

# Free Probability and Free Cumulants

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## Something Old and Something New

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# Section 1

## Freeness



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- 1991 Voiculescu discovers relation with random matrices (which leads, among others, to deep results on free group factors)
- 1994 Speicher and Nica develop a combinatorial theory of freeness, based on the notion of "free cumulants"
- later ... many new results on operator algebras, eigenvalue distribution of random matrices, and much more ....

# Definition of freeness

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- Let  $(\mathcal{A}, \varphi)$  be **non-commutative probability space**, i.e.,  $\mathcal{A}$  is a unital algebra and  $\varphi : \mathcal{A} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  is unital linear functional (i.e.,  $\varphi(1) = 1$ )



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- Unital subalgebras  $\mathcal{A}_i$  ( $i \in I$ ) are **free** or **freely independent**, if  $\varphi(a_1 \cdots a_n) = 0$  whenever
  - ▶  $a_i \in \mathcal{A}_{j(i)}, \quad j(i) \in I \quad \forall i,$
  - ▶  $j(1) \neq j(2) \neq \cdots \neq j(n)$
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  - ▶  $j(1) \neq j(2) \neq \cdots \neq j(n)$
  - ▶  $\varphi(a_i) = 0 \quad \forall i$
- Random variables  $x_1, \dots, x_n \in \mathcal{A}$  are free, if their generated unital subalgebras  $\mathcal{A}_i := \text{algebra}(1, x_i)$  are so.

# What is freeness?

## Remark

Freeness between  $x$  and  $y$  is an infinite set of equations relating various moments in  $x$  and  $y$ :

$$\varphi\left(p_1(x)q_1(y)p_2(x)q_2(y)\cdots\right) = 0$$

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Basic observation: freeness between  $x$  and  $y$  is actually a **rule for calculating mixed moments** in  $x$  and  $y$  from the moments of  $x$  and the moments of  $y$ :

$$\varphi\left(x^{m_1}y^{n_1}x^{m_2}y^{n_2}\cdots\right) = \text{polynomial}(\varphi(x^i), \varphi(y^j))$$

## Example

If  $x$  and  $y$  are free, then we have

$$\varphi(x^m y^n) = \varphi(x^m) \cdot \varphi(y^n)$$

$$\varphi(x^{m_1} y^n x^{m_2}) = \varphi(x^{m_1+m_2}) \cdot \varphi(y^n)$$

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## Remark

Free independence is a rule for calculating mixed moments, analogous to the concept of independence for random variables.

Note: free independence is a different rule from classical independence; free independence occurs typically for **non-commuting random variables**, like operators on Hilbert spaces or (random) matrices.

# Where does freeness show up?

## Important occurrences

- generators of the free group in the corresponding free group von Neumann algebras  $L(\mathbb{F}_n)$



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- black holes, tensor networks, fluctuations of Q-SSEP, eigenstate thermalization hypothesis, etc ...

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- How can we understand those rules for mixed moments in a systematic way? —> **free cumulants**

## Section 2

**What is freeness?**

**A universal concept!**

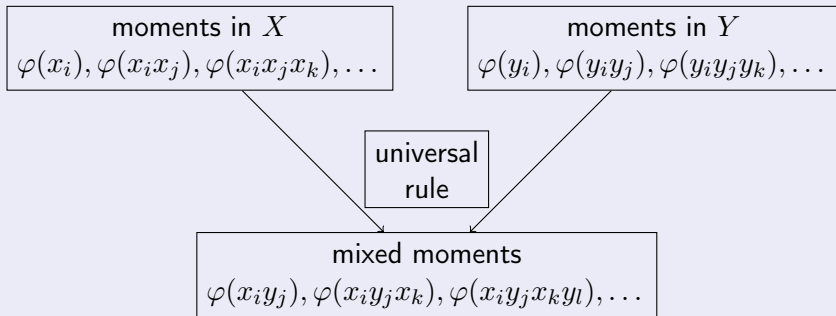


# Universal products

How to get mixed moments in a universal way?

Input: moments of  $\{x_i\}$  and moments of  $\{y_i\}$

Output: mixed moments in  $\{x_i, y_j\}$



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So by general principles, there are only two possibilities for  $\varphi(xyxy)$ :

- $\varphi(xx)\varphi(yy)$
- $\varphi(xx)\varphi(y)\varphi(y) + \varphi(x)\varphi(x)\varphi(yy) - \varphi(x)\varphi(y)\varphi(x)\varphi(y)$

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### more possibilities

without unital: also boolean product

without commutative: also monotone product

## Section 3

# How do we understand freeness conceptually: free cumulants

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# Understanding the freeness rule: the idea of cumulants

- write moments in terms of other quantities, which we call **free cumulants**
- freeness is much easier to describe on the level of free cumulants: **vanishing of mixed cumulants**
- relation between moments and cumulants is given by summing over **non-crossing or planar partitions**

# Non-crossing partitions

## Definition

A **partition** of  $\{1, \dots, n\}$  is a decomposition  $\pi = \{V_1, \dots, V_r\}$  with

$$V_i \neq \emptyset, \quad V_i \cap V_j = \emptyset \quad (i \neq j), \quad \bigcup_i V_i = \{1, \dots, n\}$$

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$\pi$  is **non-crossing** if we do not have  $p_1 < q_1 < p_2 < q_2$  such that  $p_1, p_2$  are in same block,  $q_1, q_2$  are in same block, but those two blocks are different.

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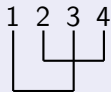
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## Remark

$\mathbf{NC}(n)$  is actually a lattice with refinement order.

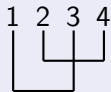
the only crossing partition for  $n = 4$

$$\pi = \{(1, 3), (2, 4)\}$$

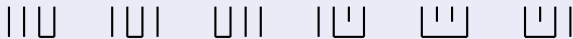
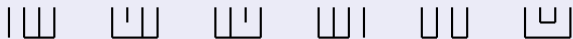


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$NC(4)$ : the 14 non-crossing partitions for  $n = 4$





# Moments and cumulants

## Definition

For unital linear functional

$$\varphi : \mathcal{A} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$$

we define **cumulant functionals**  $\kappa_n$  (for all  $n \geq 1$ )

$$\kappa_n : \mathcal{A}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$$

as multi-linear functionals by moment-cumulant relation

$$\varphi(a_1 \cdots a_n) = \sum_{\pi \in NC(n)} \kappa_{\pi}[a_1, \dots, a_n]$$

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## Remark

Note: classical cumulants are defined by a similar formula, where only  $NC(n)$  is replaced by  $\mathcal{P}(n)$

Example ( $n = 4$ )

$$\begin{aligned} \varphi(a_1 a_2 a_3 a_4) = & \quad \text{||||} + \text{| ||} + \text{|| |} + \text{|||} + \text{|| |} \\ & + \text{|||} + \text{|||} + \text{|||} + \text{|||} + \text{|||} \\ & + \text{| ||} + \text{|| |} + \text{|||} + \text{|||} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} = & \quad \kappa_4(a_1, a_2, a_3, a_4) + \kappa_1(a_1)\kappa_3(a_2, a_3, a_4) \\ & + \kappa_1(a_2)\kappa_3(a_1, a_3, a_4) + \kappa_1(a_3)\kappa_3(a_1, a_2, a_4) \\ & + \kappa_3(a_1, a_2, a_3)\kappa_1(a_4) + \kappa_2(a_1, a_2)\kappa_2(a_3, a_4) \\ & + \kappa_2(a_1, a_4)\kappa_2(a_2, a_3) + \kappa_1(a_1)\kappa_1(a_2)\kappa_2(a_3, a_4) \\ & + \kappa_1(a_1)\kappa_2(a_2, a_3)\kappa_1(a_4) + \kappa_2(a_1, a_2)\kappa_1(a_3)\kappa_1(a_4) \\ & + \kappa_1(a_1)\kappa_2(a_2, a_4)\kappa_1(a_3) + \kappa_2(a_1, a_4)\kappa_1(a_2)\kappa_1(a_3) \\ & + \kappa_2(a_1, a_3)\kappa_1(a_2)\kappa_1(a_4) + \kappa_1(a_1)\kappa_1(a_2)\kappa_1(a_3)\kappa_1(a_4) \end{aligned}$$

# Freeness $\hat{=}$ vanishing of mixed cumulants

## Theorem (Speicher 1994)

*The fact that  $x_1, \dots, x_m$  are free is equivalent to the fact that*

$$\kappa_n(x_{i(1)}, \dots, x_{i(n)}) = 0$$

*whenever*

- $1 \leq i(1), \dots, i(n) \leq m$
- *there are  $p, q$  such that  $i(p) \neq i(q)$  (in particular,  $n \geq 2$ )*

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## Example

If  $x$  and  $y$  are free then:  $\varphi(xyxy) =$

$$\kappa_1(x)\kappa_1(x)\kappa_2(y, y) + \kappa_2(x, x)\kappa_1(y)\kappa_1(y) + \kappa_1(x)\kappa_1(y)\kappa_1(x)\kappa_1(y)$$



# Sum of free variables: description via $R$ -transform

## Definition

Consider a random variable  $x \in \mathcal{A}$ . We define its **Cauchy transform**  $G = G_x$  and its  **$\mathcal{R}$ -transform**  $\mathcal{R} = \mathcal{R}_x$  by

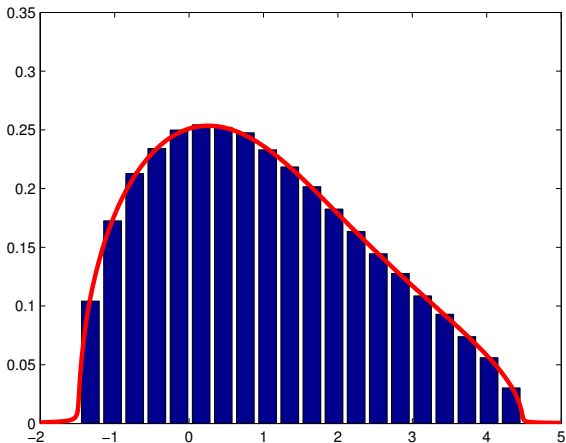
$$G(z) = \frac{1}{z} + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{\varphi(x^n)}{z^{n+1}}, \quad \mathcal{R}(z) = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \kappa_n(x, \dots, x) z^{n-1}$$

## Theorem (Voiculescu 1986, Speicher 1994)

Then we have

- $\frac{1}{G(z)} + \mathcal{R}(G(z)) = z$
- $\mathcal{R}_{x+y}(z) = \mathcal{R}_x(z) + \mathcal{R}_y(z)$  if  $x$  and  $y$  are free

# Eigenvalues of the sum of independent Gaussian and Wishart $3000 \times 3000$ random matrices



# Product of free variables: description via $S$ -transform

Theorem (Voiculescu 1987; Haagerup 1997; Nica, Speicher 1997)

Put

$$M_x(z) := \sum_{m=1}^{\infty} \varphi(x^m) z^m$$

and define

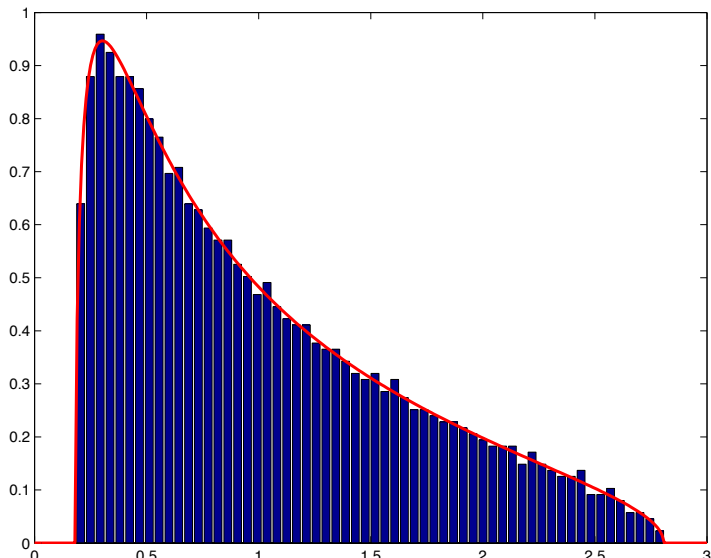
$$S_x(z) := \frac{1+z}{z} M_x^{\langle -1 \rangle}(z) \quad \text{\textit{S-transform of } } x$$

Then: If  $x$  and  $y$  are free, we have

$$S_{xy}(z) = S_x(z) \cdot S_y(z).$$



# Eigenvalues of the product of two independent Wishart $2000 \times 2000$ random matrices



## Section 4

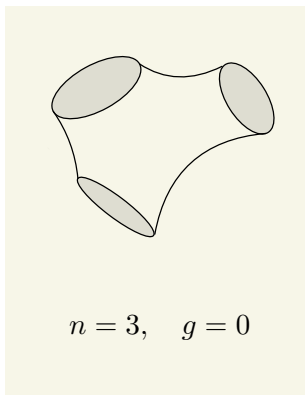
**And now something new: Generalization to higher order and arbitrary genus**

# Topological numbers, indexed by genus $g$ and numbers $l_1, \dots, l_n$ of points on $n$ boundaries

$$\alpha_{g;l_1,\dots,l_n}$$

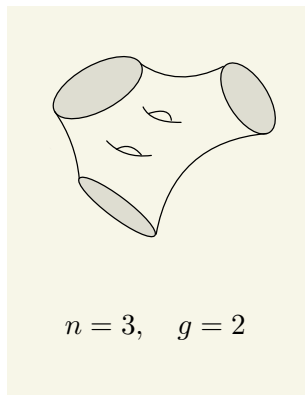
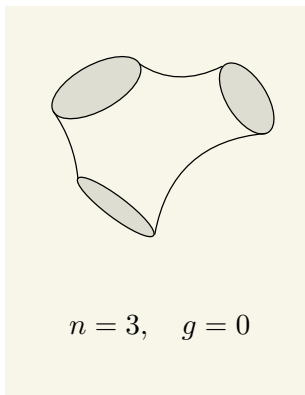
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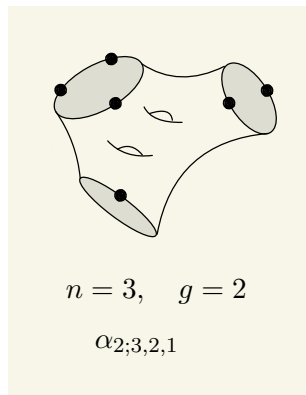
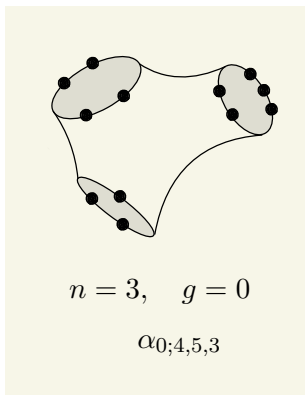
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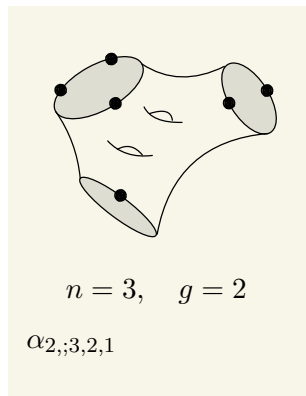
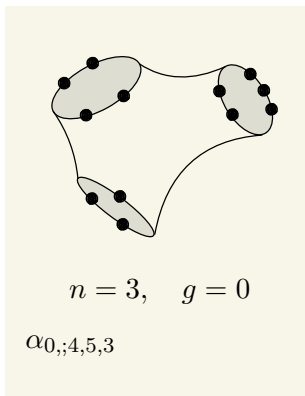
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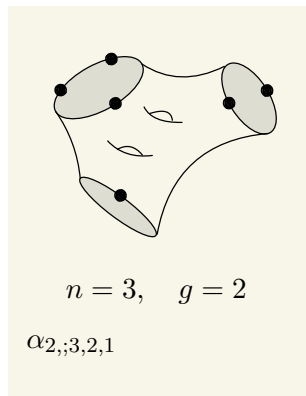
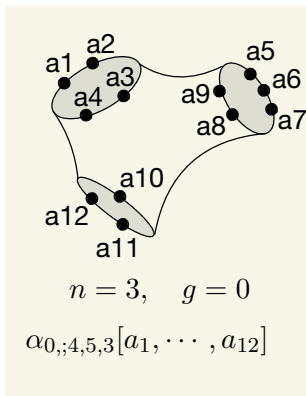
# Topological linear functionals, indexed by genus $g$ and numbers $l_1, \dots, l_n$ of points on $n$ boundaries

$$\alpha_{g;l_1, \dots, l_n}(a_1, \dots, a_{l_1}, a_{l_1+1}, \dots, a_{l_1+\dots+l_n}) \quad a_i \in \mathcal{A} \quad \text{some algebra } \mathcal{A}$$



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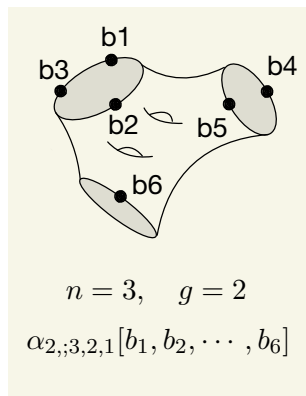
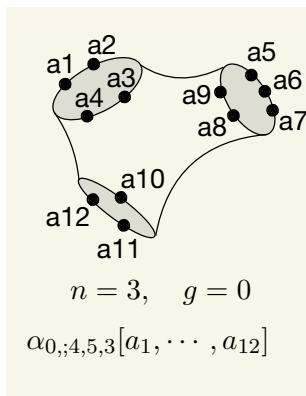
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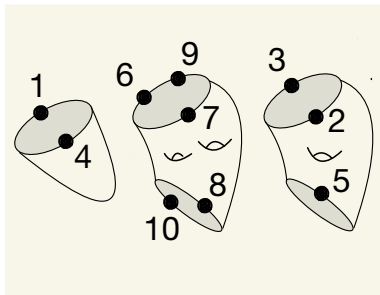
# Topological linear functionals, indexed by genus $g$ and numbers $l_1, \dots, l_n$ of points on $n$ boundaries

$$\alpha_{g;l_1, \dots, l_n}(a_1, \dots, a_{l_1}, a_{l_1+1}, \dots, a_{l_1+\dots+l_n}) \quad a_i \in \mathcal{A} \quad \text{some algebra } \mathcal{A}$$

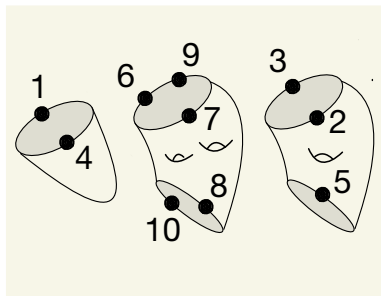


# Encoding in surfaced permutations $\mathbb{P}\mathbb{S}$ (or partitioned permutations with genus)

surfaced permutation:  $(\mathcal{V}, \pi, g)$



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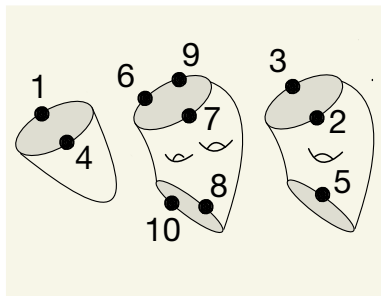


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- $\pi$  is the permutation with cycles according to all the boundaries

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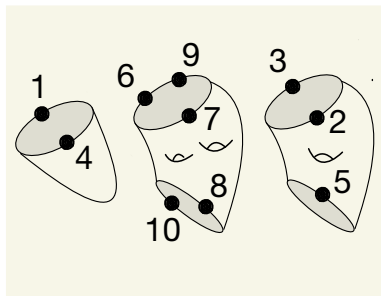


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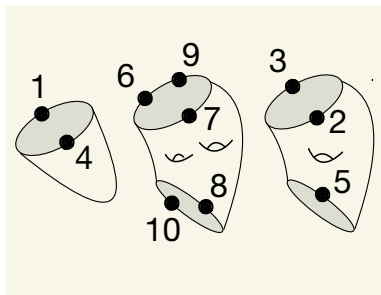


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- $g$  is the vector of genera of the components

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# Multiplicative functions on surfaced permutations

## Definition

A function  $f: \mathbb{PS} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  is called multiplicative if

$$f(\mathcal{V}, \pi, g) = \prod_{B \in \mathcal{V}} f(B, \pi|_B, g|_B)$$

and if it is invariant under conjugation of  $\pi$ .

# Example for multiplicativity

$$f\left( \begin{array}{c} 1 \\ \bullet \\ \diagdown \\ \bullet \\ 4 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} 6 \\ \bullet \\ \bullet \\ 9 \\ \bullet \\ 7 \\ \text{---} \\ \bullet \\ 8 \\ \bullet \\ 10 \end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c} 3 \\ \bullet \\ \bullet \\ 2 \\ \bullet \\ 5 \end{array} \right) = f\left( \begin{array}{c} 1 \\ \bullet \\ \diagdown \\ \bullet \\ 4 \end{array} \right) \times f\left( \begin{array}{c} 6 \\ \bullet \\ \bullet \\ 9 \\ \bullet \\ 7 \\ \text{---} \\ \bullet \\ 8 \\ \bullet \\ 10 \end{array} \right) \times f\left( \begin{array}{c} 3 \\ \bullet \\ \bullet \\ 2 \\ \bullet \\ 5 \end{array} \right)$$

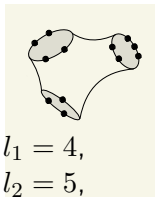


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# Our examples for such multiplicative functions: correlations coming from random matrices

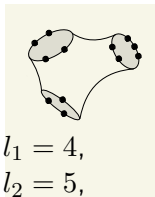
Let  $A = (a_{ij})_{i,j=1}^N$  be random matrix. Let  $k_r$  be classical cumulants:



- $l_1 = 4,$   
 $l_2 = 5,$   
 $l_3 = 3$
- $\gamma_1 = (1, 2, 3, 4)$
- $\gamma_2 = (5, 6, 7, 8, 9)$
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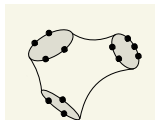
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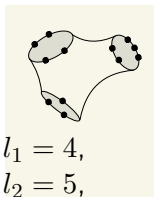
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$$\begin{aligned}
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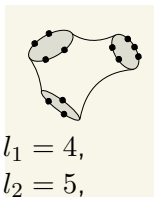
- product along cycles of matrix entries

$$\begin{aligned} k_n\left(\prod a_{j\gamma_1(j)}, \dots, \prod a_{j\gamma_n(j)}\right) \\ = \sum_g N^{-d+2-n-2g} \kappa_{g,l_1,\dots,l_n} \end{aligned}$$

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$$\begin{aligned} k_3(a_{12}a_{23}a_{34}a_{41}, a_{56}a_{67}a_{78}a_{89}a_{95}, \dots) \\ = \sum_g N^{-13-2g} \kappa_{g,4,5,3} \end{aligned}$$

# Moment-cumulant formulas

- “moments” are given by collection of numbers  $(\varphi_{g;l_1,\dots,l_n})_{n;l_1,\dots,l_n;g}$
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  - ▶ corresponding to “product of surfaced permutations”

▶ skip details

# Product of surfaced permutations

## Definition

Let  $(\mathcal{V}, \pi, g)$  and  $(\mathcal{W}, \sigma, h)$  be surfaced permutations. We define their product to be

$$(\mathcal{V}, \pi, g) \odot (\mathcal{W}, \sigma, h) = ( \quad , \quad , \quad )$$

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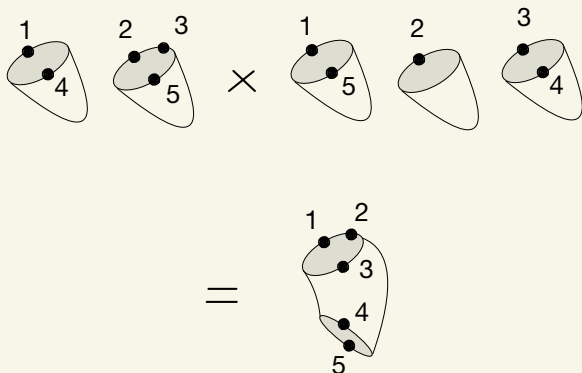
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- $\mathcal{V} \vee \mathcal{W}$  is the join of the two set partitions  $\mathcal{V}$  and  $\mathcal{W}$
- $\pi\sigma$  is the product of the two permutations  $\pi$  and  $\sigma$
- $k$  is given in terms of  $g$  and  $h$  and a “genus defect” coming from the multiplication  
(genus can be created, but not destroyed by multiplication)

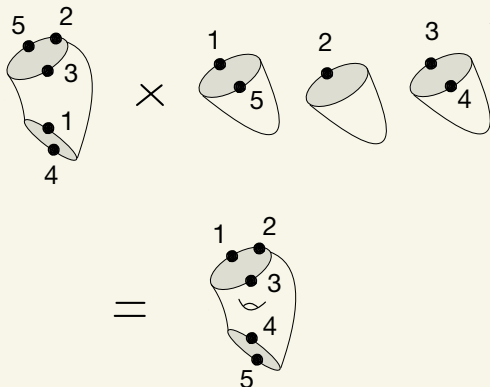
Example  $((n = 1, g = 0) \times (n = 1, g = 0) = (n = 2, g = 0))$



no creation of genus

$$\{(1, 4)\}\{(2, 3, 5)\} \times \{(1, 5)\}\{(2)\}\{(3, 4)\} = \{(123)(45)\}.$$

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# Functions on $\mathbb{PS}$ and their convolution

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Let  $f_1, f_2: \mathbb{PS} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  be functions, we define their convolution by

$$f_1 \circledast f_2(\mathcal{U}, \gamma, k) = \sum_{(\mathcal{V}, \pi, g) \odot (\mathcal{W}, \sigma, h) = (\mathcal{U}, \gamma, k)} f_1(\mathcal{V}, \pi, g) f_2(\mathcal{W}, \sigma, h).$$

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### Fact

The convolution of two multiplicative functions is multiplicative.

# Delta, Zeta, and Möbius function on $\mathbb{P}\mathcal{S}$

## Delta function

The unit element w.r.t. the convolution is given by the multiplicative delta function

$$\delta(\mathcal{V}, \pi, g) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } (0_e, e, 0) \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases},$$

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### Möbius function

The zeta function has an inverse with respect to convolution. This is called Möbius function and denoted by  $\mu$ . It is also multiplicative.

$$\zeta \circledast \mu = \delta, \quad \mu \circledast \zeta = \delta.$$

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This corresponds then to the combinatorics of higher order free probability theory.

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## Moment-cumulant formulas

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- in this context the surfaced permutations with  $g = 0$  are called partitioned permutations
- in particular, for  $n = 1$ , partitioned permutations can be identified with non-crossing partitions and everything reduces to ordinary free probability

# Our questions on higher order free probability theory

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## [BCGLS]

“Analytic theory of higher order free cumulants” (arxiv.2112.12184)  
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# Generating power series formulas for $g = 0$ : $n = 1, 2$

Voiculescu 1986, Speicher 1994;

Consider the generating series

$$M_1(x) = 1 + \sum_{l \in \mathbb{N}} \varphi_l x^l, \quad C_1(x) = 1 + \sum_{l \in \mathbb{N}} \kappa_l x^l$$

then

$$M_1(x) = C_1(xM_1(x)),$$

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Collins, Mingo, Sniady, Speicher 2008

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$$M_2(x_1, x_2) = \sum_{l_1, l_2 \in \mathbb{N}} \varphi_{l_1, l_2} x_1^{l_1} x_2^{l_2}, \quad C_2(x_1, x_2) = \sum_{l_1, l_2 \in \mathbb{N}} \kappa_{l_1, l_2} x_1^{l_1} x_2^{l_2}$$

then

$$M_2(x_1, x_2) + \frac{x_1 x_2}{(x_1 - x_2)^2} = \frac{d \ln y_1}{d \ln x_1} \frac{d \ln y_2}{d \ln x_2} \left( C_2(y_1, y_2) + \frac{y_1 y_2}{(y_1 - y_2)^2} \right),$$

where  $y_i = x_i M_1(x_i)$ .

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# Generating power series formulas for $g = 0$ : $n > 2$

## Notation

For  $n \in \mathbb{N}$  we denote

$$M_n(x_1, \dots, x_n) = \delta_{n,1} + \sum_{l_1, \dots, l_n \in \mathbb{N}} \varphi_{l_1 \dots l_n} x_1^{l_1} \dots x_n^{l_n},$$

$$C_n(x_1, \dots, x_n) = \delta_{n,1} + \sum_{l_1, \dots, l_n \in \mathbb{N}} \kappa_{l_1 \dots l_n} x_1^{l_1} \dots x_n^{l_n}.$$

Borot, Charbonnier, Garcia-Failde, Leid, Shadrin 2021

We have

$$M_n(x_1, \dots, x_n) = \sum_{r_1, \dots, r_n \in \mathbb{N}} \sum_{T \in \mathcal{G}_{0,n}(\mathbf{r}+\mathbf{1})} O_{r_i}^{\vee}(y_i) \prod_{I \in \mathcal{I}(T)} C_{\#I}(y_I).$$

# Generating power series formulas for $g = 0$ : $n > 2$

Borot, Charbonnier, Garcia-Failde, Leid, Shadrin 2021

$$M_n(x_1, \dots, x_n) = \sum_{r_1, \dots, r_n \in \mathbb{N}} \sum_{T \in \mathcal{G}_{0,n}(\mathbf{r} + \mathbf{1})} O_{r_i}^{\vee}(y_i) \prod'_{I \in \mathcal{I}(T)} C_{\#I}(y_I),$$

where  $y_i = x_i M_1(x_i)$ ,  $\mathbf{r} + \mathbf{1} = (r_1 + 1, \dots, r_n + 1)$ ,

- $\mathcal{G}_{0,n}(\mathbf{r} + \mathbf{1})$  is set of bicolored trees,  $\mathcal{I}(T)$  the set of black vertices identified with its adjacent white vertices,

- 

$$O_r^{\vee}(y) = \sum_{m \geq 0} \left( \frac{d \ln y}{d \ln x} y \partial_y \right)^m \frac{d \ln y}{d \ln x} [v^m] \left( \partial_w + \frac{v}{w} \right)^r \cdot 1 \Big|_{w=C_1(y)},$$

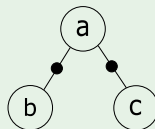
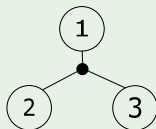
- $\prod'$  means  $C_2(y_i, y_j)$  is replaced by

$$C_2(y_i, y_j) + \frac{y_i y_j}{(y_i - y_j)^2}.$$

# The case $k=3$

## Example

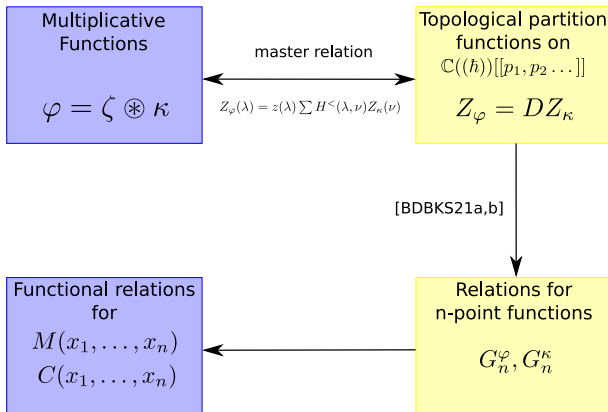
The only types of trees that contribute to  $M_3(x_1, x_2, x_3)$  are the following

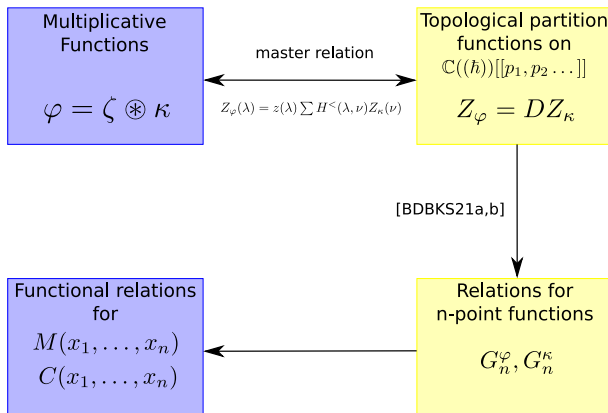


$$M_3(x_1, x_2, x_3) =$$

$$\frac{C_3(x_1, x_2, x_3)}{\prod_{i=1}^3 C_1(y_i)x'(y_i)} + \frac{y_1}{\prod_{i=1}^3 C_1(y_i)x'(y_i)} \frac{\partial}{\partial y_1} \frac{\tilde{C}_2(y_1, y_2)\tilde{C}_2(y_1, y_3)}{C_1(y_1)x'(y_1)} + \dots$$







Bychkov, Dunin-Barkowski, Kazarian, Shadrin:

- Explicit closed algebraic formulas for Orlov– Scherbin n-point functions
- Generalised ordinary vs fully simple duality for n-point functions and a proof of the Borot–Garcia-Failde conjecture

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Thank you for your attention!