A solution to Haagerup's problem on normal weights

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Main result

In my master's thesis, I solved a 50-year-old problem posed by Haagerup in his master's thesis and obtained the following theorem!

Theorem ([Cho25], arXiv:2501.16832)

Let A be a C^* -algebra, and F^* be a weakly* closed convex hereditary subset of A^{*+} . Then, for any $\omega \in A^{*+} \setminus F^*$, there exists $\alpha \in A^+$ such that

$$\omega(a) > 1$$
 and $\omega'(a) \le 1$ for all $\omega' \in F^*$.

The original proof has been simplified thanks to N. Ozawa. The positivity condition $a \ge 0$ is the non-trivial point. Applying the idea used to prove the above theorem, I could simplify the proof of the following.

Theorem ([Haa75])

For a subadditive weight φ on M, the followings are equivalent:

- $\triangleright \varphi$ is σ -lower semi-continuous.
- $\triangleright \varphi$ is given by the pointwise supremum of normal positive linear functionals.

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C*-algebras and von Neumann algebras

We will always denote a C^* -algbera and a vN algebra by A and M respectively.

A vN (or W*-) algebra can be defined as a C*-algebra M that admits a predual M_* , which is unique if it exists. The canonical weak* topology on M is conventionally called the σ -weak topology, and normality usually means the σ -weak continuity. We focus on the dual pairs (A,A^*) and (M,M_*) and their weak/weak* topologies. Note that for a convex subset of A or M_* it is norm closed iff it is weakly closed by the Hahn-Banach separation.

To see the measure theoretic analogues in today's talk, the following notes would be helpful to keep in mind.

Example (Commutative C*-algebras)

A commutative A is *-isomorphic to $C_0(X)$ for a locally compact Hausdorff space X. The positive part of its dual A^{*+} is given by the set of finite regular Borel measures on X.

Example (Commutative vN algebras)

A commutative M is *-isomorphic to $L^\infty(X,\mu)$ for a localizable measure space (X,μ) . The positive part of its predual M_*^+ is isomorphic to $L^1(X,\mu)$, which can be identified with the set of finite measures on X absolutely continuous with respect to μ . Note that every σ -finite measure is a localizable.

Definitions on weights

Definition (Weights and subadditive weights)

A weight on A is a homogeneous additive functional $\varphi: A^+ \to [0, \infty]$. A subadditive weight on A is a homogeneous subadditive functional $\varphi: A^+ \to [0, \infty]$.

Definition (Properties of weights)

For a weight φ on A, we say it is

- (i) faithful if $\varphi(a) = 0$ implies a = 0 for $a \in A^+$,
- (ii) densely defined if $\varphi^{-1}([0,\infty))$ is norm dense in A^+ ,
- (iii) lower semi-continuous if $\varphi^{-1}([0,1])$ is norm closed in A^+ .

For a weight φ on M, we say it is

- (ii') semi-finite if $\varphi^{-1}([0,\infty))$ is σ -weakly dense in M^+ ,
- (iii') normal if $\varphi^{-1}([0,1])$ is σ -weakly closed in M^+ .

A positive linear functional gives rise to a weight. Normality can be regarded as the generalization of the countable additivity of measures. Note that the σ -weak lower semi-continuity can be understood as a restatement of the Fatou lemma.

Motivating examples for weights

Example (Localizable measures)

A localizable measure μ is always a faithful semi-finite normal weight on $L^{\infty}(\mu)$. In fact, every M admits a faithful semi-finite normal weight.

Example (Radon measures)

Densely defined lower semi-continuous weights on $C_0(X)$ for a locally compact Hausdorff X are exactly positive linear functionals on $C_c(X)$, and are exactly locally finite inner regular Borel measures on X. Every densely defined subadditive weight on a unital A is bounded, so there is A without a faithful densely defined lower semi-continuous weight.

Example (Gelfand-Naimark-Segal representations)

There is a one-to-one correspondence between weights on A and unitary equivalence classes of semi-cyclic representations of A, which is defined as a representation $\pi:A\to B(H)$ equipped with a partially defined left A-linear map $\Lambda:A\to H$ of dense range. The corresponding weight φ on M is normal iff π is normal and Λ is σ -weakly closed. A densely defined lower semi-continuous weight φ on A gives rise to a faithful semi-finite normal weight on the σ -weak closure A'' in the associated semi-cyclic representation to φ .

Equivalent characterizations for normality of weights

Theorem ([Haa75])

For a weight φ on M, the followings are all equivalent.

(1) φ is completely additive for positive elements;

$$\varphi(\sum_i x_i) = \sum_i \varphi(x_i), \qquad x_i \in M^+.$$

(2) φ preserves directed suprema;

$$\varphi(\sup_{i} x_{i}) = \sup_{i} \varphi(x_{i}), \qquad x_{i} \uparrow \sup_{i} x_{i} \text{ in } M^{+}.$$

 φ is σ -weakly lower semi-continuous;

$$\varphi(\lim_{i} x_{i}) \leq \liminf_{i} \varphi(x_{i}), \qquad x_{i} \to \lim_{i} x_{i} \text{ σ-weakly in M^{+}.}$$

(4) φ is given by the pointwise supremum of normal positive linear functionals;

$$\varphi(x) = \sup_{\omega \le \varphi, \ \omega \in M_*^+} \omega(x), \qquad x \in M^+.$$

 $(4) \Rightarrow (3) \Rightarrow (2) \Rightarrow (1)$ are clear.

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Problem (1.10)

For a subadditive weight on M, is it σ -weakly lower semi-continuous if it preserves directed suprema?

Haagerup proved (1) \Rightarrow (3) directly without an intermediate step (2). He proved first for σ -finite vN algebras, and extended the result to general vN algebras.

Definition

A vN algebra is called σ -finite or countably decomposable if every orthogonal family of non-zero projections is countable, or equivalently, it admits a faithful normal state.

Theorem ([Haa75])

For a weight on σ -finite M, (1) \Rightarrow (3) holds.

For a subadditive weight on general M, $(1)\Rightarrow(3)$ holds if every restriction on σ -finite vN subalgebras satisfies $(1)\Rightarrow(3)$.

Therefore, for a weight on general M, $(1)\Rightarrow(3)$ holds.

Thus, it is enough to solve the problem in the σ -finite case.

Second problem

Problem (1.11)

For a weight on M, is it normal if it is normal on every commutative vN subalgebra?

Theorem ([Dix53])

For a positive linear functional ω on M, the followings are all equivalent.

- (0) ω is completely additive for orthogonal projections.
- (1) ω is completely additive for positive elements.
- (2) ω preserves directed suprema.
- (3) ω is σ -weakly continuous.

In particular, a (positive) linear functional on M is normal if it is normal on every commutative vN subalgebra by $(0) \Rightarrow (1)$, and it is used to prove some equivalent characterizations for weak compactness in M_* .

Example

 $(0)\Rightarrow (1)$ is false for weights. Define a weight φ for $x=(x_n)_n\in \ell^\infty(\mathbb{N})^+$ such that $\varphi(x):=\sum_n x_n$ if $x\in c_c(\mathbb{N})$ and $\varphi(x):=\infty$ otherwise. Then, it gives a counterexample.

Third problem

Problem (2.7)

Does the positive bipolar theorem hold for dual C*-algerbas? See (d) in the below.

Definition

Let (E, E^*) be a dual pair of (directed partially) ordered real vector spaces such that E^+ and E^{*+} are mutually dual cones, i.e. $E^{*+} = \{x^* \in E : x^*(x) \ge 0 \text{ for } x \in E\}$. For $F \subset E^+$, we say it is *hereditary* if $0 \le x \le y \in F$ implies $x \in F$, and its *positive polar* is the set

$$F^{r+} := (F^r)^+ = \{x^* \in E^* : \sup_{x \in F} x^*(x) \le 1\}^+ = \{x^* \in E^{*+} : \sup_{x \in F} x^*(x) \le 1\}.$$

Theorem ((a) \sim (c) in [Haa75], (d) in [Cho25])

Consider the ordered real dual pairs (M^{sa}, M^{sa}_*) and (A^{sa}, A^{sa*}) of self-adjoint parts.

- (a) If F is a σ -weakly closed convex hereditary subset of M^+ , then $F = F^{r+r+}$.
- (b) If F_* is a norm closed convex hereditary subset of M_*^+ , then $F_* = F_*^{r+r+}$.
- (c) If F is a norm closed convex hereditary subset of A^+ , then $F = F^{r+r+}$.
- (d) If F^* is weakly* closed convex hereditary subset of A^{*+} , then $F^* = (F^*)^{r+r+}$.

Corollaries of third problem

Corollary ([Haa75])

For a subadditive weight φ on M, (3) \Rightarrow (4) holds.

- (3) φ is σ -lower semi-continuous.
- (4) φ is given by the pointwise supremum of normal positive linear functionals.

Proof. Define

$$F := \{ x \in M^+ : \varphi(x) \le 1 \}, \qquad F_* := \{ \omega \in M_*^+ : \omega \le \varphi \}.$$

Then, $F_*=F^{r+}$ by definition, and (4) is equivalent to $F=F_*^{r+}$. Since F is σ -weakly closed by the σ -weak lower semi-continuity of φ , and since F is clearly convex and hereditary by definition of subadditive weights, so we are done by the part (a).

Using (c) instead of (a), we can simplify the proof of the following theorem.

Corollary (Combes, 1968)

A lower semi-continuous subadditive weight on A is given by the pointwise supremum of positive linear functionals.

Corollaries of third problem

Corollary

There are one-to-one correspondences

$$\left\{\begin{array}{c} \textit{normal} \\ \textit{subadditive} \\ \textit{weights on } \textit{M} \end{array}\right\} \quad \longleftrightarrow \quad \left\{\begin{array}{c} \sigma\textit{-weakly closed} \\ \textit{convex hereditary} \\ \textit{subsets of } \textit{M}^+ \end{array}\right\} \quad \longleftrightarrow \quad \left\{\begin{array}{c} \textit{norm closed} \\ \textit{convex hereditary} \\ \textit{subsets of } \textit{M}^+_* \end{array}\right\}$$

and

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \textit{lower semi-} \\ \textit{continuous} \\ \textit{subadditive} \\ \textit{weights on } A \end{array} \right\} \quad \longleftrightarrow \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \textit{norm closed} \\ \textit{convex hereditary} \\ \textit{subsets of } A^+ \end{array} \right\} \quad \longleftrightarrow \quad \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \textit{weakly* closed} \\ \textit{convex hereditary} \\ \textit{subsets of } A^{*+} \end{array} \right\}$$

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Definition (Suppression by the one-parameter family of functional calculi)

For $\delta > 0$, we define a function $f_{\delta} : (-\delta^{-1}, \infty) \to \mathbb{R}$ such that

$$f_{\delta}(t) := t(1 + \delta t)^{-1}, \qquad t > -\delta^{-1}.$$

They are operator monotone, σ -strongly continuous, and has the semi-group property.

Proof sketch of (a) by Haagerup. Since

$$F^{r+} = F^r \cap M_*^+ = F^r \cap (-M^+)^r = (F \cup -M^+)^r = (F - M^+)^r,$$

$$F^{r+r+} = (F - M^+)^{r+r+} = (\overline{F - M^+})^+$$

by the usual real bipolar theorem, it suffices to show $(\overline{F-M^+})^+ \subset F$.

Heuristics. Let $x \in (\overline{F-M^+})^+$ with nets x_i and y_i such that $x_i \to x$ σ -weakly in M and $x_i \le y_i \in F$ for all i. Observe that if x_i were bounded by r > 0, then assuming $x_i \to x$ σ -strongly and $f_\delta(y_i) \to y_\delta$ σ -weakly for each $0 < \delta < r^{-1}$, we get

$$x_i \le y_i \in F$$
, $f_{\delta}(x_i) \le f_{\delta}(y_i) \in F$, $0 \le f_{\delta}(x) \le y_{\delta} \in F$, $f_{\delta}(x) \in F$, $x \in F$.

The boundedness of x_i is necessary to define $f_{\delta}(x_i)$ for δ independently of i.

Question. How can we remove the boundedness condition of x_i ?

Solution. We use the Krein-Šmulian theorem. Define

$$G := \{x \in M^{sa} : \text{for any sufficiently small } \delta > 0, f_{\delta}(x) \in F - M^{+}\}.$$

It is enough to show

$$F - M^+ \subset G$$
, $G^+ \subset F$, $\overline{G} \subset G$,

and the first two are clear. To apply the Krein-Šmulian theorem, fix r>0 and let $M_r:=\{x\in M: \|x\|\leq r\}$. The proof of the σ -weak closedness is divided into the two steps: $G\cap M_r$ is σ -strongly closed, $G\cap M_r$ is convex. After proving these, $\overline{G}\subset G$ by the Krein-Šmulian theorem.

Definition (Bounded commutant Radon-Nikodym derivatives)

Let $\psi \in M^+_*$ and let $\pi: M \to B(H)$ be associated cyclic representation to ψ with the canonical cyclic vector $\Omega \in H$. Then, we have a positive bounded linear map $\theta: \pi(M)' \to M_*$, which we call the *RN map*, defined such that

$$\theta(h)(x) := \langle h\pi(x)\Omega, \Omega \rangle, \qquad h \in \pi(M)', \ x \in M.$$

If $\omega \in M_*$ satisfies $|\omega(x)| \le \psi(x)$ for all $x \in M^+$, then $\theta^{-1}(\omega)$ is uniquely defined and $\|\theta^{-1}(\omega)\| \le 1$, which has $\theta^{-1}(\omega) = d\omega/d\psi$ when M is commutative.

Proof sketch of (b). It is enough to prove $(\overline{F_*-M_*^+})^+ \subset F_*$. Let $\omega \in (\overline{F_*-M_*^+})^+$ with sequences ω_n and φ_n such that $\omega_n \to \omega$ in norm of M_* and $\omega_n \le \varphi_n \in F_*$ for all n. We may assume $\|\omega_n - \omega\| \le 2^{-n}$ for all n by passing to a subsequence. Define

$$\psi := \omega + \sum_{n} [\omega_n - \omega] + \sum_{n} 2^{-n} \frac{\varphi_n}{1 + \|\varphi_n\|} \in M_*^+,$$

and let $\theta:\pi(M)'\to M_*$ be the RN map associated to ψ . Since $-\psi\le\omega_n\le\psi$ implies the boundedness $\|\theta^{-1}(\omega_n)\|\le 1$ for all n, the weak convergence $\omega_n\to\omega$ in M_* implies the convergence $\theta^{-1}(\omega_n)\to\theta^{-1}(\omega)$ in the weak operator topology of $\pi(M)'$.

By the Mazur lemma, we can take a net ω_i in the convex hull of ω_n such that $\theta^{-1}(\omega_i) \to \theta^{-1}(\omega)$ strongly in $\pi(M)'$, and the corresponding $\varphi_i \in F^*$ can be defined such that $\omega_i \leq \varphi_i$ for all i. (In fact, the net ω_i can be taken to be a sequence because the commutant is σ -finite by the existence of the separating vector, but it is not necessary in here.) For each i and $0 < \delta < 1$, define

$$\omega_{\delta}:=\theta(f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\omega))), \qquad \omega_{i,\delta}:=\theta(f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\omega_{i}))), \qquad \varphi_{i,\delta}:=\theta(f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\varphi_{i}))).$$

Then, the strong convergence $f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\omega_i)) \to f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\omega))$ in $\pi(M)'$ implies $\omega_{i,\delta} \to \omega_{\delta}$ weakly in M_* , and the strong convergence $f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\omega)) \to \theta^{-1}(\omega)$ in $\pi(M)'$ implies $\omega_{\delta} \to \omega$ weakly in M_* as $\delta \to 0$. If we define $\varphi_{\delta} := \theta(\lim_i f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\varphi_i)))$ by taking a subnet or a cofinal ultrafilter, then $\varphi_{i,\delta} \to \varphi_{\delta}$ weakly in M_* . Since $\omega_i \leq \varphi_i$ and $0 \leq \varphi_{i,\delta} \leq \varphi_i \in F_*$, we get

$$\omega_{i,\delta} \leq \varphi_{i,\delta} \in F_*, \qquad 0 \leq \omega_{\delta} \leq \varphi_{\delta} \in F_*, \qquad \omega_{\delta} \in F_*, \qquad \omega \in F_*.$$

This completes the proof.

Let ω_i and φ_i be nets in A^{*sa} such that $\omega_i \to \omega$ weakly* in A^* and $\omega_i \le \varphi_i \in F^*$ for all i.

Question 1. How can we choose the reference ψ for the Radon-Nikodym?

Solution 1. Take ψ_i dynamically depending on ω_i .

Question 2. How can we commute the weak* limit of ω_i and f_δ without strong topology?

Solution 2. Approximate f_{δ} with affine functions by

$$t - \delta^{\frac{1}{2}} \le f_{\delta}(t) \le t, \qquad |t| \le 2^{-1} \delta^{-\frac{1}{4}},$$

 $(1 + \delta^{-1})t \le f_{\delta}(t) \le t, \qquad 0 \le t \le 1.$

Proof of (d). It suffices to show $(\overline{F^* - A^{*+}})^+ \subset F^*$. Define

$$G^* := \left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{there is } \psi \in A^{*+}, \text{ and there is } \varphi_\delta \in F^* \\ \omega \in A^{*sa}: \text{ for any sufficiently small } \delta > 0, \text{ such that } \\ \|\psi\| \leq 1, \ \|\varphi_\delta\| \leq \delta^{-1}, \text{ and } \omega \leq \varphi_\delta + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}}\psi \end{array} \right\}.$$

It suffices to show $F^* - A^{*+} \subset G^*$, $G^{*+} \subset F^*$, and $\overline{G^*} \subset G^*$.

Step 1. Let $\omega \in F^* - A^{*+}$. Take $\varphi \in F^*$ such that $\omega \leq \varphi$. Define, for $\delta > 0$,

$$\psi := \frac{[\omega]}{1 + \|\omega\|} + \frac{\varphi}{(1 + \|\omega\|)(1 + \|\varphi\|)}, \qquad \varphi_{\delta} := \theta(f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\varphi))),$$

where θ is the RN map associated to ψ . The norm conditions $\|\psi\| \leq 1$ and $\|\varphi_\delta\| \leq \delta^{-1}$ are easily checked. For sufficiently small $\delta > 0$ such that $\|\theta^{-1}(\omega)\| \leq 1 + \|\omega\| \leq 2^{-1}\delta^{-\frac{1}{4}}$ and $\delta \leq 1$, we have

$$\theta^{-1}(\omega) \leq f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\omega)) + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}} \leq f_{\delta}(\theta^{-1}(\varphi)) + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}},$$

so $\omega \leq \varphi_{\delta} + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}} \psi$ and $\omega \in G^*$.

Step 2. Let $\omega \in G^{*+}$. Take $\psi \in A^{*+}$ and $\varphi_{\delta} \in F^{*}$ such that $\|\psi\| \leq 1$, $\|\varphi_{\delta}\| \leq \delta^{-1}$, $\omega \leq \varphi_{\delta} + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}} \psi$, for any sufficiently small $\delta > 0$. Let $\psi_{\delta} := \omega + \delta \varphi + \psi$, and let θ_{δ} be the associated RN map. For any fixed $\delta' > 0$, since $0 \leq \theta_{\delta}^{-1}(\omega) \leq 1$, we have

$$0 \leq (1 + \delta')^{-1} \theta_{\delta}^{-1}(\omega) \leq f_{\delta'}(\theta_{\delta}^{-1}(\omega)) \leq f_{\delta'}(\theta_{\delta}^{-1}(\varphi_{\delta} + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}}\psi))$$

$$\leq f_{\delta'}(\theta_{\delta}^{-1}(\varphi_{\delta}) + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}}) \leq f_{\delta'}(\theta_{\delta}^{-1}(\varphi_{\delta})) + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}},$$

and it implies

$$0 \leq (1+\delta')^{-1}\omega \leq \theta_{\delta}(f_{\delta'}(\theta_{\delta}^{-1}(\varphi_{\delta}))) + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}}\psi_{\delta}.$$

Since $\|\psi_{\delta}\| \leq \|\omega\| + 2$ is bounded and $\theta_{\delta}(f_{\delta'}(\theta_{\delta}^{-1}(\varphi_{\delta}))) \in F^*$ is also bounded for fixed δ' as $\delta \to 0$, by considering the limit along a cofinal ultrafilter on the set of δ , we have $(1 + \delta')^{-1}\omega \in F^*$, so $\delta' \to 0$ gives $\omega \in F^*$.

Step 3. To show G^* is weakly* closed, we claim for any r > 0 that

$$\overline{(F^*-A^{*+})\cap A_{2r}^*}\subset G^*,\qquad G^*\cap A_r^*\subset \overline{(F^*-A^{*+})\cap A_{2r}^*},$$

where $A_r^* := \{ \omega \in A^* : ||\omega|| \le r \}$. If these are true, then

$$G^*\cap A_r^*=\overline{(F^*-A^{*+})\cap A_{2r}^*}\cap A_r^*$$

is weakly* closed and convex in A^{*} for all r>0, so the Krein-Šmulian theorem shows the claim.

Let $\omega_i \in (F^* - A^{*+}) \cap A_{2r}^*$ be a net such that $\omega_i \to \omega$ weakly* in A^* . Following the proof of $F^* - A^{*+} \subset G^*$, we can take $\psi_i \in A^{*+}$ and $\varphi_{i,\delta} \in F^*$ such that $||\psi_i|| \le 1$, $||\varphi_{i,\delta}|| \le \delta^{-1}$, $\omega_i \leq \varphi_{i,\delta} + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}} \psi_i$, for uniformly sufficiently small δ such that $1 + 2r \leq 2^{-1} \delta^{-\frac{1}{4}}$ because $\|\omega_i\|$ is bounded by 2r. Since the three conditions are preserved by the weak* convergence, taking the limit along a cofinal ultrafilter on the index set of i, we can obtain limit points ψ and φ_{δ} so that $\omega \in G^*$.

Let $\omega \in G^* \cap A^*$. Take $\psi \in A^{*+}$ and $\varphi_{\delta} \in F^*$ with $\|\psi\| \le 1$, $\|\varphi_{\delta}\| \le \delta^{-1}$, $\omega \le \varphi_{\delta} + \delta^{\frac{1}{2}}\psi$, for any sufficiently small $\delta > 0$. If $\delta^{\frac{1}{2}} < r$, then $\omega - \delta^{\frac{1}{2}} \psi \in (F^* - A^{*+}) \cap A_2^*$ converges to ω weakly* in A^* as $\delta \to 0$, we have $\omega \in \overline{(F^* - A^{*+}) \cap A_{2}^*}$.

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Proofs (for those who are interested in)

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