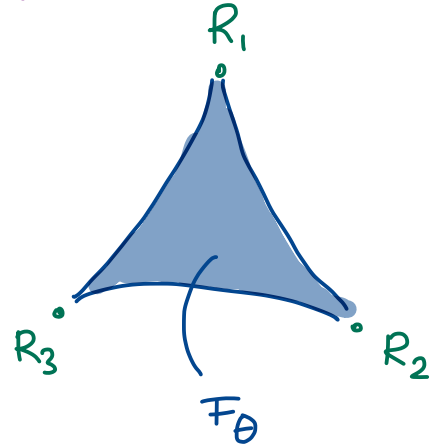
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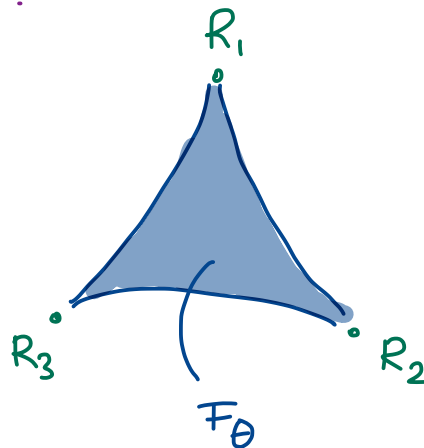
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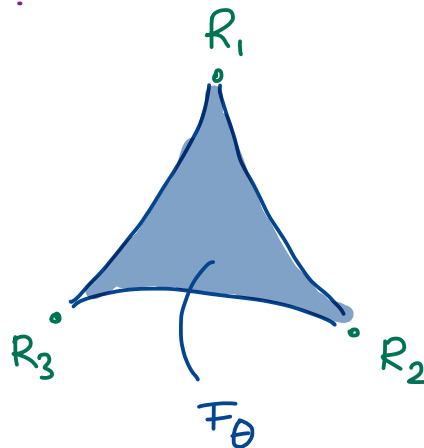
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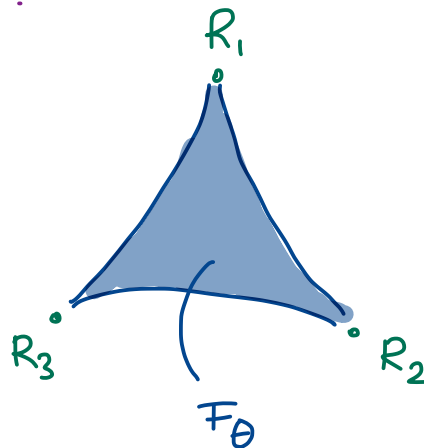
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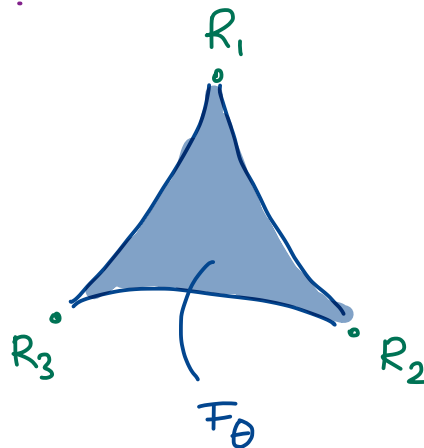
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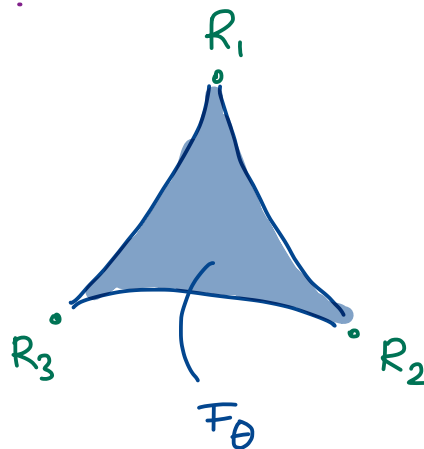
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$\Rightarrow$ asymptotic rank
conjecture, $w=2, \dots$

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$\rightsquigarrow$ Coarser classification that is meaningful and finite.
Moment polytopes $\Delta(T)$

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Representation theory description

$$\Delta(T) = \dots T^{\otimes n} \dots$$

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Intermezzo: Representation theory

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Subrepresentation $G \curvearrowright V$, $W \subseteq V$, $G \cdot W \subseteq W$

Intermezzo: Representation theory

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Isomorphism $G \curvearrowright V, W$, $\phi: V \rightarrow W$ bijective, G -equivariant. $V \cong W$.

Symmetric group irreps

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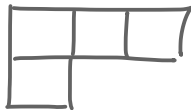
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match!

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Summary:

Moment polytopes

$$\Delta(T) := \left\{ (\text{spec}(S, S^*), \text{spec}(S_2 S_2^*), \text{spec}(S_3 S_3^*)) : S \in \overline{GL \cdot T}, \right. \\ \left. \|S\| = 1 \right\}$$

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Proof of $F_{\theta} \in X$ uses both descriptions, semigroup property of Kronecker coefficients, entropy inequalities, ..

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Algorithm. Given T , outputs a defining set of inequalities for $\Delta(T)$

Previously known $\Delta(T)$:

- for every $T \in \mathbb{C}^2 \otimes \mathbb{C}^2 \otimes \mathbb{C}^2$
- for generic $T \in \mathbb{C}^n \otimes \mathbb{C}^n \otimes \mathbb{C}^n$ $n = 3, 4, 5$ [Vergne-Walter, Ressayre]

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↗ Nurmier classification of GL-orbits in $\mathbb{C}^3 \otimes \mathbb{C}^3 \otimes \mathbb{C}^3$

Moment polytopes for $T \in \mathbb{C}^3 \otimes \mathbb{C}^3 \otimes \mathbb{C}^3$

We compute all 2g of them: arxiv.org/abs/2510.08336

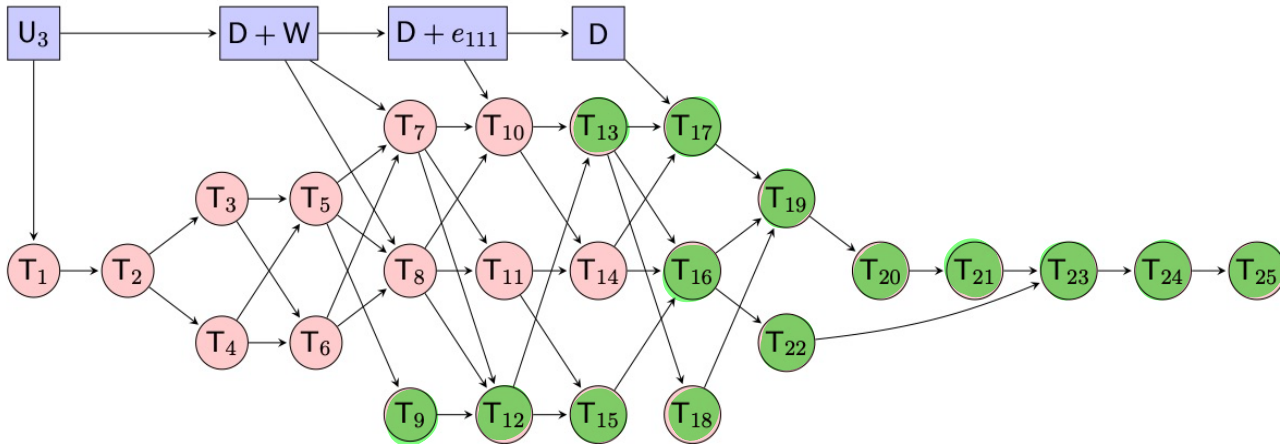
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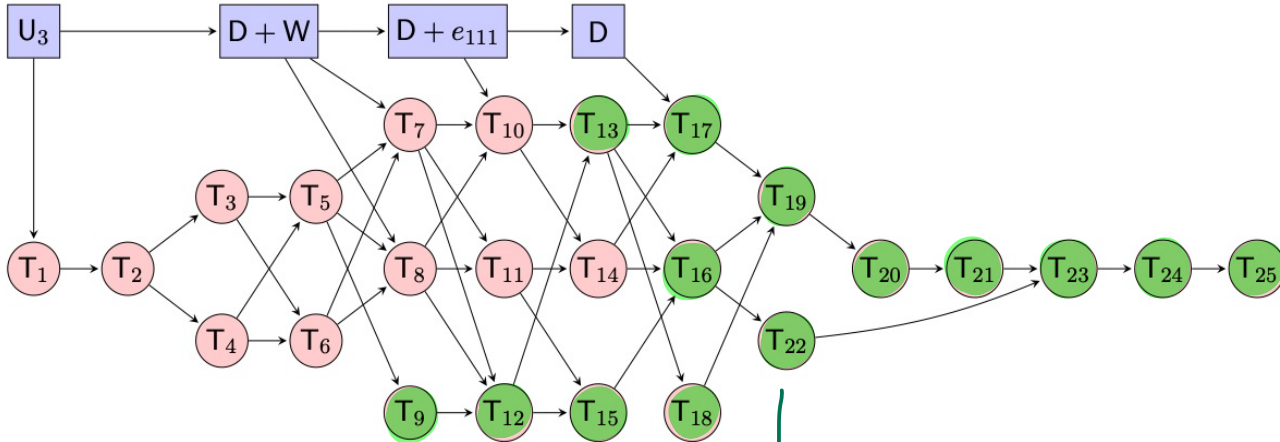
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$\langle 3 \rangle$

$e_1 \wedge e_2 \wedge e_3$



$\langle 1,1,3 \rangle \quad \langle 2 \rangle \quad W \quad \langle 1,1,2 \rangle \quad \langle 1 \rangle \quad \langle 0 \rangle$

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[illegible]

$$\mathbb{C}^3 \otimes \mathbb{C}^3 \otimes \mathbb{C}^3$$

$$\begin{aligned} T_{10} &= 113 + 122 + 131 + 212 + 221 + 311 \\ &= \mathbb{C}[x]/(x^3) \end{aligned}$$

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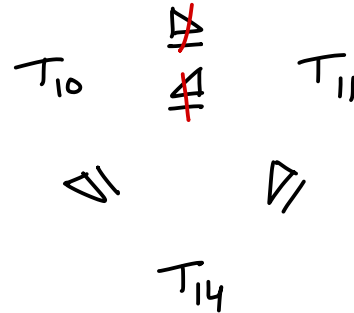
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hurmev

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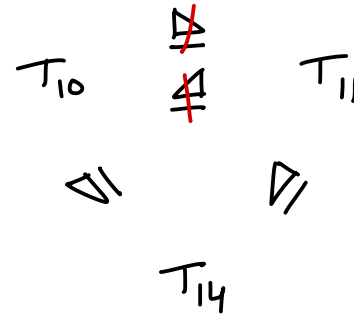
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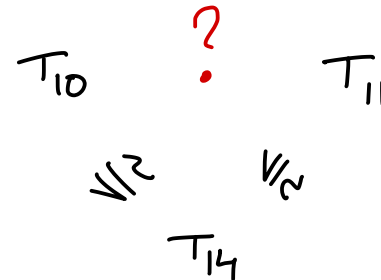
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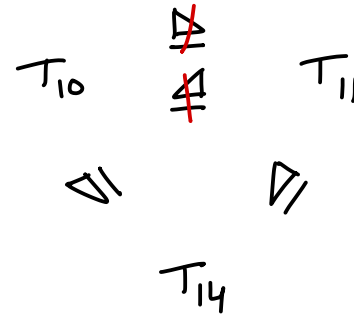
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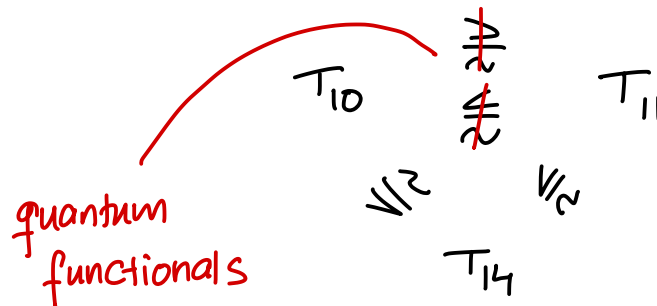
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$$\langle 4 \rangle \begin{array}{c} \stackrel{?}{\parallel} \\ \parallel \end{array} \langle 2,2,2 \rangle \Rightarrow \omega = 2$$

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Theorem $\forall n$, $\Delta(\langle n,n,n \rangle)$ is not maximal:

$$\exists p, \Delta(\langle n,n,n \rangle) \subsetneq \Delta(\langle n^2 \rangle)$$

~~ω~~
 p

ω
 p

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Problem: determine $\Delta(\langle n \rangle)$ and $\Delta(\langle m, m, m \rangle)$ [Bürgisser-Ikenmeyer]

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From slight modification of above:

Theorem $\underline{Q}(\langle n, n, n \rangle) = \lceil \frac{3}{4} n^2 \rceil$ reproving [Kopparty-Moshkovitz-Z]

Special classes of tensors

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Lemma

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Dimensions:

$$3n^2 + \lceil \frac{3}{4}n^2 \rceil - 3n = \quad " \quad < \quad 4n^2 - 3n \quad \overset{(n \geq 4)}{<} \quad n^3$$

(Conner-Gesmundo-Landsberg-Ventura-Wang 2020)

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$$3n^2 + \lceil \frac{3}{4}n^2 \rceil - 3n = \quad " \quad < \quad 4n^2 - 3n \quad \overset{(n \geq 4)}{<} \quad n^3$$

(Conner-Gesmundo-Landsberg-Ventura-Wang 2020)

Corollary • There are free tensors that are not tight (explicit constructions known)

Explicit non-free tensors

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Theorem

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Proof idea: gradient flow along moment map reduces problem to $U \in GL$.

Open problems

- (1) Are the quantum functionals all of X ?
- (2) What other (asymptotic) information does $\Delta(T)$ give?
- (3) Is there an efficient algorithm to test freeness?