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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 to the continuous case a mean projection theorem for discrete determinantal point processes associated with a finite range projection, 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 [KL22, 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 $S = \{1, \dots, d\}$ and consider H a subspace of E of dimension n . Let \mathbf{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 Π^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*

$$\mathbb{E}[\wedge P_X] = \wedge \Pi^H.$$

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 Π^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.

One of the referees of this paper kindly pointed out to us that results in the spirit of Theorem 1.1 have also been obtained in the context of the resolution of singular linear systems of equations, for instance in [Ber86, BTT90] and more recently in the context of active sampling for linear regression [DW18, Thms 5, 6 and 7], see also [AB13, MS17, DWH22]. In [DLM20, Def. 4], the authors define the class of random matrices for which the expectation of any minor equals the same minor of the expectation, give basic properties, and provide a few examples. Theorem 1.1 and [KL22, Thm 5.9] give families of examples of such random matrices, namely the matrices P_X . A systematic study of this class of random matrices would certainly be interesting.

The goal of this short note is to extend 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. An example of this situation is investigated in [BQ22], where the author study among other things 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 λ 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 .¹ Let $H \subseteq E \cap \mathcal{C}(S)$ be a linear subspace of finite dimension n .

Let $\text{Conf}_n(S)$ be the set of collections of n distinct points in S , and let μ be the determinantal probability measure on $\text{Conf}_n(S)$ 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 $T : S^n \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ the equality

$$(1) \quad \int_{\text{Conf}_n(S)} T(X) \, d\mu(X) = \frac{1}{n!} \int_{S^n} T(x_1, \dots, x_n) |\det(\varphi_j(x_i)_{1 \leq i, j \leq n})|^2 \, d\lambda^{\otimes n}(x_1, \dots, x_n),$$

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 μ , and use the notation $\mathbb{E}[T(X)]$ for either of the two sides of the equality above.

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

Lemma 2.1. *For μ -almost every $X \in \text{Conf}_n(S)$, 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 μ -almost every $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_n\}$ in $\text{Conf}_n(S)$, we have $\det(\varphi_j(x_i)_{1 \leq i, j \leq n}) \neq 0$, so that the system

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

¹The 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.

²The 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].

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

For the rest of this note, we will keep the notation \mathbf{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 \mathbf{P}_X is independent of this Euclidean structure.

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

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

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

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, \dots, h_m belong to $E \cap \mathcal{C}(S)$, then

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

This equality justifies, for instance, the fact that the measure μ 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

$$(4) \quad L^2(S^m) \simeq L^2(S)^{\otimes m} = \bigoplus_{\varepsilon_1, \dots, \varepsilon_m \in \{0, 1\}} H^{\varepsilon_1} \otimes \dots \otimes H^{\varepsilon_m} = \bigoplus_{k=0}^m \left[\bigoplus_{\substack{\varepsilon_1, \dots, \varepsilon_m \in \{0, 1\} \\ \varepsilon_1 + \dots + \varepsilon_m = k}} H^{\varepsilon_1} \otimes \dots \otimes H^{\varepsilon_m} \right].$$

Let us denote by Π_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 Π^H the orthogonal projection on H in E . For all real t , let us define the linear operator $\mathbf{D}_t = \Pi^H + t\Pi^{H^\perp}$ on E . Then

$$\mathbf{D}_t g_1 \wedge \dots \wedge \mathbf{D}_t g_m = \sum_{k=0}^m t^k \Pi_k(g_1 \wedge \dots \wedge g_m).$$

In words, $\Pi_k(g_1 \wedge \dots \wedge g_m)$ is the sum of all the functions obtained from $g_1 \wedge \dots \wedge g_m$ 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 $f_1, \dots, f_m \in E \cap \mathcal{C}(S)$, we have*

$$(5) \quad \mathbb{E}[\mathbf{P}_X f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge \mathbf{P}_X f_m] = \Pi^H f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge \Pi^H f_m,$$

$$(6) \quad \text{Var}(\mathbf{P}_X f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge \mathbf{P}_X f_m) = \sum_{k=1}^m \binom{n-m+k}{k} \|\Pi_k(f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge f_m)\|^2.$$

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,

$$\text{Var}(\mathbf{P}_X f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge \mathbf{P}_X f_m) = \mathbb{E} \left[\left\| \mathbf{P}_X f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge \mathbf{P}_X f_m - \Pi^H f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge \Pi^H f_m \right\|_{L^2(S^m, \frac{1}{m!} \lambda^{\otimes m})}^2 \right].$$

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]:

$$\mathbb{E}[\mathbf{P}_X f] = \Pi^H f \quad \text{and} \quad \text{Var}(\mathbf{P}_X f) = n \|\Pi^{H^\perp} f\|^2.$$

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 $\llbracket n \rrbracket$ the set $\{1, \dots, n\}$ and by $\mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)$ the set of its subsets with m elements. Given a $p \times q$ matrix M and two subsets $I \subseteq \llbracket p \rrbracket$ and $J \subseteq \llbracket q \rrbracket$, we define

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

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*

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

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

If $I = \{i_1 < \dots < i_m\}$, 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,

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

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 :

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

which concludes the proof. \square

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

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

For each $I = \{i_1 < \dots < i_k\} \subseteq \{1, \dots, n\}$, let us write $\varphi_I = \varphi_{i_1} \wedge \dots \wedge \varphi_{i_k}$.

For each $1 \leq i \leq m$, we have

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

so that

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

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

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

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

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 μ and the Andreieff–Heine identity (3), we find

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

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

The last determinant is, up to conjugation by a permutation matrix, that of a 2×2 block-triangular matrix. One of the diagonal blocks of this matrix is the identity, and the other is G^I . Thus, its 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' theorem, and (5), we find that

$$(10) \quad \text{Var}(\mathbf{P}_X f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge \mathbf{P}_X f_m) = \sum_{I \in \mathcal{P}_m(\llbracket n \rrbracket)} \mathbb{E}[(\det A^I)^2] - \|\Pi^H f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge \Pi^H f_m\|^2.$$

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

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

The last matrix has a simple block structure corresponding to the partition $\llbracket n \rrbracket = I \sqcup I^c$, in which the block indexed by (I^c, I^c) is the identity. The Schur complement formula thus gives

$$\begin{aligned} \det (\langle \psi_{I,a}, \psi_{I,b} \rangle)_{1 \leq a, b \leq n} &= \det (\langle f_i, f_j \rangle_{1 \leq i, j \leq m} - (\langle f_i, \varphi_b \rangle)_{1 \leq i \leq m, b \in I^c} (\langle \varphi_a, f_j \rangle)_{a \in I^c, 1 \leq j \leq m}) \\ &= \det (\langle f_i, (\text{Id} - \Pi^{H_{I^c}}) f_j \rangle)_{1 \leq i, j \leq m} \\ &= \det (\langle f_i, (\Pi^{H^\perp} + \Pi^{H_I}) f_j \rangle)_{1 \leq i, j \leq m}, \end{aligned}$$

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The sum runs over those j_1, \dots, 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, \dots, 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, \dots, 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

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

The sum over B yields exactly the function $\Pi_k(f_1 \wedge \dots \wedge f_m)$. 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). \square

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