

# Braid monodromy computations using certified path tracking

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Alexandre Guillemot

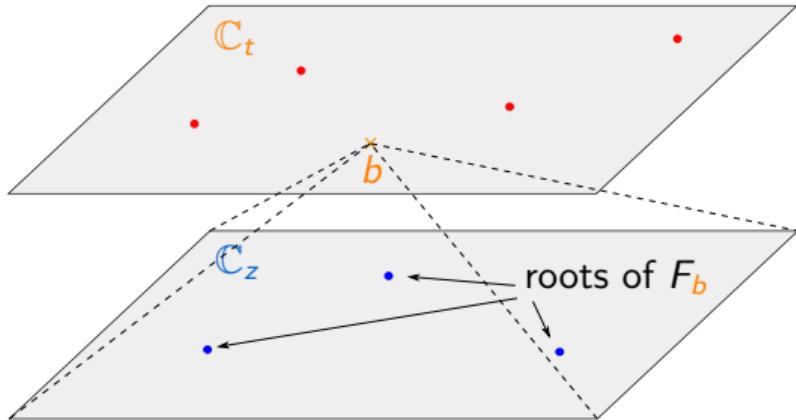
Joint work with Pierre Lairez  
MATHEXP, Inria, France

Séminaire Pascaline

September 25, 2025 | École Normale Supérieure de Lyon



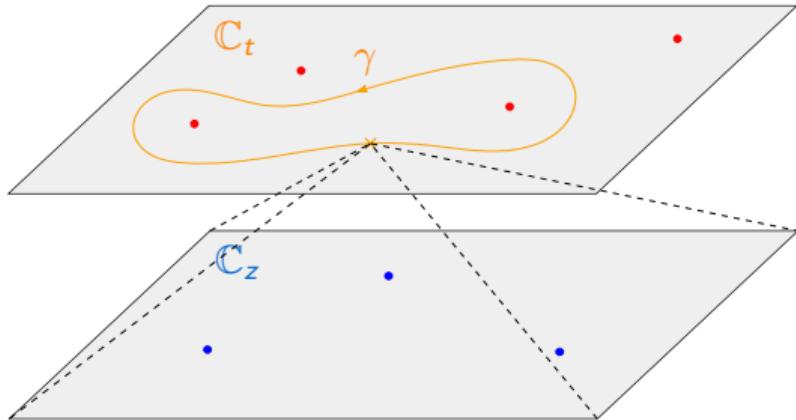
# Motivation



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- Let  $g \in \mathbb{C}[t, z]$  ( $n = \deg_z(g)$ ),
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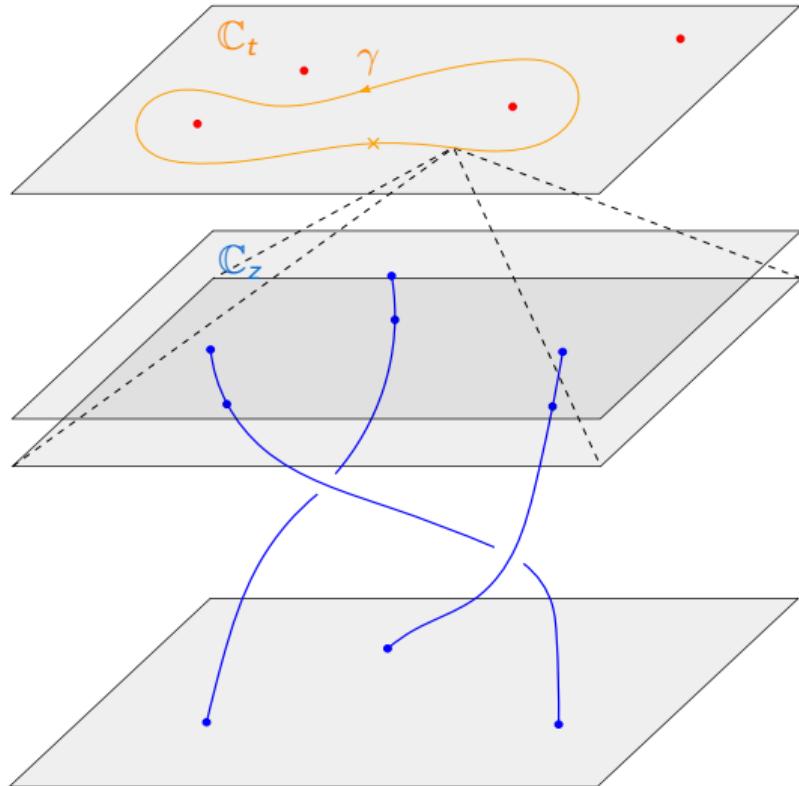
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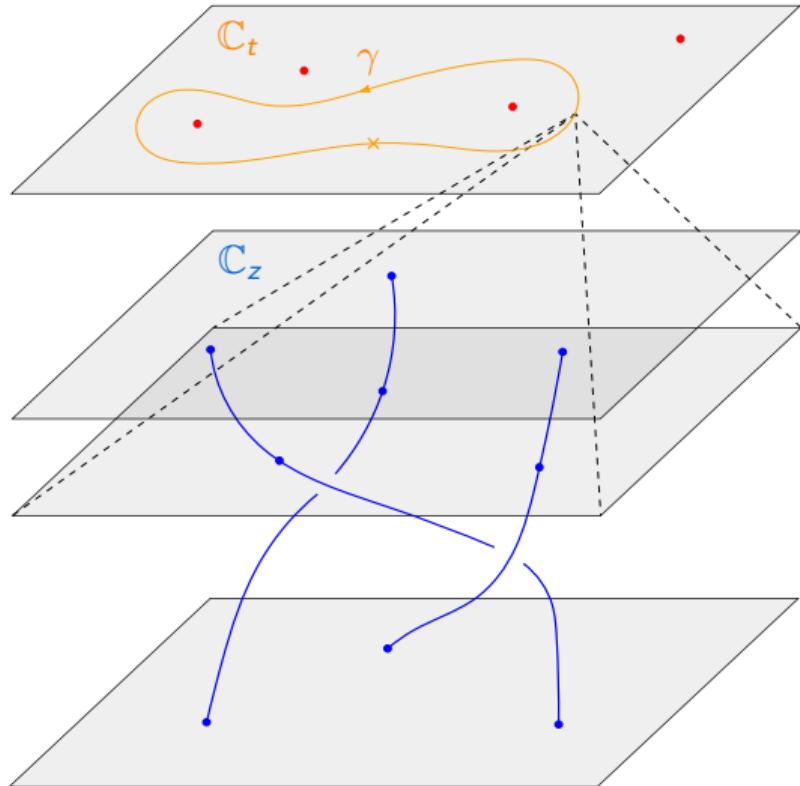
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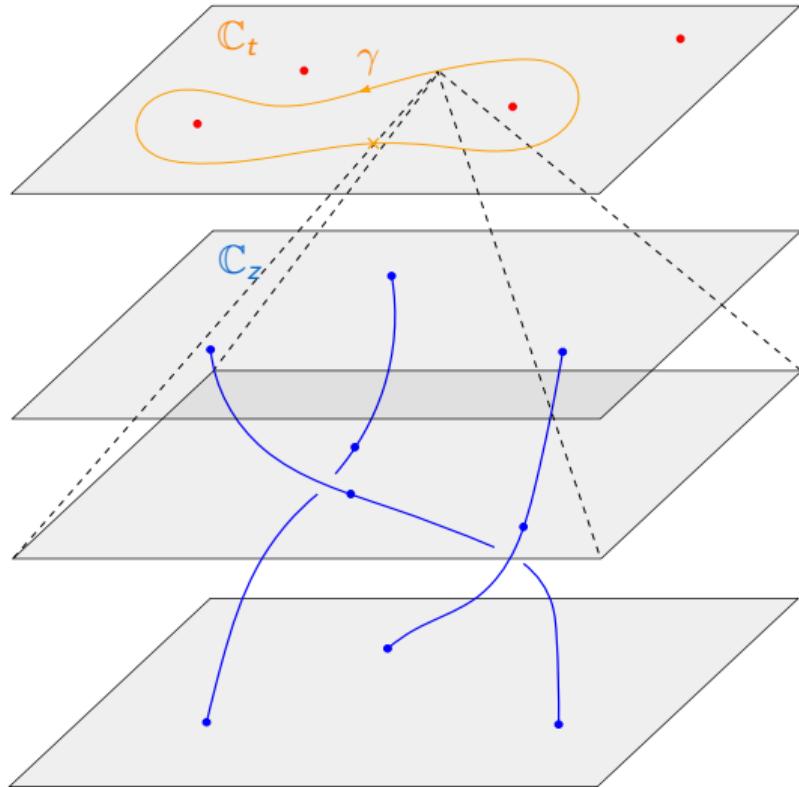
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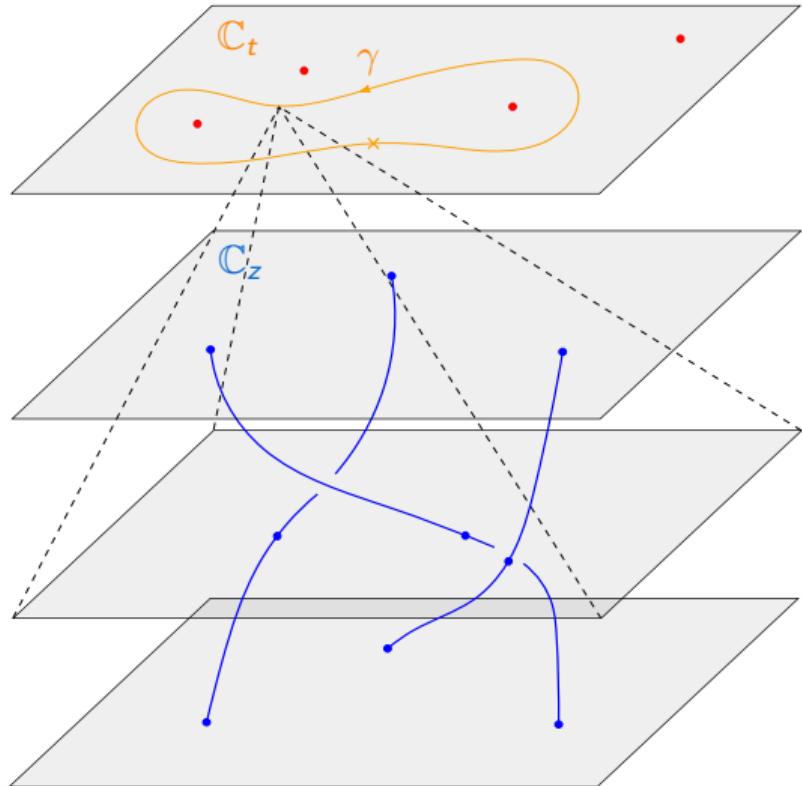
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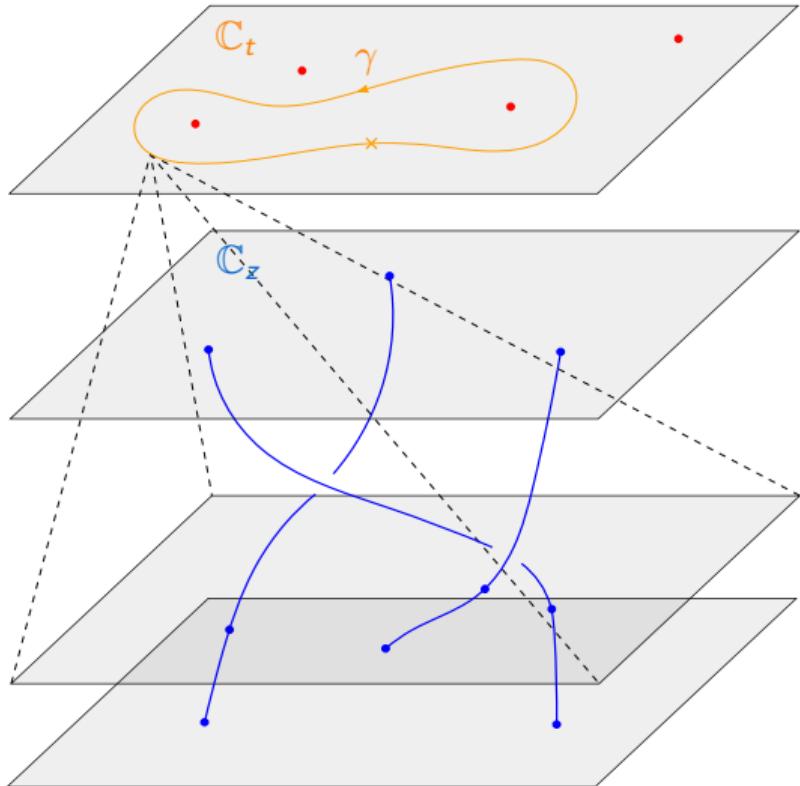
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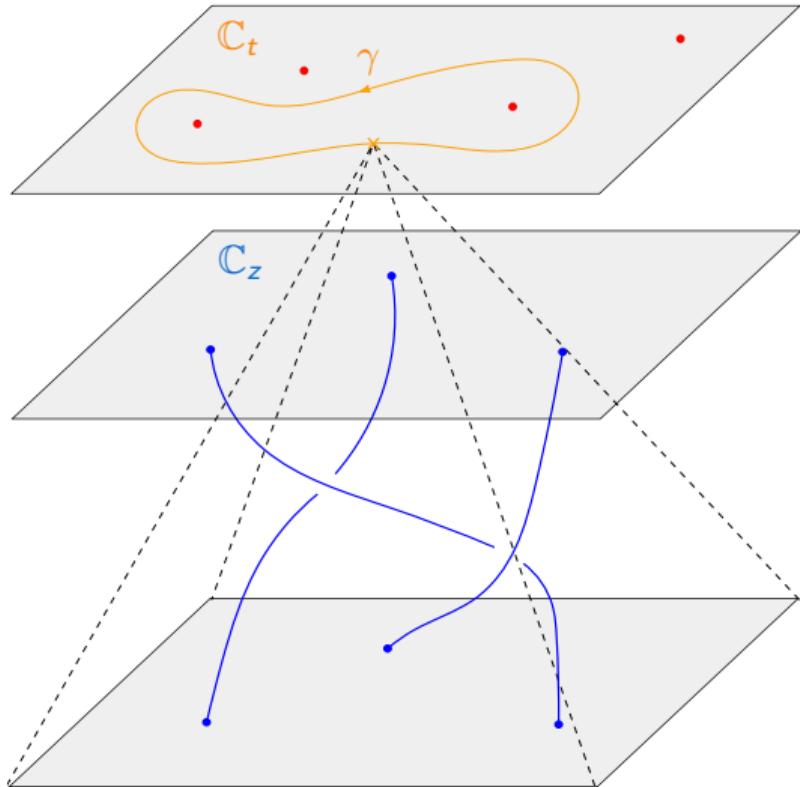
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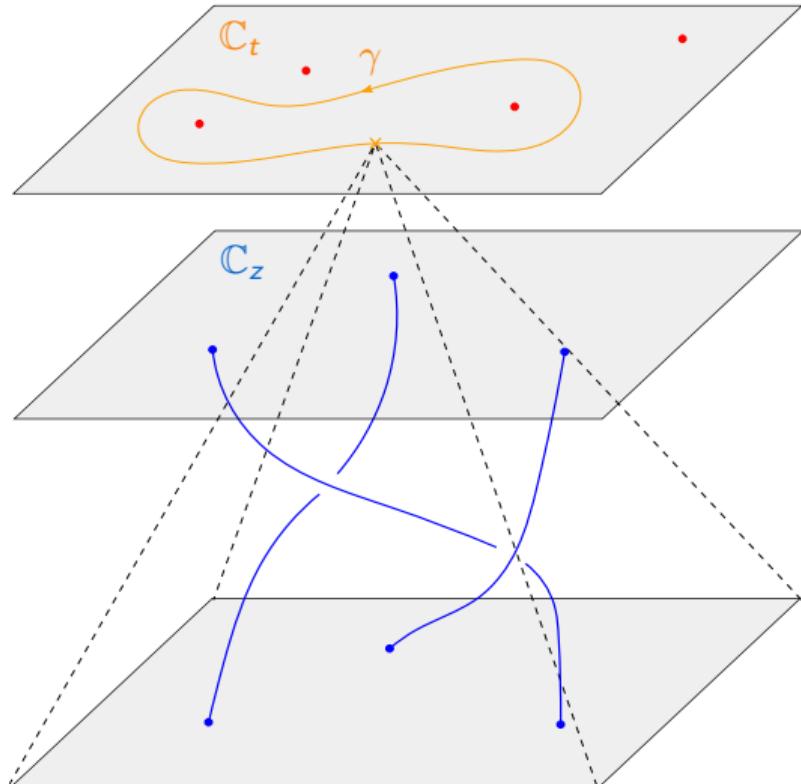
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## Algorithmic goal

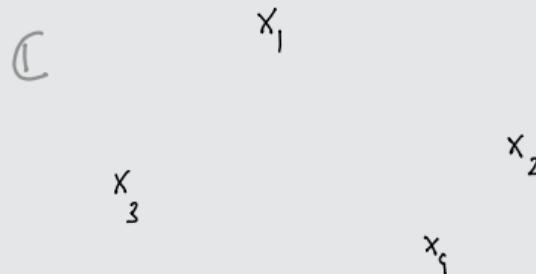
**Input:**  $g, \gamma$

**Output:** the associated braid in terms of Artin's generators

# Configurations

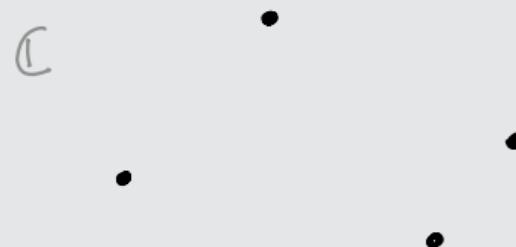
## Ordered configurations

$$OC_n = \{(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \mathbb{C}^n : \forall i \neq j, x_i \neq x_j\}.$$



## Configurations

$$C_n = \{\text{subsets of size } n \text{ in } \mathbb{C}\}.$$



## “Forget order” projection

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \pi : & OC_n & \rightarrow \\ & (x_1, \dots, x_n) & \mapsto \end{array} \quad \{x_1, \dots, x_n\} .$$

Rk: equivalent definition is  $C_n = OC_n / \mathfrak{S}_n$ .

# Braid group

## Braid

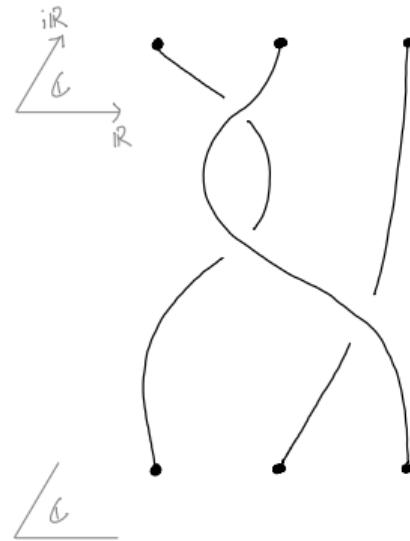
Homotopy class of a path  $\beta : [0, 1] \rightarrow C_n$  such that  $\beta(0) = \beta(1) = \{1, \dots, n\}$ .



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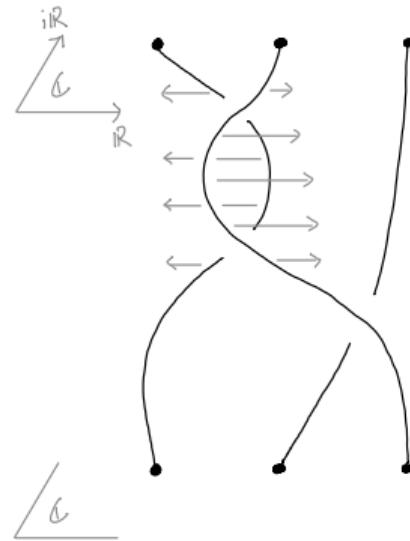
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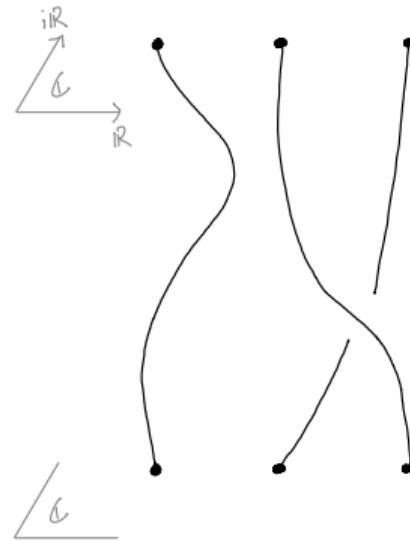
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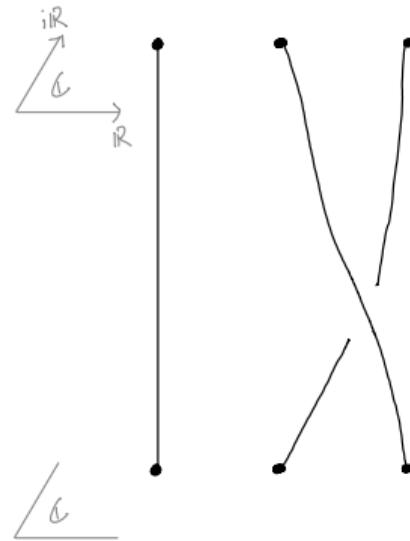
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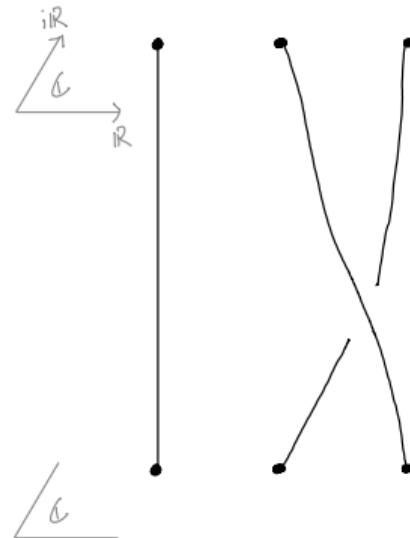


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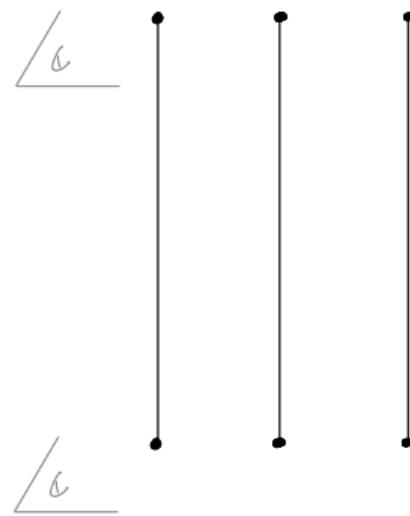
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id: class of the constant path equal to  $\{1, \dots, n\}$ .

Law:  $[\beta_1][\beta_2] := [\beta_1 \cdot \beta_2]$

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$\text{id}_{B_3}$

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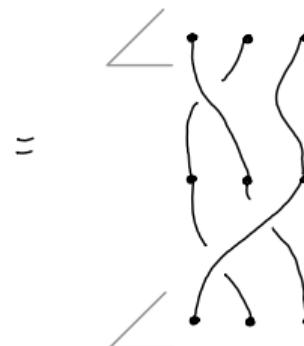
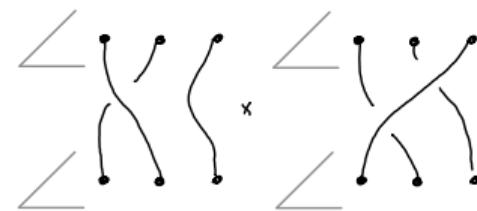
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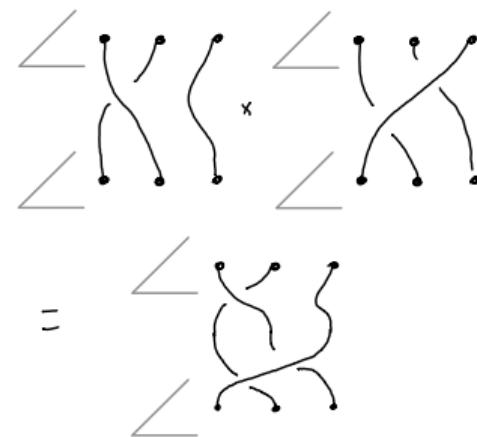
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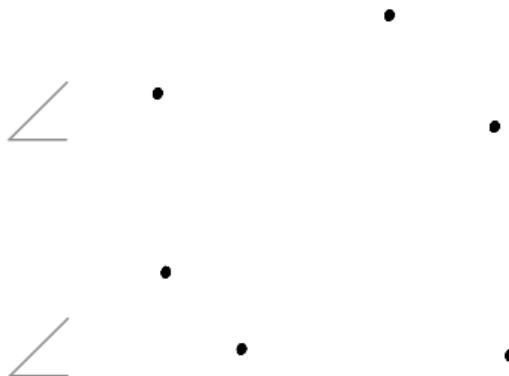


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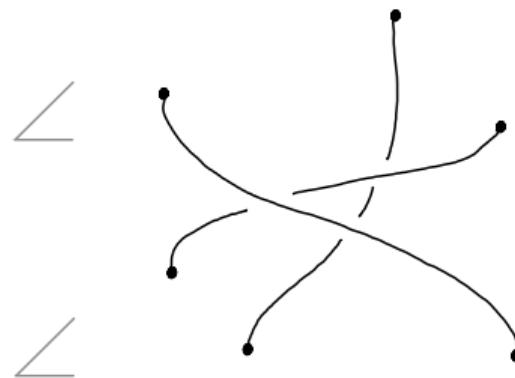


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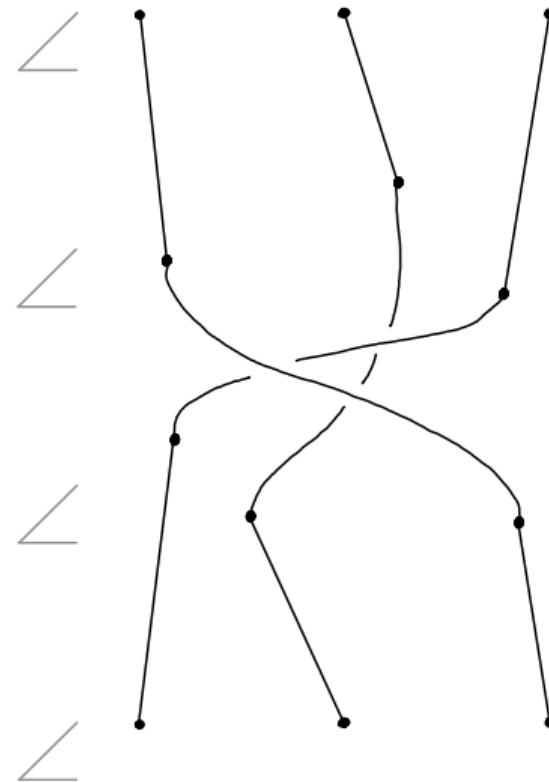
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We associate a braid to it by concatenating on top and on bottom specific pseudo-braids to get back to a loop around  $\{1, \dots, n\}$ .



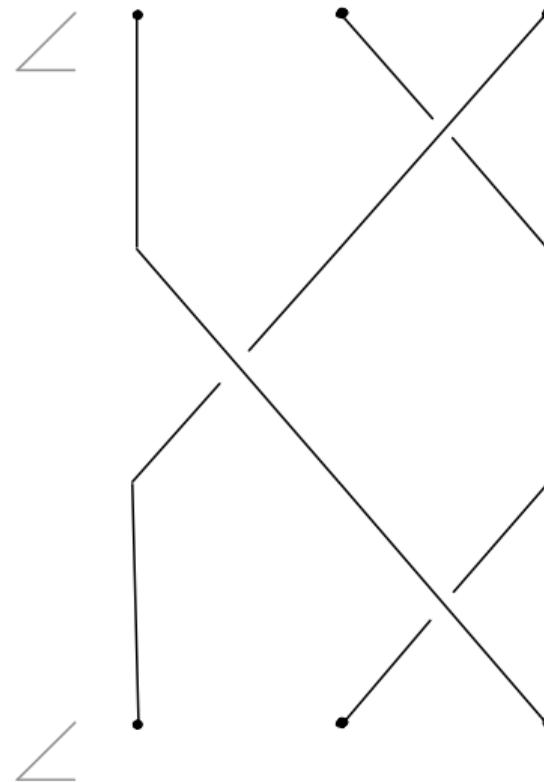
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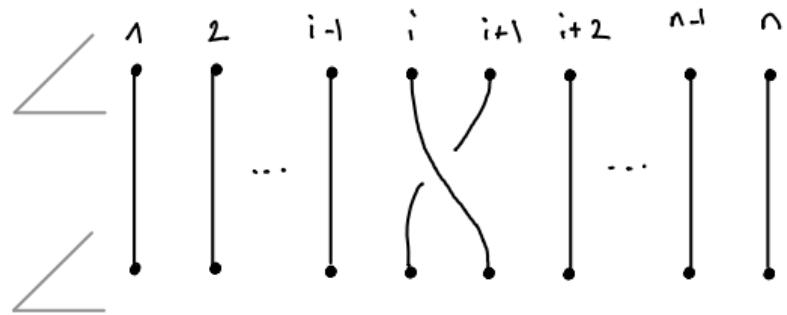
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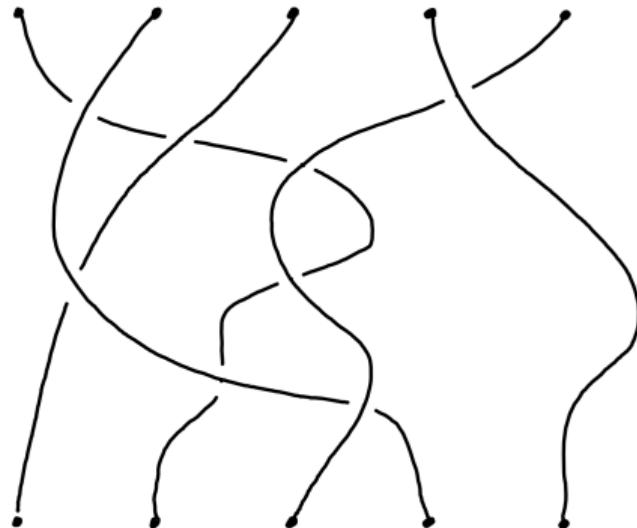
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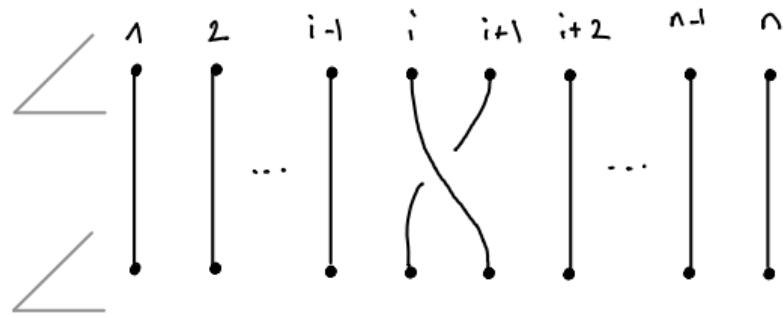
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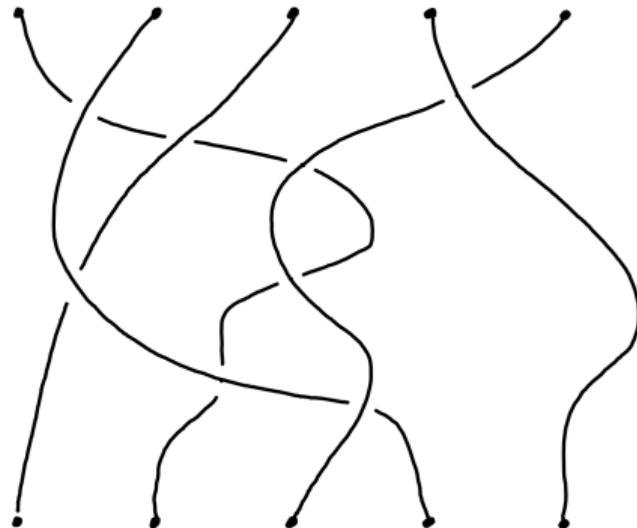
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The  $\sigma_i$ 's generate  $B_n$  (+ explicit relations).

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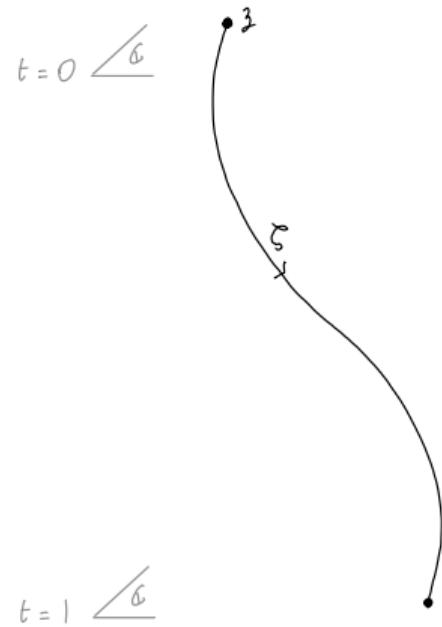
$$\sigma_4\sigma_1^{-1}\sigma_2^{-1}\sigma_3^{-1}\sigma_3\sigma_1\sigma_2\sigma_3^{-1}$$

# Main tool

## Certified homotopy continuation

**Input:**  $H : [0, 1] \times \mathbb{C}^r \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^r$  and  $z \in \mathbb{C}^r$  such that  $H(0, z) = 0$ .

There exists  $\zeta : [0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{C}^r$  such that  $H(t, \zeta(t)) = 0$  and  $\zeta(0) = z$ . Assume it is unique.



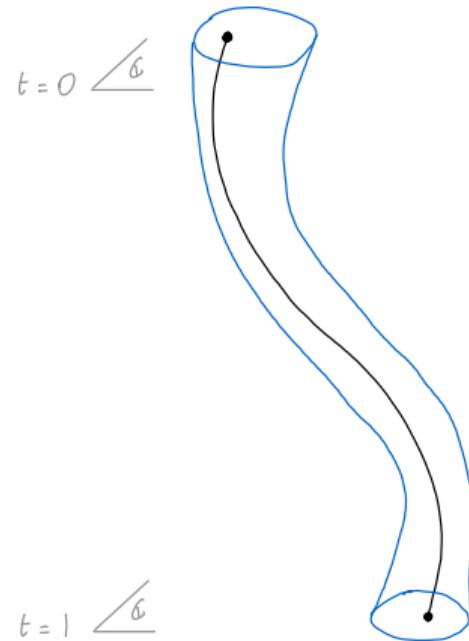
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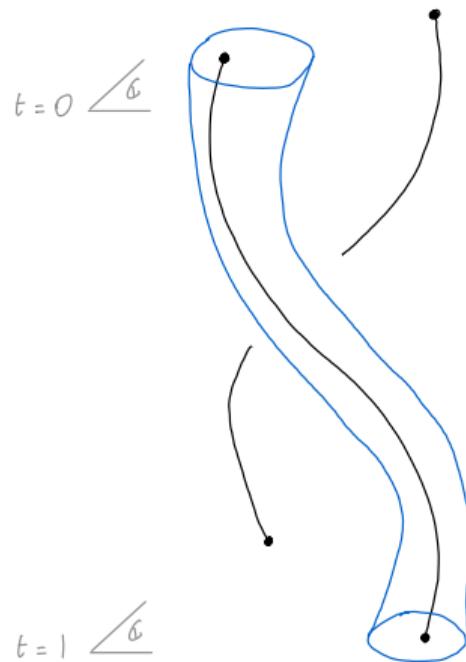
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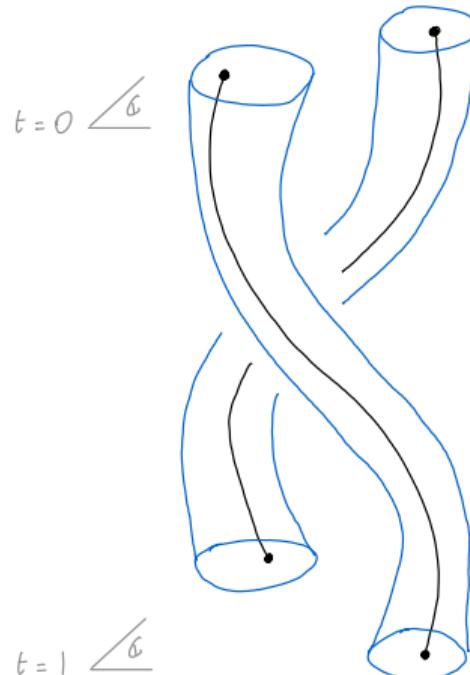
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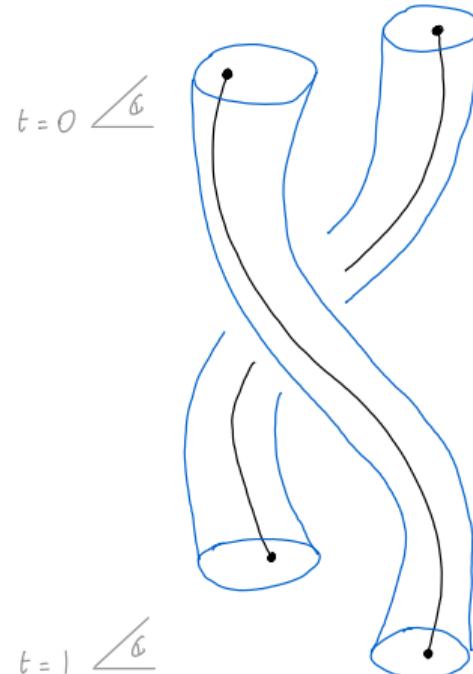
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## Application

Recall  $g \in \mathbb{C}[t, z]$  and  $\gamma : [0, 1] \rightarrow \mathbb{C} \setminus \Sigma$  from first slide.

Apply certified homotopy continuation to

$H(t, z) = g(\gamma(t), z)$ .



## Related work

### Certified homotopy continuation

- Kearfott, R. B., & Xing, Z. (1994). An Interval Step Control for Continuation Methods.
- van der Hoeven, J. (2015). Reliable homotopy continuation.
- Xu, J., Burr, M., & Yap, C. (2018). An Approach for Certifying Homotopy Continuation Paths: Univariate Case.
- G., A., & Lairez, P. (2024). Validated Numerics for Algebraic Path Tracking.
- Duff, T., & Lee, K. (2024). Certified homotopy tracking using the Krawczyk method.

### Braid computations

- Rodriguez, J. I., & Wang, B. (2017). [Numerical computation of braid groups](#).
- Marco-Buzunariz, M. Á., & Rodríguez, M. (2016). [SIROCCO: a library for certified polynomial root continuation](#).

## Today's goal

We now assume  $\zeta = (\zeta_1, \dots, \zeta_n) : [0, 1] \rightarrow OC_n$  inducing a loop in  $C_n$  i.e.  $\pi(\zeta(0)) = \pi(\zeta(1))$ .

### Goal

**Input** :  $\zeta$  ( $n$  disjoint tubular neighborhoods around  $\zeta_1, \dots, \zeta_n$ )

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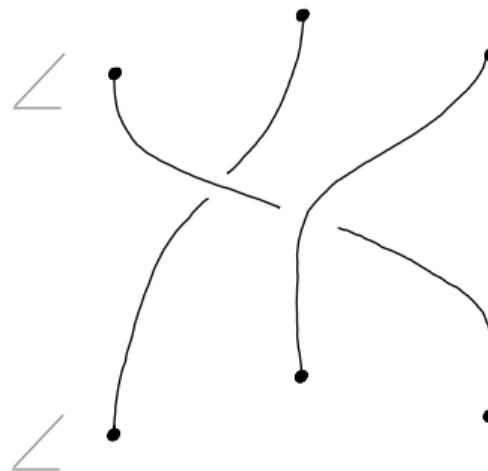
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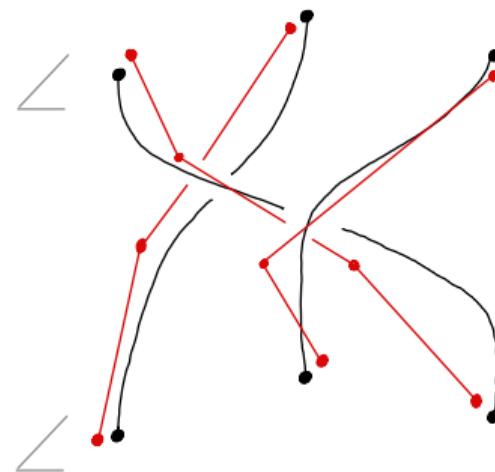
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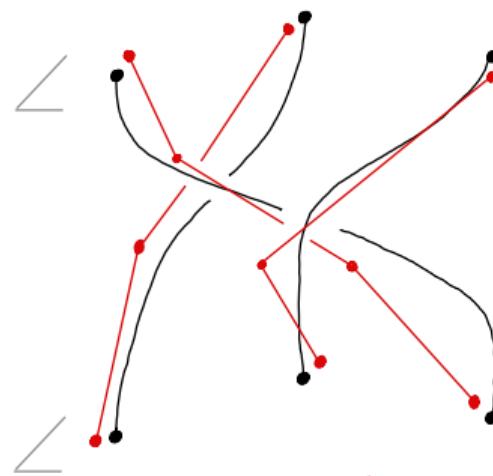
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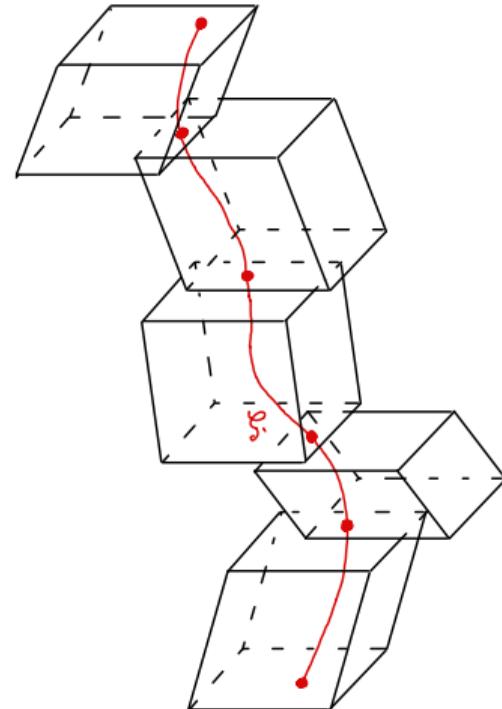
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- 2) Decompose  $\tilde{\zeta}$ .



# Algpath vs SIROCCO

## SIROCCO [Marco-Buzunariz and Rodríguez, 2016]

- Tubular neighborhoods are piecewise linear.
- For each strand  $\zeta_i$ , computes a piecewise linear path in the tube.
- “Intuitive” (! non generic cases) algorithm on the braid with piecewise linear strands.



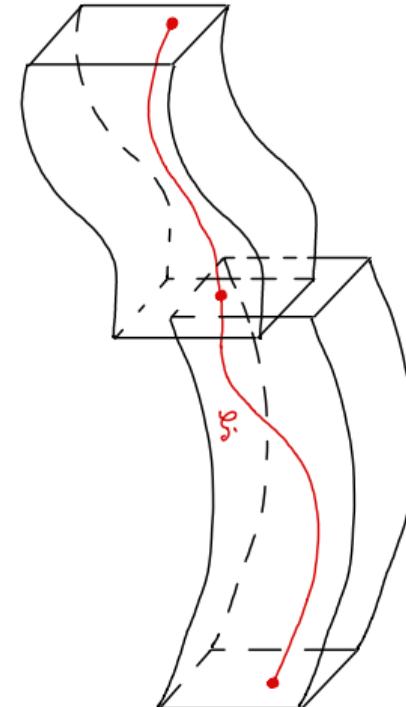
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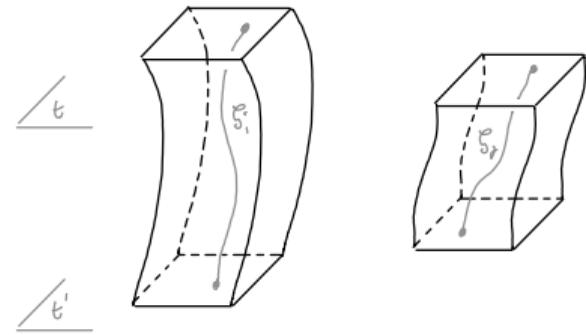
- Tubular neighborhoods are piecewise **cubic**.
- + Faster than SIROCCO,
- ! Finding a piecewise linear path in the tube requires additional work.



## Strand separation

We assume a function  $\text{sep}(i, j, t)$  that returns  $t' \in (t, 1]$  and a symbol in  $\star \in \{\rightarrow, \leftarrow, \overrightarrow{\phantom{x}}, \overleftarrow{\phantom{x}}\}$ , such that for all  $s \in [t, t']$ ,

- $\text{Re}(\zeta_i(s)) < \text{Re}(\zeta_j(s))$  if  $\star = \rightarrow$ ,
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$$\text{sep}(i, j, t) = (t', \rightarrow)$$

# Interface

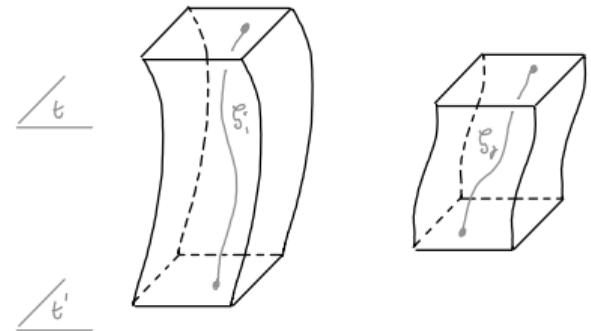
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## Monodromy

We assume a fonction `monodromy()` that returns the monodromy permutation of  $\zeta$ .



$$\text{sep}(i, j, t) = (t', \rightarrow)$$

$\pi(\zeta(0)) = \pi(\zeta(1)) \Rightarrow \exists \sigma \in \mathfrak{S}_n$  s.t.  
for all  $i \in [1, n]$ ,  $\zeta_i(1) = \zeta_{\sigma(i)}(0)$ .

# Cells

Recall:  $OC_n = \{(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \mathbb{C}^n : \forall i \neq j, x_i \neq x_j\}$ .

## Definition

A cell is a pair  $c = (R, I)$  of relations on  $\{1, \dots, n\}$ .

We associate to it a topological space  $|c| \subseteq OC_n$   
whose points are  $(x_1, \dots, x_n) \in OC_n$  such that

- for all  $(i, j) \in R$ ,  $\operatorname{Re}(x_i) < \operatorname{Re}(x_j)$ ,
- for all  $(i, j) \in I$ ,  $\operatorname{Im}(x_i) < \operatorname{Im}(x_j)$ ,

## Notation

- $i \xrightarrow{c} j \iff (i, j) \in R$
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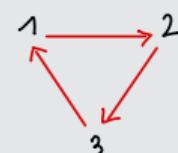
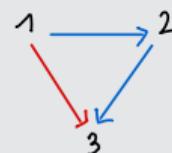
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## Notation

- $i \xrightarrow{c} j \iff (i, j) \in R$
- $i \xrightarrow{c} j \iff (i, j) \in I$

## Examples

$c = (\emptyset, \emptyset)$ :  $|c| = OC_n$ ,



$(1, 2, 3 + i) \in |c| \quad |c| = \emptyset$

# Properties of cells

## Empty cells

A cell is empty if and only if there is a cycle in  $R$  or in  $I$ .

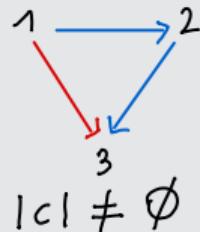
## Convex cells

A (non-empty) cell is convex if and only if for all  $i, j \in \{1, \dots, n\}$ , either  $i \rightarrow^* j$  or  $j \rightarrow^* i$  or  $i \rightarrow^* j$  or  $j \rightarrow^* i$ . We call this graph property "monochromatic semi-connectedness" (m.s.c. for short).

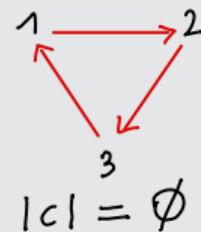
## Intersection of cells

Given  $c = (R, I)$  and  $c' = (R', I')$  two cells, the space associated to  $(R \cup R', I \cup I')$  is  $|c| \cap |c'|$ .

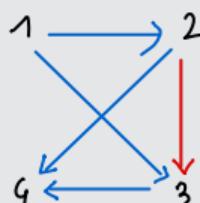
## Examples



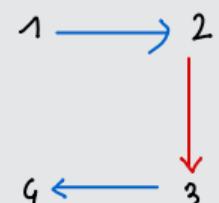
$$|c| \neq \emptyset$$



$$|c| = \emptyset$$



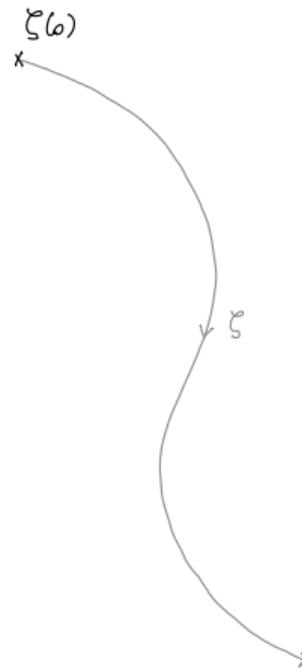
$$|c| \text{ convex}$$



$$|c| \text{ not convex}$$

# Linearization using convex cells

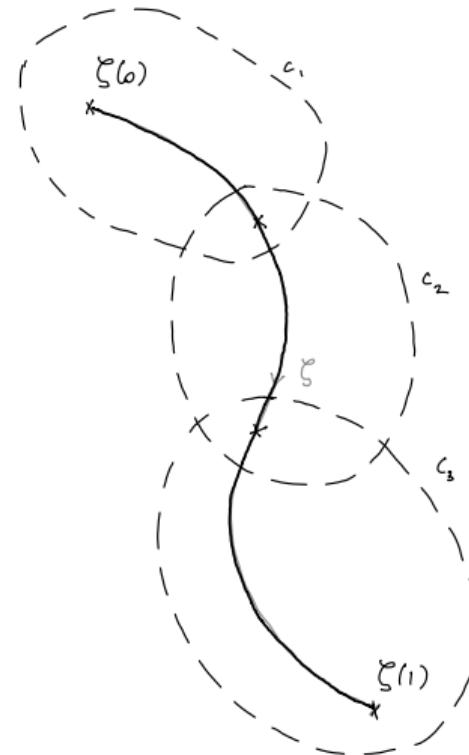
Idea



# Linearization using convex cells

## Idea

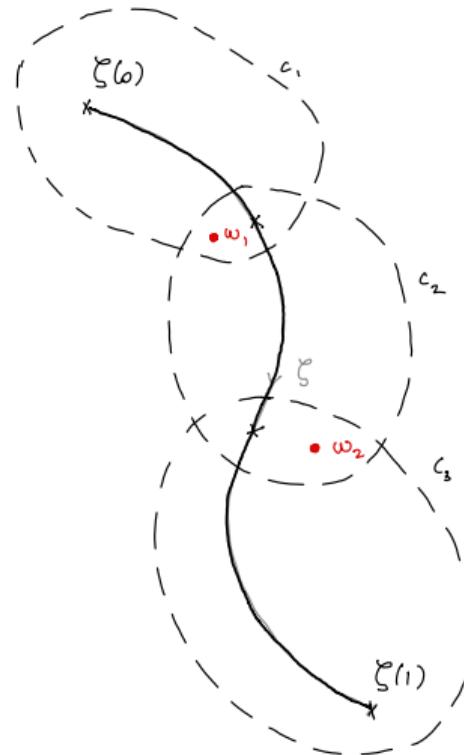
1. Compute a sequence of convex cells covering  $\zeta$



# Linearization using convex cells

## Idea

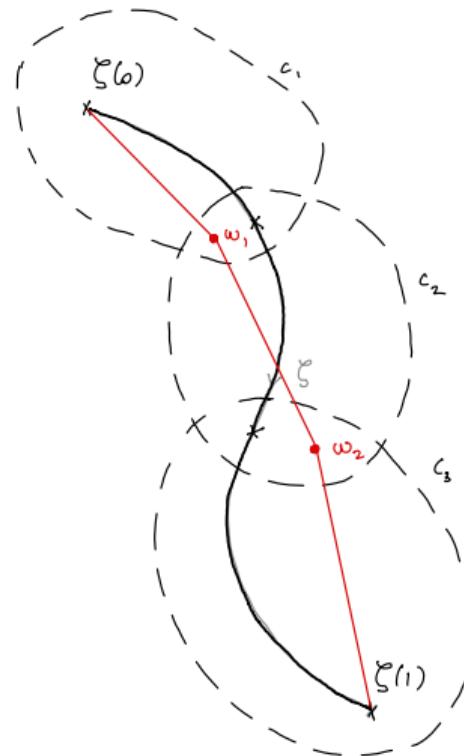
1. Compute a sequence of convex cells covering  $\zeta$
2. Find a simplified path covered by the same cells for which the braid is easy to compute



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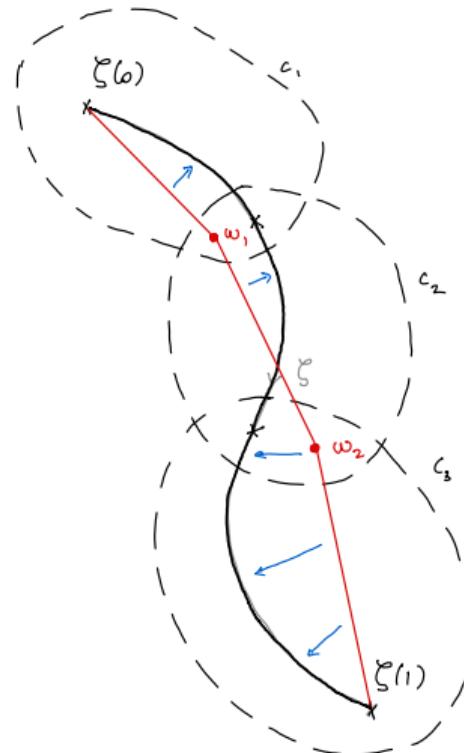
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# Linearization using convex cells

## Idea

1. Compute a sequence of convex cells covering  $\zeta$
  2. Find a simplified path covered by the same cells for which the braid is easy to compute
- We use `sep` to compute the sequence of cells
  - Correction: convexity of the cells

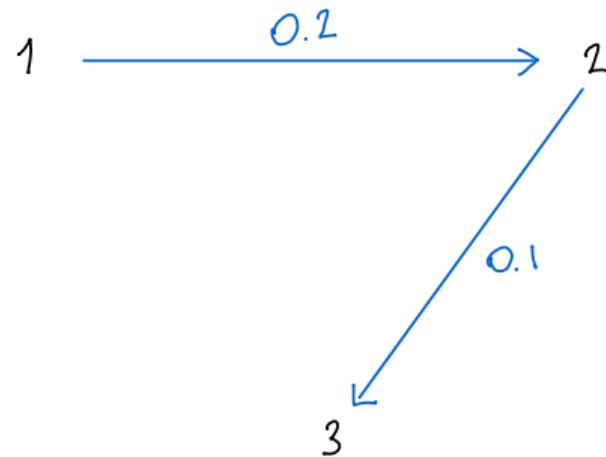


## Step 1: compute a sequence of cells

```
def path_to_cells( $\zeta = (\zeta_1, \dots, \zeta_n)$ ):  
    1   $c \leftarrow (1 \xrightarrow{0} 2 \xrightarrow{0} \dots \xrightarrow{0} n, \emptyset)$  # assume that  $\text{Re}(\zeta_1(0)) < \dots < \text{Re}(\zeta_n(0))$   
    2   $res \leftarrow []$   
    3  loop:  
    4       $res.append(c)$   
    5       $i, j, t \leftarrow c.pop()$  # pops the edge with minimal label in  $c$   
    6      if  $t = 1$ : break  
    7       $t', \star \leftarrow \zeta.sep(i, j, t)$  #  $\star \in \{\rightarrow, \leftarrow, \rightarrow, \leftarrow\}$   
    8       $c.insert(i, j, t', \star)$   
    9      Repair monochromatic semi-connectedness # i.e. convexity  
   10     #  $c$  is convex and contains  $\zeta$  on  $[t, s]$  where  $s$  is the smallest time label in  $c$   
   11  return res
```

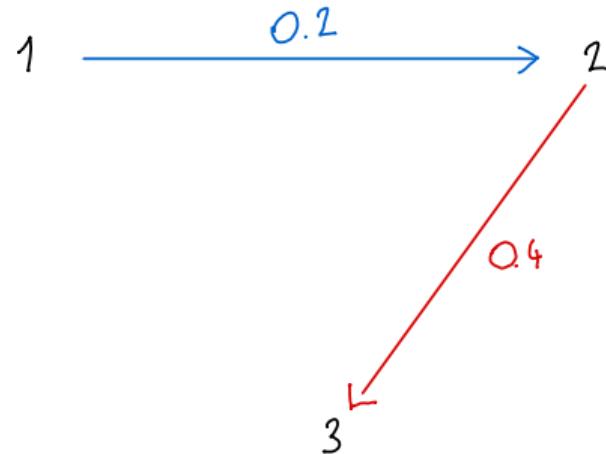
# Repair monochromatic semi-connectedness?

```
1 loop:  
2     res.append(c)  
3     i,j,t ← c.pop()  
4     if t = 1: break  
5     t',* ← ζ.sep(i,j,t)  
6     c.insert(i,j,t',*)  
7     Repair monochromatic semi-connectedness
```



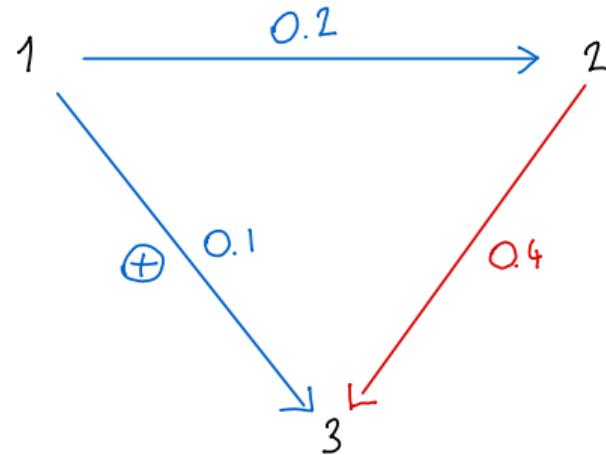
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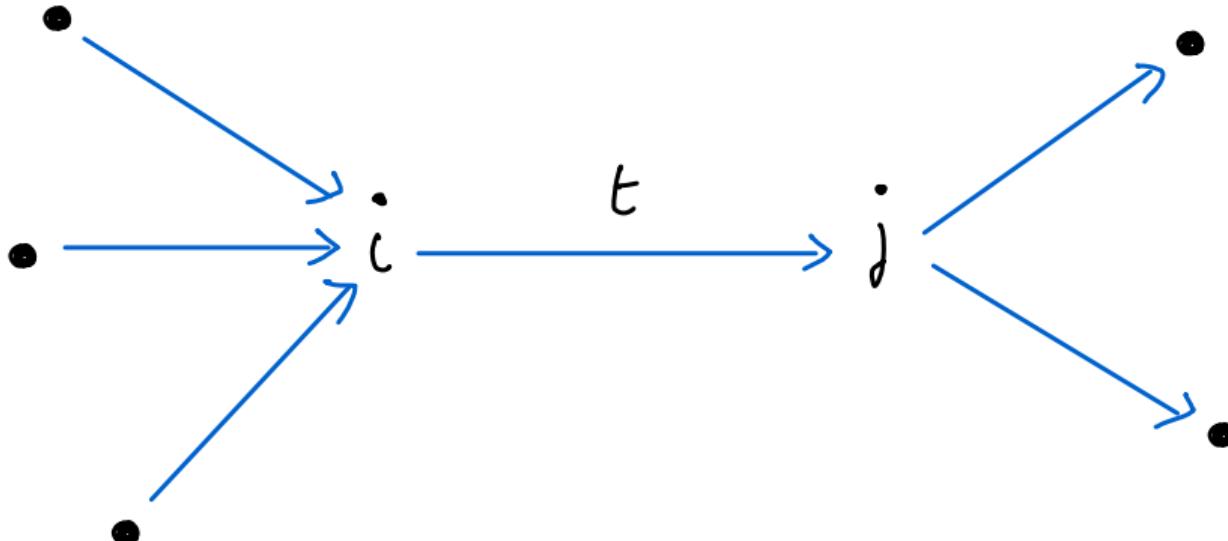


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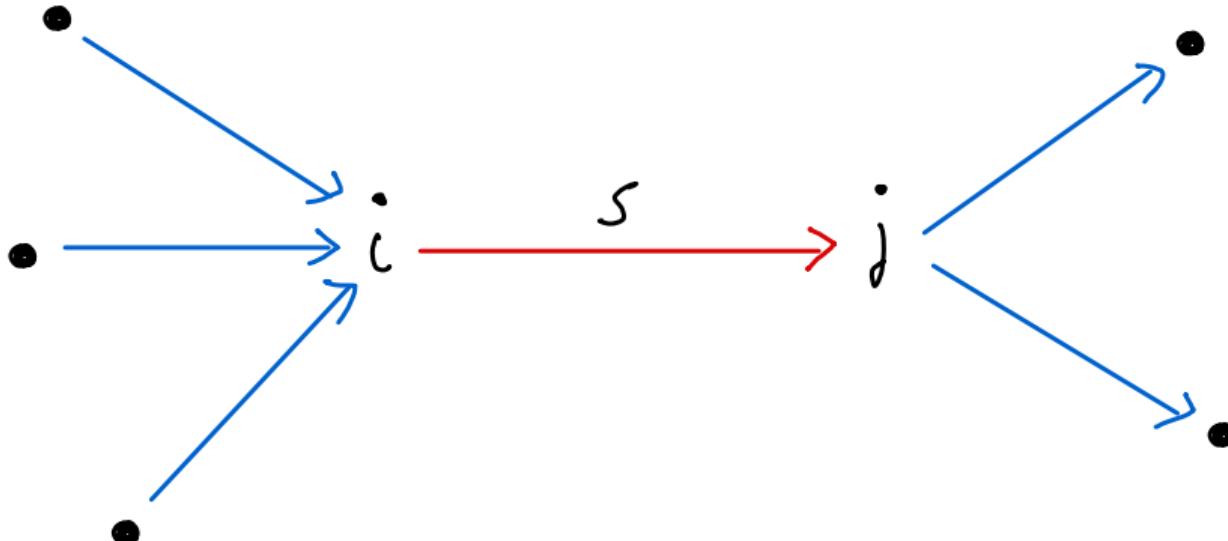
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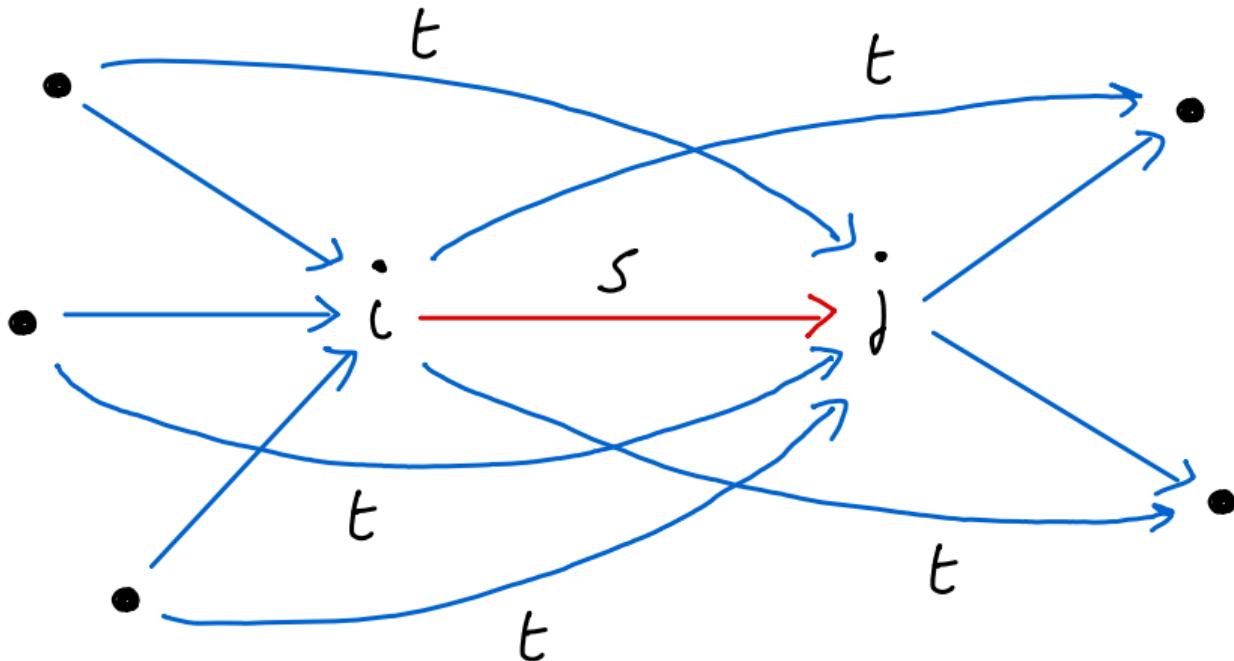
## Repair monochromatic semi-connectedness!



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## Step 2: linearize $\zeta$

### Definition

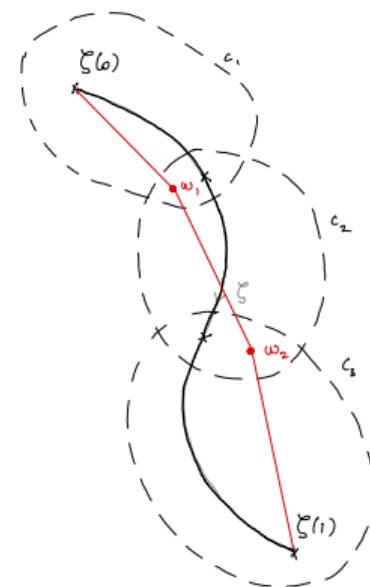
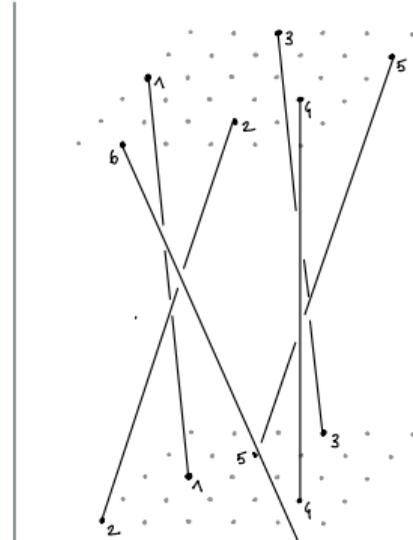
Let  $\rho, \iota \in \mathfrak{S}_n$ . We define

$$\omega_{\rho, \iota} = (\rho(1) + i\iota(1), \dots, \rho(n) + i\iota(n)) \in OC_n$$

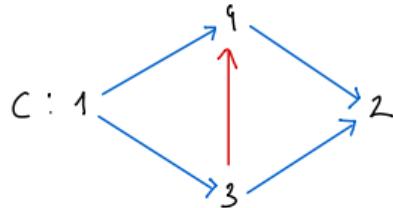
$$\rho = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 2 & 1 & 4 & 3 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\iota = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 4 & 2 & 1 & 3 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\omega_{\rho, \iota} = \begin{matrix} & \bullet_1 & & \bullet_4 & \\ \cdot & & \cdot & & \cdot \\ & \bullet_2 & & \cdot & \\ & \cdot & & \cdot & \bullet_3 \end{matrix}$$



# Given a cell, how do we find a $\omega_{\rho,\iota}$ in it?



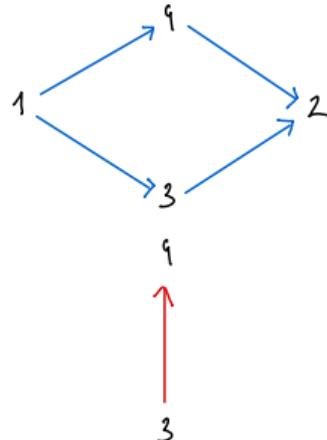
## Problem

$c = (R, I)$  nonempty cell. Find  $\rho, \iota$  such that  $\omega_{\rho,\iota} \in |c|$ .

## Solution

Extend  $R$  and  $I$  to total orders (“topological sort”).

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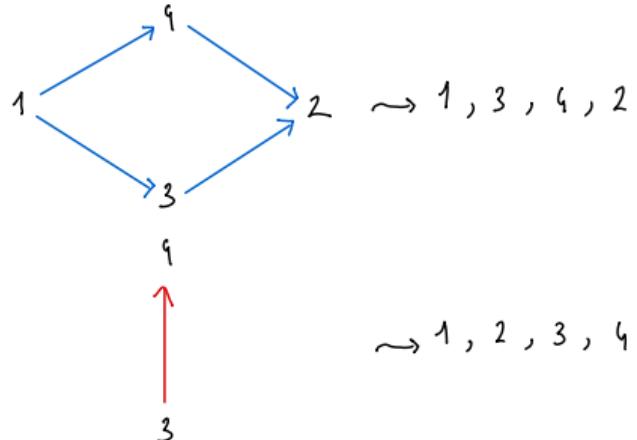
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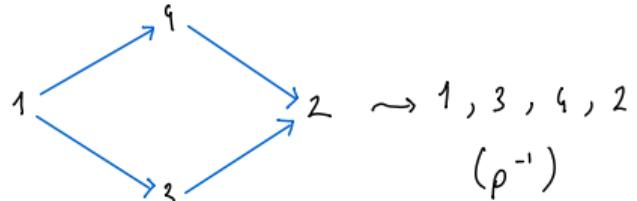
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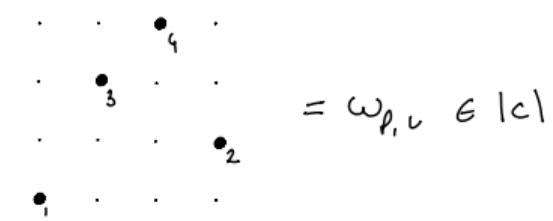
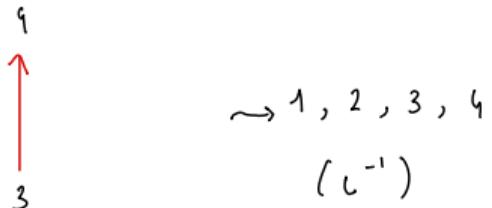


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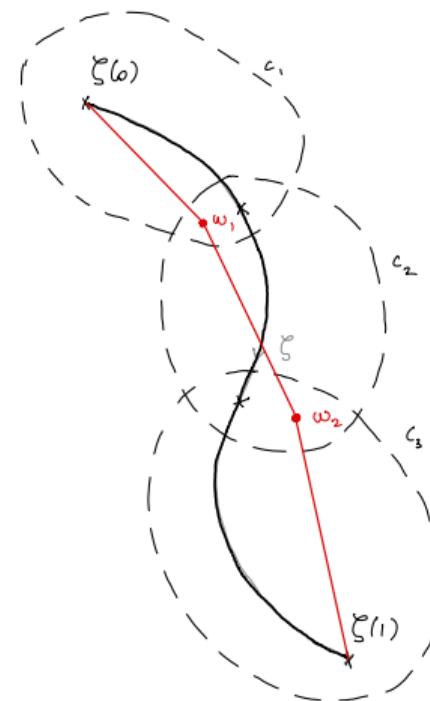
# Algorithm

```
def linearize( $\zeta$ )
1  cells  $\leftarrow \zeta.\text{path\_to\_cells}()$ 
2  res  $\leftarrow [(1, 1)]$  #  $\omega_{1,1} \in (1 \xrightarrow{0} 2 \xrightarrow{0} \dots \xrightarrow{0} n, \emptyset)$  the first element of cells
3  for each pair of successive cells  $c_i, c_{i+1}$  in cells:
4      Compute  $\rho, \iota$  such that  $\omega_{\rho, \iota} \in |c_i| \cap |c_{i+1}|$ 
5      res.append(( $\rho, \iota$ ))
6   $\sigma \leftarrow \zeta.\text{monodromy}()$  #  $\zeta_i(1) = \zeta_{\sigma(i)}(0)$ 
7  res.append(( $\sigma, \iota$ ))
8  return res
```

# Main property of linearize

## Proposition

The braid associated to  $\zeta$  and to the linear interpolation of the result of  $\zeta.\text{linearize}()$  are equal.



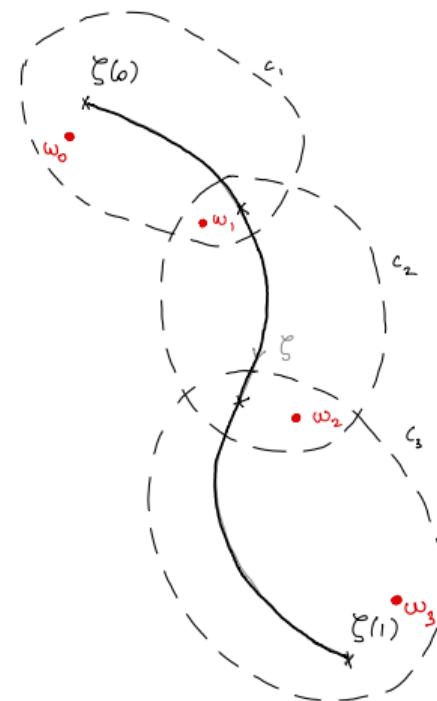
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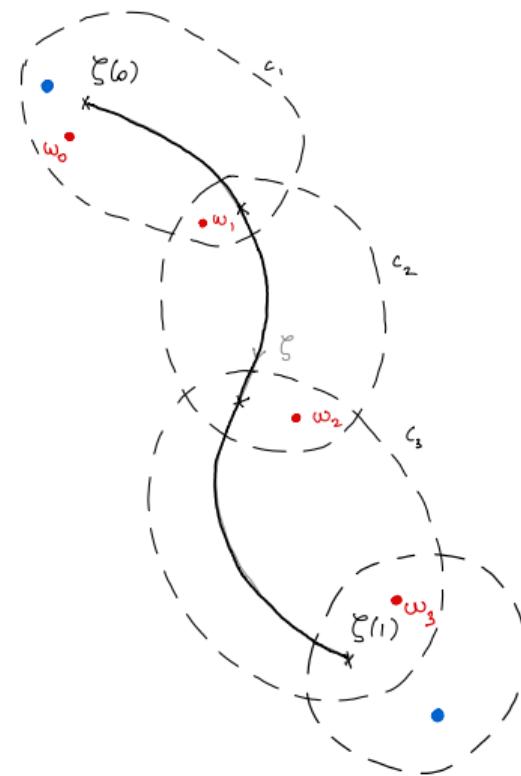
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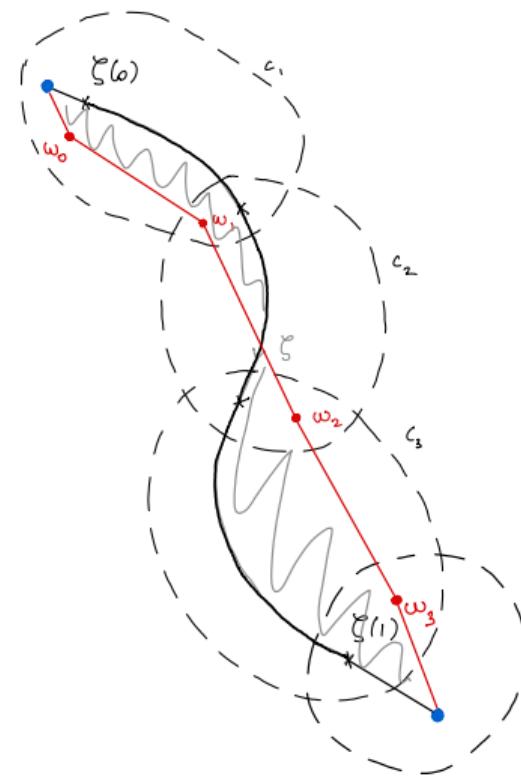
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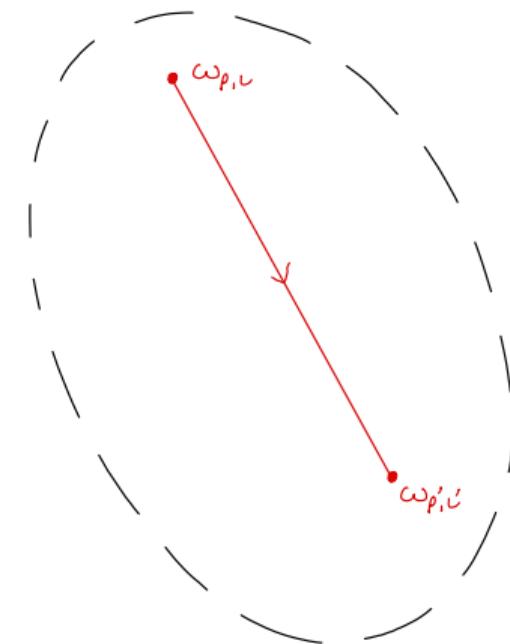
The braid associated to  $\zeta$  and to the linear interpolation of the result of  $\zeta.\text{linearize}()$  are equal.



## Step 3: decomposition of the linearization in standard generators

### Reduction

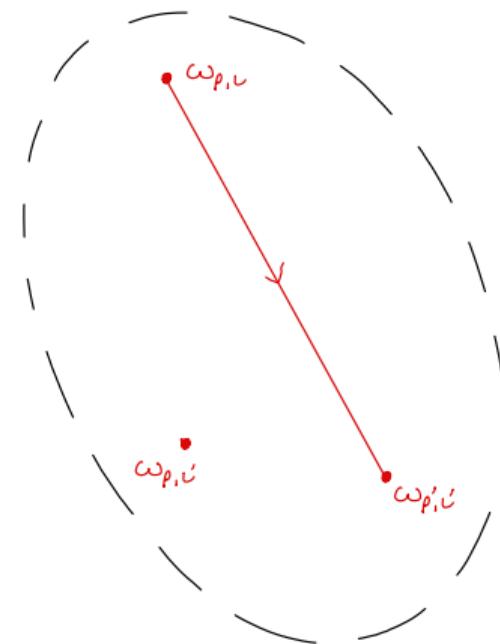
- Computing the braid associated to the whole linearization or to each piece and concatenating the results is equivalent



## Step 3: decomposition of the linearization in standard generators

### Reduction

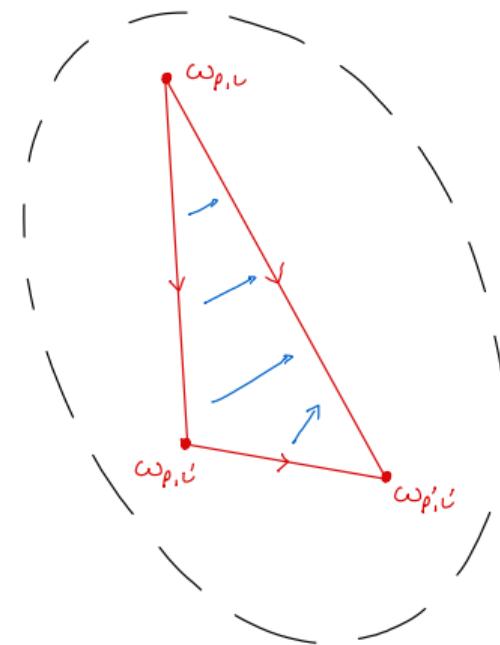
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- Assume  $\omega_{\rho,\iota}$  and  $\omega_{\rho',\iota'}$  both lie in a m.s.c cell  $c = (R, I)$ . It means that  $\rho, \rho'$  extend  $R$  and  $\iota, \iota'$  extend  $I$ . **So  $\omega_{\rho,\iota}$  also lies in  $c$ !**



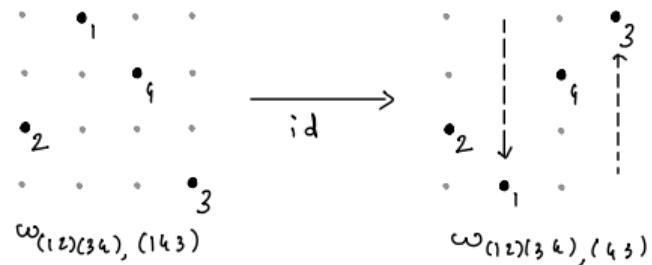
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- We compute the braid of  $\omega_{\rho,\iota} \rightarrow \omega_{\rho,\iota'}$  then the braid of  $\omega_{\rho,\iota'} \rightarrow \omega_{\rho',\iota'}$



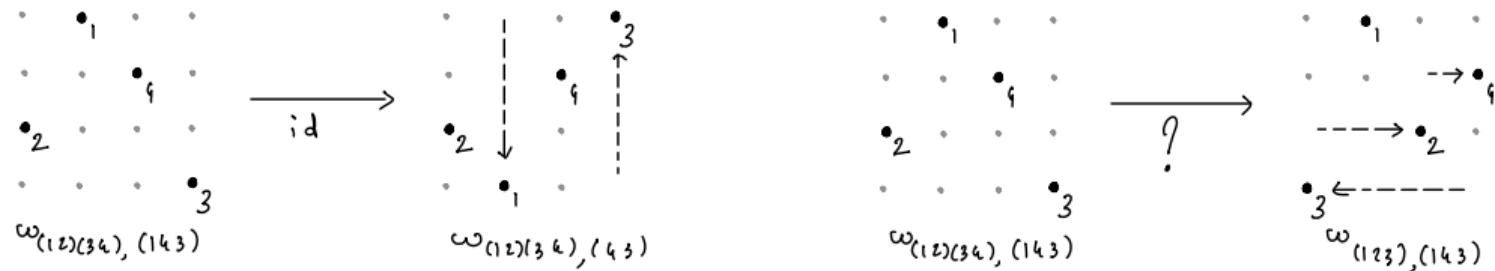
## Step 3: decomposition of the linearization in standard generators



$$\omega_{\rho, \iota} \rightarrow \omega_{\rho, \iota'}$$

The induced braid is trivial, as the real part of the strands is constant.

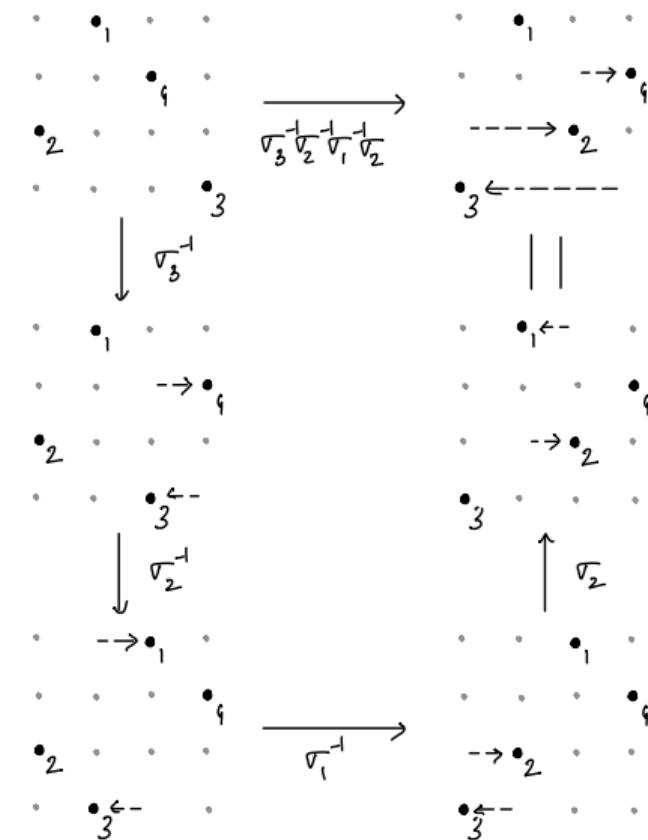
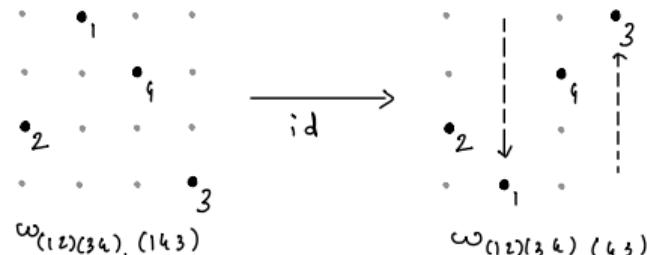
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The induced braid is trivial, as the real part of the strands is constant.

$$\omega_{\rho, \iota'} \rightarrow \omega_{\rho', \iota'}$$

Let  $\rho' \rho^{-1} = s_{i_1} \dots s_{i_r}$  be a decomposition in elementary transpositions. Output

$\sigma_{i_1}^{\varepsilon_1} \dots \sigma_{i_r}^{\varepsilon_r}$  with  $\varepsilon_1, \dots, \varepsilon_r \in \{\pm 1\}$  computed using  $\iota'$ .

# Optimizations

## Cell size

- Worst case, quadratic in the number of strands. But  $1 \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow n$  has only  $n - 1$  edges.
- In the algorithm presented, we never decrease the number of edges.
- Optimization: before inserting an edge between  $i$  and  $j$ , check if there is a monochromatic path between  $i$  and  $j$  and in this case do not insert.

## Combine all three steps

- In step 2, we perform multiple topological sorts, but the consecutive cells do not differ by much (an edge deleted and a few inserted)
- Maintain a  $\omega_{\rho, \iota}$  and update  $\rho$  and  $\iota$  on cell change.
- Done efficiently using a dynamical topological sort algorithm [Pearce and Kelly, 2007]
- We directly compute the braid of the consecutive  $\omega_{\rho, \iota}$ .

# Conclusion

```
~/2025/code/braid_group cargo run --release
```

```
Finished `release` profile [optimized] target(s) in 0.08s
Running `target/release/braid_group`
```

```
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