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## ON THE MEAN PROJECTION THEOREM FOR DETERMINANTAL POINT PROCESSES

#### ADRIEN KASSEL AND THIERRY LÉVY

ABSTRACT. In this short note, we extend a mean projection theorem for discrete determinantal point processes to the continuous case, thus strengthening a known result in random linear algebra due to Ermakov and Zolotukhin. We also give a new formula for the variance of the exterior power of the random projection.

#### 1. Introduction

Kirchhoff's work on electrical networks [Kir47] seems to be one of the earliest works in the literature where linear algebra and graph-theoretical combinatorial methods were put together. Later on, linear algebra problems, and classical determinantal methods for solving them, gave rise to various statistical approaches, notably linked to the so-called determinantal point processes (introduced by Macchi in 1975 [Mac75], and named like this by Borodin, only around 2000 which saw a blossoming of results on those processes from various authors, see [Sos00, ST03, Lyo03, Joh06, Bor11]). These methods recently became an active field in randomized numerical linear algebra [DM21].

In his work, Kirchhoff solved a linear algebra system on an electrical network seen as a finite graph, by expressing the current induced by an external battery hooked on the network, as an average over spanning trees of a certain current associated to the tree. In modern terms, he expressed an orthogonal projection as the expectation of a certain random projection associated to a random spanning tree. Such a mean projection theorem appeared in several guises in the literature, and more or less independently, in works of Maurer [Mau76], Lyons [Lyo03], Catanzaro-Chernyak-Klein [CCK13], and probably others that we are unaware of.

In our work [KL19, Theorem 5.9], we extended the mean projection formula for determinantal point processes on finite sets, thus putting the statements of [Kir47, Mau76, Lyo03, CCK13] in a unified geometric framework, and strengthening the result by proving a mean projection theorem for the exterior powers of the projections, that is, for minors of their matrices in a fixed basis.

Let us quickly recall our statement. Let  $\mathbb{K}$  be  $\mathbb{R}$  or  $\mathbb{C}$ , let E be a finite dimensional Euclidean space on  $\mathbb{K}$  of dimension d, and let  $(e_i)_{1 \leq i \leq d}$  be an orthonormal basis of E. We let  $S = \{1, \ldots, d\}$  and consider H a subspace of E of dimension n. Let X be the determinantal point process on S associated to the matrix  $K = (\langle e_i, \Pi^H e_j \rangle)_{1 \leq i,j \leq d}$ , where  $\Pi^H$  is the orthogonal projection on H. For each  $X \subseteq S$ , let  $E_X = \bigoplus_{x \in X} \mathbb{K} e_x$  be the corresponding coordinate subspace of E.

**Theorem 1.1.** Almost surely, the equality  $E = H \oplus E_X^{\perp}$  holds, and denoting by  $P_X$  the projection on H parallel to  $E_X^{\perp}$ , we have

$$\mathbb{E}\big[ \bigwedge \mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}} \big] = \bigwedge \mathsf{\Pi}^H \,.$$

In words, in a fixed basis of E, the expectation of any minor of the matrix of  $P_X$  is equal to the same minor of  $\Pi^H$ .

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A short while ago, it came to our attention while reading the recent statistics paper [GBV19] on Monte–Carlo integration methods, that such a mean projection formula had also appeared in [EZ60] in the case of  $S = \mathbb{R}$ , in a different guise, although the relation to the above-cited works was not mentioned there. The goal of this short note is to emphasize this link, by extending Theorem 1.1 to the case of a determinantal point process associated to a finite rank orthogonal projection on any Polish space S, so that it applies for instance to any orthogonal polynomial ensemble, see [Lyo14, Section 3.8]. This extension is the content of Theorem 2.2. An extension of Theorem 1.1 to the case of a projection with infinite range (both in the case where S is discrete or continuous) would be interesting. It would probably be harder to prove in view of [BQ22] which studies the continuous analogue of  $P_X$  in the case of the Bergman kernel.

#### 2. The Mean Projection Theorem

Let S be a Polish space and  $\lambda$  a positive Radon measure on S. Let us consider the space  $E = L^2(S, \lambda)$  and the space  $\mathcal{C}(S)$  of continuous functions on S.<sup>1</sup> Let  $H \subseteq E \cap \mathcal{C}(S)$  be a linear subspace of finite dimension n.

Let  $\mathsf{Conf}_n(S)$  be the set of collections of n distinct points in S, and let  $\mu$  be the determinantal probability measure on  $\mathsf{Conf}_n(S)$  associated with the orthogonal projection on H. This means that if we choose an orthonormal basis  $(\varphi_j)_{1 \leq j \leq n}$  of H, then we have for any bounded continuous symmetric test function  $T: S^n \to \mathbb{C}$  the equality

$$(1) \qquad \int_{\mathsf{Conf}_n(S)} T(X) \ \mathrm{d}\mu(X) = \frac{1}{n!} \int_{S^n} T(x_1, \dots, x_n) |\det \left(\varphi_j(x_i)_{1 \le i, j \le n}\right)|^2 \ \mathrm{d}\lambda^{\otimes n}(x_1, \dots, x_n),$$

in which the right-hand side does not depend on the choice of the orthonormal basis. We will denote by X a random subset of S distributed according to  $\mu$ , and use the notation  $\mathbb{E}[T(\mathsf{X})]$  for either of the two sides of the equality above.

It follows from (1) that  $\mu$ -almost every X is a uniqueness set for H, in the sense that two elements of H that coincide on X are equal.<sup>2</sup> This fact can be used to define a random projection onto H, as follows. For every  $X \in \mathsf{Conf}_n(S)$ , let us define  $\mathcal{C}(S;X) = \{f \in \mathcal{C}(S) : f_{|X} = 0\}$ .

**Lemma 2.1.** For  $\mu$ -almost every  $X \in \mathsf{Conf}_n(S)$ , the decomposition  $\mathcal{C}(S) = H \oplus \mathcal{C}(S;X)$  holds.

*Proof.* Let f be an element of  $\mathcal{C}(S)$ . Let  $(\varphi_j)_{1 \leq j \leq n}$  be an orthonormal basis of H. For  $\mu$ -almost every  $X = \{x_1, \ldots, x_n\}$  in  $\mathsf{Conf}_n(S)$ , we have  $\det(\varphi_j(x_i)_{1 \leq i,j \leq n}) \neq 0$ , so that the system

$$\alpha_1 \varphi_1(x_i) + \ldots + \alpha_n \varphi_n(x_i) = f(x_i), \quad \forall i \in \{1, \ldots, n\}$$

admits a unique solution. Then  $\mathsf{P}_X f = \alpha_1 \varphi_1 + \ldots + \alpha_n \varphi_n$  is the unique element of H which takes the same values as f on X.

For the rest of this note, we will keep the notation  $\mathsf{P}_X$  introduced in the previous proof for the projection on H parallel to  $\mathcal{C}(S;X)$ . Let us emphasize that the decomposition given by Lemma 2.1 depends on H and X, but is independent of the Euclidean structure of E. In particular, the projection  $\mathsf{P}_X$  is independent of this Euclidean structure.

For example, if  $S = \mathbb{R}$ ,  $\lambda$  is a measure with infinite support which admits moments of all orders, and  $\varphi_1, \ldots, \varphi_n$  are the first n orthogonal polynomials with respect to  $\lambda$ , then H is the space of polynomial functions of degree at most n-1 and  $\mathsf{P}_X f$  is the *interpolating polynomial* of the restriction of f to X.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>The space of continuous functions plays for us the role usually devoted to a reproducing kernel Hilbert space (RKHS), namely that of a space of functions that can be evaluated at points. However, we do not need this extra structure, because we do not need evaluation at a point to be a continuous linear form. Moreover, it seems that in many examples of interest, the RKHS is a subspace of continuous functions, so that our result applies.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>The uniqueness property is true for all determinantal processes associated with an orthogonal projection of possibly infinite range, that is with infinitely many points  $(n = \infty)$ , as proved in the discrete case by Lyons [Lyo03], and recently by Bufetov-Qiu-Shamov [BQS21] in the general case, following partial results by Ghosh [Gho15].

For all  $g_1, \ldots, g_m \in E \cap \mathcal{C}(S)$ , let us define  $g_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge g_m \in L^2(S^m, \frac{1}{m!}\lambda^{\otimes m}) \cap \mathcal{C}(S^m)$  by setting, for all  $y_1, \ldots, y_m \in S$ ,

$$(2) (g_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge g_m)(y_1, \ldots, y_m) = \det (g_j(y_i)_{1 \le i, j \le m}).$$

We will use several times the Andreieff-Heine identity, which is a continuous analogue of the Cauchy-Binet identity, and can be phrased as follows: if  $h_1, \ldots, h_m$  belong to  $E \cap \mathcal{C}(S)$ , then

(3) 
$$\langle g_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge g_m, h_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge h_m \rangle_{L^2(S^m, \frac{1}{m!} \lambda^{\otimes m})} = \det \left( \langle g_i, h_j \rangle \right)_{1 \leq i, j \leq m}.$$

This equality justifies, for instance, the fact that the measure  $\mu$  defined by (1) is a probability measure.

Let us write  $H^0=H$  and  $H^1=H^{\perp}$ . The isomorphism of vector spaces  $L^2(S^m,\frac{1}{m!}\lambda^{\otimes m})\simeq L^2(S,\lambda)^{\otimes m}$  is  $\sqrt{m!}$  times an isometry, and the orthogonal decomposition  $L^2(S)=H^0\oplus H^1$  gives rise to an orthogonal decomposition

$$(4) L^{2}(S^{m}) \simeq L^{2}(S)^{\otimes m} = \bigoplus_{\varepsilon_{1}, \dots, \varepsilon_{m} \in \{0,1\}} H^{\varepsilon_{1}} \otimes \dots \otimes H^{\varepsilon_{m}} = \bigoplus_{k=0}^{m} \left[ \bigoplus_{\substack{\varepsilon_{1}, \dots, \varepsilon_{m} \in \{0,1\} \\ \varepsilon_{1} + \dots + \varepsilon_{m} = k}} H^{\varepsilon_{1}} \otimes \dots \otimes H^{\varepsilon_{m}} \right].$$

Let us denote by  $\Pi_k$  the orthogonal projection of  $L^2(S^m)$  on the k-th summand of the last expression. In order to describe this operator more concretely, recall that we denote by  $\Pi^H$  the orthogonal projection on H in E. For all real t, let us define the linear operator  $D_t = \Pi^H + t\Pi^{H^{\perp}}$  on E. Then

$$\mathsf{D}_t g_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{D}_t g_m = \sum_{k=0}^m t^k \, \mathsf{\Pi}_k (g_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge g_m).$$

In words,  $\Pi_k(g_1 \wedge ... \wedge g_m)$  is the sum of all the functions obtained from  $g_1 \wedge ... \wedge g_m$  by replacing k of the  $g_i$ 's by their projections on  $H^{\perp}$ , and the others by their projection on H.

**Theorem 2.2.** For all  $m \geq 1$ , and all  $f_1, \ldots, f_m \in E \cap C(S)$ , we have

(5) 
$$\mathbb{E}[\mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_m] = \mathsf{\Pi}^H f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{\Pi}^H f_m,$$

(6) 
$$\operatorname{Var}(\mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_m) = \sum_{k=1}^m \binom{n-m+k}{k} \|\mathsf{\Pi}_k(f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge f_m)\|^2.$$

The variance in the second assertion is that of a random element of  $L^2(S^m, \frac{1}{m!}\lambda^{\otimes m})$ , that is, to be explicit, and in view of the first assertion,

$$\operatorname{Var}(\mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_m) = \mathbb{E}\Big[ \big\| \mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_m - \mathsf{\Pi}^H f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{\Pi}^H f_m \big\|_{L^2(S^m, \frac{1}{m!}\lambda^{\otimes m})}^2 \Big].$$

Further note that the quadratic identity (6) may be polarized to obtain information on covariances.

Given the remark made after Lemma 2.1, one can view Theorem 2.2 as providing a statistical estimator of part of the Euclidean structure of E given H and a realisation X.

When m=1, this is the theorem of Ermakov–Zolotukhin [EZ60], rephrased by [GBV19]:

$$\mathbb{E}[\mathsf{P}_\mathsf{X} f] = \mathsf{\Pi}^H f \ \text{ and } \ \mathrm{Var}(\mathsf{P}_\mathsf{X} f) = n \|\mathsf{\Pi}^{H^\perp} f\|^2.$$

In order to prove Theorem 2.2, we will use the following generalization of Cramer's formula, which surprisingly enough, we have not encountered in our undergraduate linear algebra class.

For all integers n and m, we denote by [n] the set  $\{1,\ldots,n\}$  and by  $\mathcal{P}_m([n])$  the set of its subsets with m elements. Given a  $p \times q$  matrix M and two subsets  $I \subseteq [p]$  and  $J \subseteq [q]$ , we define

$$M_J^I = (M_{ij})_{i \in I, j \in J}$$
 and  $M^I = M_{\llbracket q \rrbracket}^I$ .

**Proposition 2.3** (Cramer's identity for minors). Let  $1 \leq m \leq n$  be two integers. Let M be an  $n \times n$  invertible square matrix, and F an  $n \times m$  rectangular matrix. Let A be the  $n \times m$ rectangular matrix solving MA = F. Then for all  $I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)$ , the  $m \times m$  submatrix  $A^I$  has determinant

(7) 
$$\det A^{I} = (\det M)^{-1} \det M_{[I \leftarrow F]},$$

where  $M_{[I\leftarrow F]}$  is the  $n\times n$  square matrix obtained by replacing in M the columns indexed by Iby the columns of the matrix F.

If 
$$I = \{i_1 < \ldots < i_m\}$$
, then  $(M_{[I \leftarrow F]})_{ij} = M_{ij}$  for  $j \notin I$ , and  $(M_{[I \leftarrow F]})_{ij} = F_{ik}$  for  $j = i_k$ .

*Proof.* Let us write  $A = M^{-1}F$  and use the Cauchy–Binet formula:

$$\det A^I = \sum_{J \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)} \det(M^{-1})_J^I \det F^J.$$

Now, by Jacobi's complementary minor formula,

$$\det(M^{-1})_{I}^{I} = (-1)^{\sum_{i \in I} i + \sum_{j \in J} j} (\det M)^{-1} \det M_{I^{c}}^{J^{c}}.$$

Combining the two previous equations and checking signs, we now recognize the Laplace expansion of det  $M_{[I \leftarrow F]}$  with respect to all columns in I:

$$\det A^I = (\det M)^{-1} \sum_{J \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)} (-1)^{\sum_{i \in I} i + \sum_{j \in J} j} \det M^{J^c}_{I^c} \det F^J = (\det M)^{-1} \det M_{[I \leftarrow F]},$$

which concludes the proof.

Proof of Theorem 2.2. Let  $(\varphi_i)_{1 \leq i \leq n}$  be an orthonormal basis of H. Let  $X = (x_1, \ldots, x_n) \in S^n$ be such that  $\det(\varphi_j(x_i)_{1\leq i,j\leq n})\neq 0$ . Let us introduce the following matrices:

- $M = (\varphi_j(x_i))$   $1 \le i, j \le n$ ,
- $F = (f_j(x_i))$   $1 \le i \le n, 1 \le j \le m$ ,  $A = (\alpha_{ij})$   $1 \le i \le n, 1 \le j \le m$ , the solution to MA = F,  $G = (\langle \varphi_i, f_j \rangle)$   $1 \le i \le n, 1 \le j \le m$ .

For each  $I = \{i_1 < \ldots < i_k\} \subseteq \{1, \ldots, n\}$ , let us write  $\varphi_I = \varphi_{i_1} \wedge \ldots \wedge \varphi_{i_k}$ . For each  $1 \leq i \leq m$ , we have

$$\mathsf{P}_X f_i = \sum_{k=1}^n A_{ki} \, \varphi_k \quad \text{and} \quad \mathsf{\Pi}^H f_i = \sum_{k=1}^n G_{ki} \, \varphi_k,$$

so that

(8) 
$$\mathsf{P}_X f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{P}_X f_m = \sum_{I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)} \det A^I \varphi_I \text{ and } \Pi^H f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \Pi^H f_m = \sum_{I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)} \det G^I \varphi_I.$$

In order to prove the first assertion of the theorem, namely (5), we are thus left to show that for all  $I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)$ , we have

(9) 
$$\mathbb{E}\big[\det A^I\big] = \det G^I,$$

where we view A as a function of the subset  $X \subseteq S$  and the expectation is with respect to  $\mu$ .

By Proposition 2.3, we can write  $\det A^I = (\det M)^{-1} \det M_{[I \leftarrow F]}$ . Using the form (1) of the density of  $\mu$  and the Andreieff-Heine identity (3), we find

$$\mathbb{E}\left[\det A^{I}\right] = \frac{1}{n!} \int_{S^{n}} \det A^{I} |\det M|^{2} d\lambda^{\otimes n}$$
$$= \frac{1}{n!} \int_{S^{n}} \det M_{[I \leftarrow F]} \overline{\det M} d\lambda^{\otimes n}$$
$$= \det\left(\langle \varphi_{a}, \psi_{I, b} \rangle\right)_{1 \leq a, b \leq n},$$

where  $(\psi_{I,1}, \ldots, \psi_{I,n})$  is the list  $(\varphi_1, \ldots, \varphi_n)$  in which the terms labelled by elements of I have been replaced by  $f_1, \ldots, f_m$ . In symbols,  $\psi_{I,b} = \varphi_b$  if  $b \notin I$  and  $\psi_{I,b} = f_k$  if  $I = \{i_1 < \ldots < i_m\}$  and  $b = i_k$ .

It is readily seen that the last determinant is equal to  $\det G^I$ , which proves (9) and thus (5).

We now turn to the computation of the variance. An important observation is that the family  $\{\varphi_I : I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)\}$  is orthonormal in  $L^2(S^m, \frac{1}{m!}\lambda^{\otimes m})$ . Thus, using (8), Pythagoras's theorem, and (5), we find that

(10) 
$$\operatorname{Var}(\mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{P}_{\mathsf{X}}f_m) = \sum_{I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)} \mathbb{E}\left[ (\det A^I)^2 \right] - \left\| \mathsf{\Pi}^H f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \mathsf{\Pi}^H f_m \right\|^2.$$

Using the same strategy as before, we compute, for each set I of cardinality m,

$$\begin{split} \mathbb{E}\big[|\det A^I|^2\big] &= \frac{1}{n!} \int_{S^n} |\det A^I|^2 \; |\det M|^2 \; d\lambda^{\otimes n} \\ &= \frac{1}{n!} \int_{S^n} |\det M_{[I \leftarrow F]}|^2 \; d\lambda^{\otimes n} \\ &= \det(\langle \psi_{I,a}, \psi_{I,b} \rangle)_{1 \leq a,b \leq n}. \end{split}$$

We now use the Schur complement formula to obtain that the last determinant is equal to

$$\det \left( \langle f_i, (\Pi^{H^{\perp}} + \Pi^{H_I}) f_j \rangle \right)_{1 \leq i, j \leq m} ,$$

where for all  $J \subseteq \{1, ..., n\}$ , we set  $H_J = \text{Vect}(\varphi_j, j \in J)$ . Using the Andreieff-Heine identity, we rewrite this determinant as

$$\mathbb{E}\left[|\det A^I|^2\right] = \left\langle f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge f_m, (\Pi^{H^{\perp}} + \Pi^{H_I}) f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge (\Pi^{H^{\perp}} + \Pi^{H_I}) f_m \right\rangle$$

and what we need now is to sum this quantity over all  $I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)$ .

For each  $i \in \{1, ..., m\}$ , let us decompose  $f_i$  as  $f_{i,0} + f_{i,1} + ... + f_{i,n}$ , where  $f_{i,0} = \Pi^{H^{\perp}} f_i$  and for all  $j \in \{1, ..., n\}$ ,  $f_{i,j} = \langle \varphi_j, f_i \rangle \varphi_j$ . By multilinearity, we find

$$\mathbb{E}\left[|\det A^I|^2\right] = \sum_{j_1,\dots,j_m=0}^n \left\langle f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge f_m, \underbrace{\left(\Pi^{H^\perp} + \Pi^{H_I}\right) f_{1,j_1} \wedge \dots \wedge \left(\Pi^{H^\perp} + \Pi^{H_I}\right) f_{m,j_m}}_{R}\right\rangle.$$

Let us call R the function in the right-hand side of the scalar product. If among the integers  $j_1,\ldots,j_m$  two are positive and equal, then R vanishes, and so does the corresponding term of the sum. Let us now assume that the positive indices among  $j_1,\ldots,j_m$  are pairwise distinct, and let us list them as  $\{l_1,\ldots,l_{m-k}\}$ , where  $k=1_{\{j_1=0\}}+\ldots+1_{\{j_m=0\}}$ . We make three observations. Firstly, for R not to be zero, it is necessary that  $\{l_1,\ldots,l_{m-k}\}\subseteq I$ . Secondly, if this condition is satisfied, then  $R=f_{1,j_1}\wedge\ldots\wedge f_{m,j_m}$ , and in particular does not depend on I. Finally, the condition  $\{l_1,\ldots,l_{m-k}\}\subseteq I$  is verified for  $\binom{n-m+k}{k}$  subsets I of  $\{1,\ldots,n\}$  with m elements. Putting these observations together, we find

$$\sum_{I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)} \mathbb{E} \left[ |\det A^I|^2 \right] = \sum_{j_1, \dots, j_m} \binom{n - m + k}{k} \langle f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge f_m, f_{1, j_1} \wedge \dots \wedge f_{m, j_m} \rangle.$$

The sum runs over those  $j_1, \ldots, j_m$  between 0 and n among which no two are positive and equal, but lifting this condition only adds null terms to the sum. Therefore, we let  $j_1, \ldots, j_m$  run freely between 0 and n, and k is the number of them that are zero.

Let us sort the terms of the last sum according to which of the indices  $j_1, \ldots, j_m$  are zero and which are not: calling B the set  $\{p \in \llbracket m \rrbracket : j_p = 0\}$  and with the notation  $H^0 = H$  and  $H^1 = H^{\perp}$ , this resummation yields

$$(11) \sum_{I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)} \mathbb{E}\left[|\det A^I|^2\right] = \sum_{k=0}^m \binom{n-m+k}{k} \Big\langle f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge f_m, \sum_{B \in \mathcal{P}_k(\llbracket m \rrbracket)} \Pi^{H^{1_{B^{(1)}}}} f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge \Pi^{H^{1_{B^{(m)}}}} f_m \Big\rangle.$$

The sum over B yields exactly the function  $\Pi_k(f_1 \wedge \ldots \wedge f_m)$ . The result follows from the orthogonality of the decomposition (4) and the observation that the term corresponding to k=0 is exactly the last term of (10).

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ADRIEN KASSEL - CNRS - UMPA, ENS DE LYON Email address: adrien.kassel@ens-lyon.fr

THIERRY LÉVY - LPSM, SORBONNE UNIVERSITÉ, PARIS *Email address*: thierry.levy@sorbonne-universite.fr