

Roberto Pagaria

Università di Bologna

# Representation theory and configuration spaces

Seminar on Combinatorics, Lie Theory, and Topology

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Talk is being recorded.

Covered topics:

The category of finite sets

Ordered configuration spaces

The algebraic model

# The category $\mathbb{F}$

Let  $\mathbb{F}$  be the category whose objects are the finite sets  $[n] = \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$  for  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  and morphisms are the maps  $f: [n] \rightarrow [m]$ .

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## Definition

A representation of  $\mathbb{F}$  is a functor  $V: \mathbb{F} \rightarrow \text{Vec}_{\mathbb{Q}}$ , the category of (finite dimensional)  $\mathbb{Q}$ -vector spaces.

Equivalently, a representation is a collection of (finite dimensional) vector spaces  $(V[n])_{n \in \mathbb{N}}$  and linear maps  $f_*: V[n] \rightarrow V[m]$  for each map  $f \in \text{Map}([n], [m])$  such that  $(g \circ f)_* = g_* \circ f_*$ .

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## Example

Let  $D_0$  be the representation given by  $D_0[0] = \mathbb{Q}$  and  $D_0[n] = 0$  for  $n > 0$ . This is a representation because  $\text{Map}([n], [0]) = \emptyset$  for  $n > 0$ .

# Classical representation theory

For each representation  $V$  and  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ , the vector space  $V[n]$  is a representation of  $\mathfrak{S}_n$ , i.e. the group of bijections  $[n] \rightarrow [n]$ .

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## Theorem (Schur-Weyl duality)

Let  $W$  be a finite dimensional vector space, then there exists an isomorphism of  $GL(W) \times \mathfrak{S}_n$ -representations:

$$W^{\otimes n} = \bigoplus_{\substack{\lambda \vdash n \\ l(\lambda) \leq \dim W}} \mathbb{S}^\lambda(W) \boxtimes V_\lambda$$

where  $V_\lambda$  is an irreducible representation of  $\mathfrak{S}_n$  indexed by a partition  $\lambda = (\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots, \lambda_{l(\lambda)})$  of  $n$  (i.e.  $\lambda_1 + \dots + \lambda_{l(\lambda)} = n$ ) and  $\mathbb{S}^\lambda$  is the Schur functor.

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## Example

For  $n = 2$  we have  $W \otimes W = S^2 W \oplus \Lambda^2 W$ .



# The indecomposable projective representations

## Definition

A Schur projective representation of weight  $k$  is  $\mathbb{P}_\lambda$  for  $\lambda \vdash k$  defined by

$$\mathbb{P}_\lambda[n] = \mathbb{S}^\lambda(\mathbb{Q}^n)$$

and each  $f: [n] \rightarrow [m]$  induces  $\tilde{f}: \mathbb{Q}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}^m$  and the linear map  $\mathbb{S}^\lambda(\tilde{f}): \mathbb{P}_\lambda[n] \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_\lambda[m]$ .

The dimension of  $\mathbb{P}_\lambda[n]$  is given by the Schur polynomial  $s_\lambda(1^n)$ .

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## Example

The exact sequence of representations

$$\cdots \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{1^3} \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{1^2} \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_1 \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_0 \rightarrow 0$$

specialize on the object  $[n]$  to the Koszul complex

$$\cdots \rightarrow \Lambda^3 \mathbb{Q}^n \rightarrow \Lambda^2 \mathbb{Q}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{Q} \rightarrow 0.$$

# The representations $D_k$

## Definition

Let  $D_k$  be the kernel  $\ker(\mathbb{P}_{1^{k-1}} \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{1^{k-2}})$

The dimension of  $D_k[n] = V_{(n-k+1, 1^{k-1})}$  is  $\binom{n-1}{k-1}$  (for  $k > 0$ ).

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## Example

The representation  $\mathbb{P}_1$  has  $D_2$  as a subrepresentation:

$$0 \rightarrow D_2 \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_1 \rightarrow D_1 \rightarrow 0.$$

On the object  $[n]$  (for  $n > 0$ ) is

$$0 \rightarrow V \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{Q} \rightarrow 0$$

where  $V = \langle e_i - e_j \rangle$ . The sequence of  $\mathbb{F}$ -representation do not split (using  $i_1, i_2: [1] \rightarrow [2]$  the retraction  $r: \mathbb{Q} \rightarrow \mathbb{Q}^2$  would satisfy  $e_1 = i_1(r(1)) = r(1) = i_2(r(1)) = e_2$ ).

# The representations $C_\lambda$

## Definition

Let  $\lambda \vdash k$  with  $\lambda_1 > 1$ , the representation  $C_\lambda$  is defined by  $C_\lambda[n] = 0$  for  $n < k$  and  $C_\lambda[n] = \text{Ind}_{\mathfrak{S}_k \times \mathfrak{S}_{n-k}}^{\mathfrak{S}_n} V_\lambda \boxtimes 1_{n-k}$ .

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The dimension of  $C_\lambda[n]$  is  $\binom{n}{k} \dim V_\lambda = \binom{n}{k} \langle s_\lambda, p_{1^k} \rangle$ .  
 We say that  $C_\lambda$  is of weight  $k = |\lambda|$ .

# Some facts

## Definition

A representation  $V$  is *finitely generated* if there is a finite set  $\{v_i\}_{i=1,\dots,N}$  of elements  $v_i \in V[n_i]$  such that  $\langle v_i \rangle_{i=1,\dots,N} = V$ .

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## Theorem (Wiltshire-Gordon '14)

- ▶  $\mathrm{Hom}_{\mathbb{F}}(\mathbb{P}_\lambda, V) \cong \mathrm{Hom}_{\mathfrak{S}_k}(V_\lambda, V[k])$ .
- ▶ *The category of f.g. representations has the Jordan-Hölder property.*
- ▶ *The indecomposable projective are  $\{\mathbb{P}_\lambda\}_\lambda$ .*
- ▶ *The irreducible representations are  $\{D_k\}_{k \in \mathbb{N}}$  and  $\{C_\lambda\}_{\lambda_1 > 1}$ .*
- ▶ *Let  $V$  be f.g., the sequence  $\dim V[n]$  is polynomial in  $n$  for  $n > 0$ .*



## Definition

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## Example

Recall that  $\mathbb{P}_1[n] = \mathbb{Q}^n$ , we have  $\text{sk}_k \mathbb{P}_1 = \mathbb{P}_1$  for  $k \geq 1$  and  $\text{sk}_k \mathbb{P}_1 = 0$  otherwise. Therefore,  $\text{gr}_{\text{sk}}^1 \mathbb{P}_1 = \mathbb{P}_1$  is not semisimple. Moreover the inclusion  $i: D_2 \hookrightarrow \mathbb{P}_1$  induces the zero map  $\text{gr}_{\text{sk}}(i) = 0$  (indeed  $\text{gr}_{\text{sk}}^2 D_2 = D_2$ ).

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## Lemma (P. '20)

Let  $f: V \rightarrow W$  be a morphism of  $\mathbb{F}$ -representations. Suppose that  $V$  does not have composition factors of type  $D$ . Then

- ▶  $\text{gr}_{\text{sk}} V$  is semisimple,
- ▶ the map  $f$  and  $\text{gr}_{\text{sk}} f$  have the same rank.

# Computing resolutions

Theorem (Assaf, Speyer '18, Ryba '18)

The minimal projective resolution of  $C_\lambda$ ,  $\lambda \vdash k$ , is given by

$$0 \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^1 \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow \mathbb{P}^{k-1} \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_\lambda \rightarrow C_\lambda \rightarrow 0,$$

where  $\mathbb{P}^n = \bigoplus_{\mu \vdash n} \mathbb{P}_\mu^{c_\lambda^\mu}$  and the coefficients are

$$c_\lambda^\mu = \langle s_{\lambda'}, s_{\mu'}[L] \rangle,$$

where  $L$  is the Lyndon symmetric function (i.e., the character of the free Lie algebra).

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## Example

We have

$$0 \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{(1,1)} \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{(2,1)} \oplus \mathbb{P}_{(3)} \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{(4)} \rightarrow C_{(4)} \rightarrow 0,$$

and so  $\text{Ext}^1(C_{(4)}, C_{(2)}) = \mathbb{Q}$ .

# Ordered configuration spaces

Let  $X$  be a topological space. Define:

$$\text{Conf}_n(X) := \{(p_1, \dots, p_n) \in X^n \mid p_i \neq p_j\}$$

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## Example

$\text{Conf}_n(\mathbb{R}^2)$  is the complement of the hyperplane arrangement of type  $A_{n-1}$ .



# Delete a point

## Theorem (Fadell, Neuwirth 1962)

*If  $M$  is a manifold without boundary, then*

*$p: \text{Conf}_n(M) \rightarrow \text{Conf}_{n-1}(M)$  is a fibration with fibre  $M \setminus \{n-1 \text{ points}\}$ .*

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Recall the long exact sequence of homotopy groups:

$$\cdots \rightarrow \pi_n(F) \rightarrow \pi_n(E) \rightarrow \pi_n(B) \rightarrow \pi_{n-1}(F) \rightarrow \cdots$$

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## Corollary (Fadell, Neuwirth 1962)

*If  $S$  is a surface different from  $S^2$  and  $\mathbb{P}_2(\mathbb{R})$ , then  $\text{Conf}_n(S)$  is a  $K(\pi, 1)$ .*

# Add a point

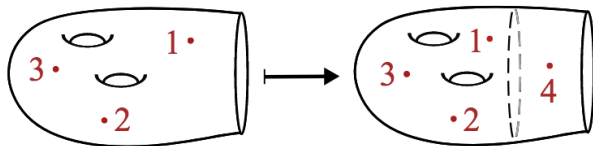
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# The Euler characteristic

Theorem (Felix, Thomas 2000)

*Let  $M$  be an even-dimensional manifold. Then*

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{\chi(\text{Conf}_n(M))}{n!} u^n = (1 + u)^{\chi(M)}$$

## Theorem (Ellenberg, Wiltshire-Gordon 2015)

*If  $M$  is a manifold that admits a non-zero vector field (i.e.  $\chi(M) = 0$ ) then  $\dim H^i(\text{Conf}_n(M); \mathbb{Q})$  is polynomial in  $n$ , for  $n > 0$ .*

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*Moreover, if  $M$  has two linearly independent vector fields (e.g. a complex variety with  $\chi(M) = 0$ ) then  $\bigoplus_n H^i(\text{Conf}_n(M); \mathbb{Q})$  is an  $\mathbb{F}$ -representation.*

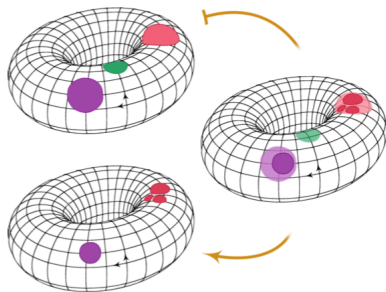


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The map  $f: [4] \rightarrow [3]$  is defined by  $f(1) = 1$ ,  
 $f(2) = f(3) = f(4) = 2$ .



# The Kriz model

Theorem (Kriz '94, Totaro '96)

*Let  $M$  be a smooth projective variety. There exists a dga  $(E(M), d)$  such that  $H^*(E_n(M), d) \simeq H^*(\text{Conf}_n(M); \mathbb{Q})$ .*

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Let  $E_n(M)$  be the exterior algebra on generators

- ▶  $x_i$  for  $x$  in a basis of  $H^*(M)$  and  $i \leq n$  with degree  $(\deg x, 0)$ ,
- ▶  $G_{i,j}$  for  $i < j$  with degree  $(0, d - 1)$ ,

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The differential of degree  $(d, 1 - d)$  is given by

- ▶  $d(x_i) = 0$ ,
- ▶  $d(G_{i,j}) = [\Delta]_{i,j}$ .

The action of  $\mathbb{F}$ 

If  $\chi(M) = 0$ , the Kriz model  $E(M) = \bigoplus_{n \in \mathbb{N}} E_n(M)$  is a representation of  $\mathbb{F}$  with the action of  $f: [n] \rightarrow [m]$  given by:

$$f_*(x_i) = x_{f(i)} \quad f_*(G_{i,j}) = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } f(i) = f(j) \\ G_{f(i),f(j)} & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

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Indeed, if  $f(i) = f(j)$  we have  $d(f_*(G_{i,j})) = 0$  and

$$f_*(d(G_{i,j})) = f_*([\Delta]_{i,j}) = \chi(M)[M]_{f(i)}.$$

# Representation theory of the Kriz model

Let  $\mathcal{E} = S^1 \times S^1$  be an elliptic curve.

Notice that  $E_n^{0,q}(\mathcal{E})$  is the Orlik-Solomon algebra for the arrangement of type  $A_n$ . So

$$E_n^{0,n-1}(\mathcal{E}) = \text{Ind}_{\mathfrak{C}_n}^{\mathfrak{S}_n} \zeta_n$$

as representation of  $\mathfrak{S}_n$  with basis the descending trees on  $[n]$ .



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Theorem (Stanley '82, Lehrer, Solomon '86, Ashraf, Azam, Berceanu '12)

The action of  $\mathfrak{S}_n$  on the Kriz model is

$$E_n^{p,q}(\mathcal{E}) \cong \bigoplus_{\substack{\lambda \vdash n \\ l(\lambda)=n-q \\ w(\lambda)=p}} \text{Ind}_{Z(\lambda)}^{\mathfrak{S}_n} \zeta_\lambda$$

where the sum is taken over all labelled partitions  $\lambda$  with blocks label by  $\{1, x, y, xy\}$ . The number  $w(\lambda)$  is the sum of the degree of the labels.

## Lemma (P. '20)

*The sign representation appears only in the first row  $E_n^{\bullet,0}(M)$  ( $M$  even dimensional).*

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## Theorem (P. '20)

For  $q > 0$  the composition factors are

$$E^{p,q}(\mathcal{E}) \sim \bigoplus_{\substack{|\lambda| - l(\lambda) = q \\ w(\lambda) = p}} C_{\text{Ind}_{Z(\lambda)}^{\mathfrak{S}_n} \zeta_\lambda},$$

where the sum is taken over all partitions  $\lambda$  without blocks of size one and label 1. Moreover

$$\text{gr}_{\text{sk}}^n E^{p,q}(\mathcal{E}) = \bigoplus_{\substack{|\lambda| = n \\ |\lambda| - l(\lambda) = q \\ w(\lambda) = p}} C_{\text{Ind}_{Z(\lambda)}^{\mathfrak{S}_n} \zeta_\lambda}.$$

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### Example

The differential is  $d(G_{i,j}) = x_i y_i - x_i y_j - x_j y_i + x_j y_j$  and the graded differential is  $\mathrm{gr} d(G_{i,j}) = -x_i y_j - x_j y_i$

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We have  $\mathrm{gr}^n E^{p,q}(\mathcal{E}) = 0$  for  $n \leq q$  or  $2(n - q) < p$  or  $n > 2q + p$ .

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### Example

The differential is  $d(G_{i,j}) = x_i y_i - x_i y_j - x_j y_i + x_j y_j$  and the graded differential is  $\mathrm{gr} d(G_{i,j}) = -x_i y_j - x_j y_i$

We have  $\mathrm{gr}^n E^{p,q}(\mathcal{E}) = 0$  for  $n \leq q$  or  $2(n - q) < p$  or  $n > 2q + p$ .

### Corollary (P. '20)

For  $q > 0$  we have as  $\mathfrak{S}_n$ -representation

$$H^{p,q}(E_n^{\bullet, \bullet}(\mathcal{E}), d) = \bigoplus_k \mathrm{Ind}_{\mathfrak{S}_k \times \mathfrak{S}_{n-k}}^{\mathfrak{S}_n} H^{p,q}(\mathrm{gr}_{\mathrm{sk}}^k E_k^{\bullet, \bullet}(\mathcal{E}), \mathrm{gr} d) \boxtimes 1_{n-k}.$$

For  $q = 0$  we have

$$H^{p,0}(E_n^{\bullet, \bullet}(\mathcal{E}), d) = \mathbb{P}_{1^p} \boxtimes \mathbb{V}_p \oplus \mathbb{P}_{1^{p-1}} \boxtimes \mathbb{V}_{p-2}$$

## Lemma

Let  $f: \mathbb{N}_0 \rightarrow \mathbb{N}$  be a polynomial function, i.e.  $f \in \mathbb{Q}[x]$ . Then  $f(n) = \sum_{i=0}^{\deg f} a_i \binom{n}{i}$  for some unique integer coefficients  $a_i \in \mathbb{Z}$ .



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## Example

For  $M = S^3$  we have  $H^2(\text{Conf}_n(S^3)) = H^{0,2}(E_n^{\bullet,\bullet}(S^3), d)$  and  $H^2(\text{Conf}_\bullet(S^3)) = D_3$  as  $\mathbb{F}$ -module. Therefore  $\dim H^2(\text{Conf}_n(S^3)) = \binom{n}{2} - \binom{n}{1} + \binom{n}{0}$ .

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## Corollary (P. '20)

For all  $n$  we have

$$\dim H^{p,q}(E_n^{\bullet,\bullet}(\mathcal{E}), d) = \sum_k \binom{n}{k} \dim H^{p,q}(\text{gr}_{\text{sk}}^k E^{\bullet,\bullet}(\mathcal{E}), \text{gr } d).$$

## Theorem (P. '20)

The Betti numbers of  $\text{Conf}_n(\mathcal{E})$  are:

$$b_0 = 1,$$

$$b_1 = 2n,$$

$$b_2 = 2\binom{n}{3} + 3\binom{n}{2} + n,$$

$$b_3 = 14\binom{n}{4} + 8\binom{n}{3} + 2\binom{n}{2},$$

$$b_4 = 32\binom{n}{6} + 74\binom{n}{5} + 32\binom{n}{4} + 5\binom{n}{3},$$

$$b_5 = 63\binom{n}{8} + 427\binom{n}{7} + 490\binom{n}{6} + 154\binom{n}{5} + 18\binom{n}{4},$$

$$b_k = c_k \binom{n}{2k-2} + o(n^{2k-2}),$$

where  $c_k \geq \binom{2k-3}{k-3}$ .

## Conjecture

The coefficient  $c_k$  is equal to  $\binom{2k-3}{k-3}$ .

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From the previous theorem, for  $k > 5$  we have

$\text{gr}_{\text{sk}}^{2k} H^k(E^{\bullet, \bullet}(\mathcal{E})) = 0$  and  $\text{gr}_{\text{sk}}^{2k-1} H^k(E^{\bullet, \bullet}(\mathcal{E})) = 0$ . Moreover

$$\text{gr}_{\text{sk}}^{2k-2} H^k(E^{\bullet, \bullet}(\mathcal{E})) = \text{gr}_{\text{sk}}^{2k-2} H^{2, k-2}(E^{\bullet, \bullet}(\mathcal{E}))$$

that contains  $C_{(k+1, 1^{k-3})}$  ( $c_k = \dim V_{(k+1, 1^{k-3})}$ ).

**Thanks for listening!**

roberto.pagaria@unibo.it