

# Classification of low-degree ovoids

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A **quadratic form** of  $V$  is a map  $\alpha : V \longrightarrow \mathbb{F}_q$  such that

- $\alpha(av) = a^2\alpha(v)$
- $\beta(u, v) = \alpha(u+v) - \alpha(u) - \alpha(v)$  is a bilinear form

for any  $u, v \in V$  and  $a \in \mathbb{F}_q$ .

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A **polarity**  $\rho$  of  $\mathrm{PG}(r, q)$  is a collineation between  $\mathrm{PG}(r, q)$  and its dual space  $\mathrm{PG}(r, q)^*$  such that  $\rho^2 = \mathrm{id}$ .

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An ovoid of  $\mathcal{P}$  is a set of pairwise non-collinear points on  $\mathcal{P}$

- $Q^-(2r+1, q)$  **elliptic quadric** of  $\text{PG}(2r+1, q)$

$$\alpha(x) = X_0X_{2r+1} + \dots + X_rX_{r+3} + h(X_{r+1}, X_{r+2})$$

$h$  is a homogeneous irreducible polynomial of degree 2 over  $\mathbb{F}_q$

- $Q^+(2r+1, q)$  **hyperbolic quadric** of  $\text{PG}(2r+1, q)$

$$\alpha(x) = X_0X_{2r+1} + \dots + X_rX_{r+3} + X_{r+1}X_{r+2}$$

- $Q(2r, q)$  **parabolic quadric** of  $\text{PG}(2r, q)$

$$\alpha(x) = X_0X_{2r} + \dots + X_{r-1}X_{r+1} + X_r^2$$

- **symplectic polar space** of  $\text{PG}(2r+1, q)$

$W(2r+1, q)$  full pointset of  $\text{PG}(2r+1, q)$

- **Hermitian variety** of  $\text{PG}(r, q^2)$

$$H(r, q^2) : X_0^{q+1} + \dots + X_r^{q+1} = 0$$

$Q(4, q) : X_0X_4 + X_1X_3 + X_2^2 = 0$  parabolic quadric of  $\text{PG}(4, q)$



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Any ovoid of  $Q(4, q)$  is equivalent to one of the form:

$$\mathcal{O}(f) = \{(1, x, y, f(x, y), -y^2 - xf(x, y))\}_{x,y \in \mathbb{F}_q} \cup \{(0, 0, 0, 0, 1)\}$$

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Known ovoids of  $Q(4, q)$

Name	$f(x, y)$	Restrictions
<i>Elliptic quadric</i>	$-nx$	$q$ odd, $n \notin \square_q$
<i>Elliptic quadric</i>	$ax + y$	$q$ even, $a \neq 1, \text{Tr}_{q/2}(a) = 1$
<i>Kantor</i>	$-nx^\sigma$	$q = p^h$ odd, $h > 1$ $n \notin \square_q, \sigma \neq 1$
<i>Penttila-Williams</i>	$-x^9 - y^{81}$	$q = 3^5$
<i>Thas-Payne</i>	$-nx - (n^{-1}x)^{1/9} - y^{1/3}$	$q = 3^h, h > 2, n \notin \square_q$
<i>Ree-Tits slice</i>	$-x^{2\sigma+3} - y^\sigma$	$q = 3^{2h+1}, \sigma = 3^{h+1}$
<i>Tits</i>	$x^{\sigma+1} + y^\sigma$	$q = 2^{2h+1}, \sigma = 2^{h+1}$

## Theorem (Bartoli, Durante - 2022)

If  $q > 6.3(\deg(f) + 1)^{13/3}$  and  $\mathcal{O}(f)$  is an ovoid of  $Q(4, q)$ , then  $\mathcal{O}(f)$  is either an elliptic quadric or a Kantor ovoid.

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If  $q > 6.3(\deg(f) + 1)^{13/3}$  and  $\mathcal{O}(f)$  is an ovoid of  $Q(4, q)$ , then  $\mathcal{O}(f)$  is either an elliptic quadric or a Kantor ovoid.

$\beta$  symmetric form associated to the quadratic form of  $Q(4, q)$

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{O}(f) \text{ is an ovoid} &\iff \beta(P_1, P_2) \neq 0 \text{ for any } P_1 \neq P_2 \text{ in } \mathcal{O}(f) \iff \\ &(y_1 - y_2)^2 + (x_1 - x_2)(f(x_2, y_2) - f(x_1, y_1)) \neq 0 \\ &\text{for any } (x_1, y_1) \neq (x_2, y_2) \text{ in } \mathbb{F}_q^2\end{aligned}$$

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$\mathcal{S}_f$  hypersurface of  $\text{PG}(4, q)$  with equation

$$(X_2 - X_4)^2 X_0^{d-1} + (X_1 - X_3) \left( \tilde{f}(X_1, X_2, X_0) - \tilde{f}(X_4, X_3, X_0) \right) = 0$$

$\tilde{f}(x, y, t)$  homogenization of  $f(x, y)$

$\mathcal{O}(f)$  is an ovoid  $\iff \mathcal{S}_f$  has no affine  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -rational points off the plane  
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### Theorem (Cafure, Matera - 2006)

Let  $\mathcal{V} \subset \text{AG}(n, q)$  be an absolutely irreducible  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -variety of dimension  $r > 0$  and degree  $\delta$ . If  $q > 2(r + 1)\delta^2$ , then the following estimate holds:

$$|\#(\mathcal{V} \cap \mathbb{F}_q^n) - q^r| \leq (\delta - 1)(\delta - 2)q^{r-1/2} + 5\delta^{13/3}q^{r-1}.$$

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for some polynomials  $f_1, f_2$  s.t.  $f_i(0, 0) = 0$ ,  $i = 1, 2$

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If  $q > 6.3(\max\{\deg(f_1), \deg(f_2)\} + 1)^{13/3}$  and  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2}$  contains an absolutely irreducible component  $\mathcal{V}$  over  $\mathbb{F}_q$ , then  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2)$  is not an ovoid of  $Q^+(5, q)$ .

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We get classification results regarding ovoids associated to a flock of the quadratic cone of  $\text{PG}(3, q)$ :

in this case  $f_1(x, y) = y + g(x)$

Known ovoids of  $Q^+(5, q)$  associated to flocks of the quadratic cone of  $\text{PG}(3, q)$

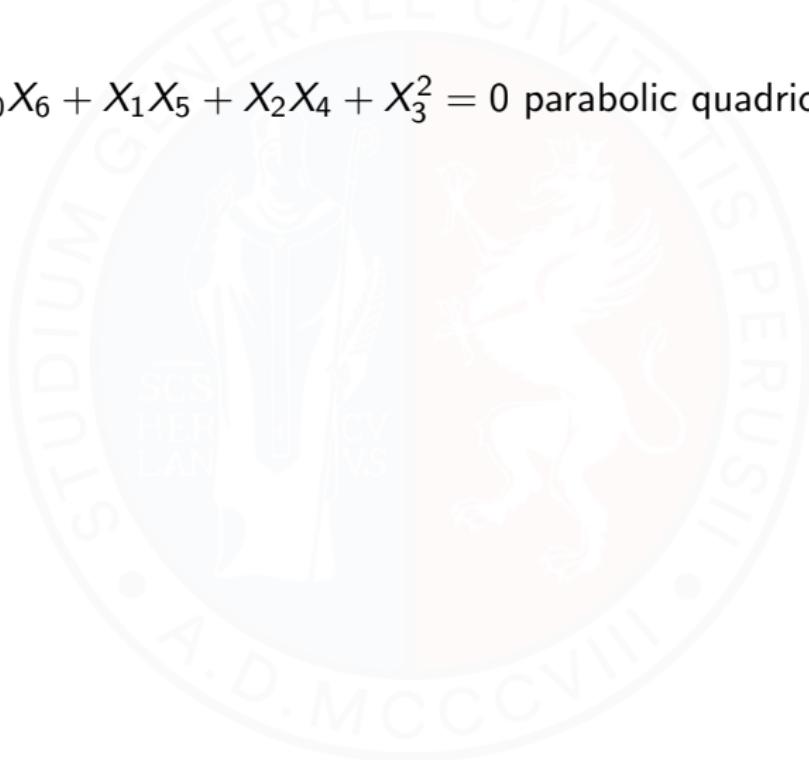
Name	$f_1(x, y)$	$f_2(x, y)$	Restrictions
Fisher-Thas-Walker	$y - x^2$	$x^3/3$	$q \equiv -1 \pmod{3}$
Kantor-Payne	$y - \beta x^3$	$\gamma x^5$	$q = p^{2h+1}$ $p \equiv \pm 2 \pmod{5}$ $\beta^2 = 5\gamma$
Law-Penttila	$y - x^4 - nx^2$	$-n^{-1}x^9 + x^7$ $+n^2x^3 - n^3x$	$q = 3^h, n \notin \square_q$
Ganley	$y - dx^3$	$-n_1x^9 - n_1n_2^2x$	$q = 3^h, h > 2$ $n_1, n_2 \notin \square_q, d^2 = n_1n_2$
Kantor	$y - x^2$	$\frac{1}{3}x^3 - nx^5 - n^{-1}x$	$q = 5^h, n \notin \square_q$
Penttila-Williams	$y + x^{27}$	$-x^9$	$q = 3^5$

## Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G. - 2024)

If  $q > 6.3(\max\{\deg(f_1), \deg(f_2)\} + 1)^{13/3}$  and  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2)$  is an ovoid of  $Q^+(5, q)$ , then  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2)$  is either a Fisher-Thas-Walker ovoid or a Kantor-Payne ovoid or a Law-Penttila ovoid or a Ganley ovoid or a Kantor ovoid.

# Ovoids of $Q(6, q)$

$Q(6, q) : X_0X_6 + X_1X_5 + X_2X_4 + X_3^2 = 0$  parabolic quadric of  $\text{PG}(6, q)$



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$$\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2) = \{(0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1)\} \cup$$

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 $(z_1 - z_2)^2 + (x_2 - x_1)(f_2(x_2, y_2, z_2) - f_2(x_1, y_1, z_1)) +$   
 $(y_2 - y_1)(f_1(x_2, y_2, z_2) - f_1(x_1, y_1, z_1)) \neq 0$   
for any  $(x_1, y_1, z_1) \neq (x_2, y_2, z_2)$  in  $\mathbb{F}_q^3$

$\mathcal{W}_{f_1, f_2}$  hypersurface of  $\text{PG}(6, q)$  with equation

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$\tilde{f}_i(x, y, z, t)$  homogenization of  $f_i(x, y, z)$ ,  $i \in \{1, 2\}$

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$\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2)$  is an ovoid  $\iff \mathcal{W}_{f_1, f_2}$  has no affine  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -rational points off the solid  $X_1 - X_4 = X_2 - X_5 = X_3 - X_6 = 0$

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### Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G. - 2024)

If  $q > 6.3(\max\{\deg(f_1), \deg(f_2)\} + 1)^{13/3}$  and  $\mathcal{W}_{f_1, f_2}$  contains an absolutely irreducible component  $\mathcal{V}$  over  $\mathbb{F}_q$ , then  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2)$  is not an ovoid of  $Q(6, q)$ .

## Known ovoids of $Q(6, q)$

Name	$f_1(x, y, z)$	$f_2(x, y, z)$	Restrictions
Thas-Kantor	$-ny^3 + x^2y - xz$	$-1/nx^3 + xy^2 + yz$	$q = 3^h, n \notin \square_q$
Ree-Tits	$-x^{\sigma+3} + y^\sigma$ $+x^2y - xz$	$-x^{2\sigma+3} + x^\sigma y^\sigma - z^\sigma$ $+xy^2 + yz$	$q = 3^{2h+1}, \sigma = 3^{h+1}$

### Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G. - 2024)

If  $q > 6.3(\max\{\deg(f_1), \deg(f_2)\} + 1)^{13/3}$  and  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2)$  is an ovoid of  $Q(6, q)$ , then  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2)$  is a Thas-Kantor ovoid.

# Ovoids of $Q^+(7, q)$

$Q^+(7, q) : X_0X_7 + X_1X_6 + X_2X_5 + X_3X_4 = 0$  hyperbolic quadric of  
 $\text{PG}(7, q)$

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$Q^+(7, q) : X_0X_7 + X_1X_6 + X_2X_5 + X_3X_4 = 0$  hyperbolic quadric of  
 $\text{PG}(7, q)$

Any ovoid of  $Q^+(7, q)$  is equivalent to one of the form:

$$\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3) = \{P_{x,y,z}\}_{x,y,z \in \mathbb{F}_q} \cup \{(0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 0, 1)\}$$

$$P_{x,y,z} =$$

$$(1, x, y, z, f_1(x, y, z), f_2(x, y, z), f_3(x, y, z), -zf_1(x, y, z) - yf_2(x, y, z) - xf_3(x, y, z))$$

for some polynomials  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  s.t.  $f_i(0, 0, 0) = 0$ ,  $i = 1, 2, 3$

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for some polynomials  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  s.t.  $f_i(0, 0, 0) = 0$ ,  $i = 1, 2, 3$

$\beta$  symmetric form associated to the quadratic form of  $Q^+(7, q)$

$\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is an ovoid  $\iff \beta(P_1, P_2) \neq 0$  for any  $P_1 \neq P_2$  in  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$   
 $\iff (x_1 - x_2)(f_3(x_2, y_2, z_2) - f_3(x_1, y_1, z_1))$   
 $+ (y_1 - y_2)(f_2(x_2, y_2, z_2) - f_2(x_1, y_1, z_1))$   
 $+ (z_1 - z_2)(f_1(x_2, y_2, z_2) - f_1(x_1, y_1, z_1)) \neq 0$   
for any  $(x_1, y_1, z_1) \neq (x_2, y_2, z_2)$  in  $\mathbb{F}_q^3$

$S_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  hypersurface of  $\text{PG}(6, q)$  with equation

$$(X_1 - X_4) \left( \tilde{f}_3(X_4, X_5, X_6, X_0) - \tilde{f}_3(X_1, X_2, X_3, X_0) \right) + \\ (X_2 - X_5) \left( \tilde{f}_2(X_4, X_5, X_6, X_0) - \tilde{f}_2(X_1, X_2, X_3, X_0) \right) + \\ (X_3 - X_6) \left( \tilde{f}_1(X_4, X_5, X_6, X_0) - \tilde{f}_1(X_1, X_2, X_3, X_0) \right) = 0$$

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**Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G., Timpanella - 202x)**

If  $q > 6.3(\max\{\deg(f_1), \deg(f_2), \deg(f_3)\} + 1)^{13/3}$  and  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  contains an absolutely irreducible component  $\mathcal{V}$  over  $\mathbb{F}_q$ , then  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is not an ovoid of  $Q^+(7, q)$ .

## Known ovoids of $Q^+(7, q)$

Name	Restrictions
<i>Thas-Kantor</i>	$q = 3^h, h > 0$
<i>Ree-Tits</i>	$q = 3^{2h+1}, h > 0$
<i>Kantor (1)</i>	$q = p^h, p \equiv 2 \pmod{3}$ (prime), $h$ odd
<i>Kantor (2)</i>	$q = 2^h, h \geq 1$
<i>Dye</i>	$q = 8$

Thas-Kantor and Ree-Tits are ovoids of  $Q(6, q)$

Dye ovoid:

$$\begin{aligned}
 f_1(x, y, z) &= x + y + z + x^2y + x^4y^2 + xy^2 + x^2y^4 + x^4y^4 \\
 f_2(x, y, z) &= y + x^2z + x^4z^2 + xz^2 + x^2z^4 + x^4z^4 \\
 f_3(x, y, z) &= x + y + y^2z + y^4z^2 + yz^2 + y^2z^4 + y^4z^4
 \end{aligned}$$

Kantor (1) ovoid,  $q \equiv 2 \pmod{3}$

$$V = \left\{ M = \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \beta & c \\ \gamma & a & \beta^q \\ b & \gamma^q & \alpha^q \end{pmatrix} : \alpha, \beta, \gamma \in \mathbb{F}_{q^2}, a, b, c \in \mathbb{F}_q, a + \alpha + \alpha^q = 0 \right\}$$

$$Q(M) = \text{Tr}_{q^2/q}(\alpha)^2 - \text{N}_{q^2/q}(\alpha) + \text{Tr}_{q^2/q}(\beta\gamma) + bc$$

$$\mathcal{O} = \left\{ \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \right\} \cup \left\{ \begin{pmatrix} \mu^q & \mu^q \rho & \mu^{q+1} \\ \rho^q & \rho^{q+1} & \mu \rho^q \\ 1 & \rho & \mu \end{pmatrix} : \text{Tr}_{q^2/q}(\mu) + \text{N}_{q^2/q}(\rho) = 0 \right\}$$

## Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G., Timpanella - 202x)

*The set  $\mathcal{O}$  corresponds to the ovoid  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$ , where if  $q$  is odd*

$$\begin{aligned}f_1(x, y, z) &= -6xy - 3y^3 - 9z^3 - z^2y - 3y^2z \\f_2(x, y, z) &= -y^3 - 3yz^2 + 6xz + 3y^2z + 9z^3 \\f_3(x, y, z) &= -3x - 3y^2 - 9z^2,\end{aligned}$$

*if  $q$  is even*

$$\begin{aligned}f_1(x, y, z) &= z^3 + z^2y + zy^2 + xy \\f_2(x, y, z) &= z^3 + y^3 + xz \\f_3(x, y, z) &= x + z^2 + zy + y^2.\end{aligned}$$

Kantor (2) ovoid,  $q = 2^h$ ,  $h \geq 1$

$$V = \mathbb{F}_q \oplus \mathbb{F}_{q^3} \oplus \mathbb{F}_{q^3} \oplus \mathbb{F}_q$$

$$Q((a, \gamma, \delta, d)) = ad + \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\gamma\delta)$$

$$\mathcal{O} = \{(0, 0, 0, 1)\} \cup \{(1, t, t^{q+q^2}, \text{N}_{q^3/q}(t)) : t \in \mathbb{F}_{q^3}\}$$

### Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G., Timpanella - 202x)

Let  $\{1, \alpha, \beta\}$  be an  $\mathbb{F}_q$ -basis of  $\mathbb{F}_{q^3}$ , and put  $t = x + y\alpha + z\beta$  with  $x, y, z \in \mathbb{F}_q$ . Then  $\mathcal{O}$  corresponds to the ovoid  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$ , where

$$f_1(x, y, z) = \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\alpha\beta^2 + \alpha\beta^{q^2})xy + \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\beta)x^2 + \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\alpha^{q+1}\beta^{q^2})y^2 + \text{N}_{q^3/q}(\beta)z^2$$

$$f_2(x, y, z) = \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\alpha\beta^2 + \alpha\beta^{q^2})xz + \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\alpha)x^2 + \text{N}_{q^3/q}(\alpha\beta^{q^2})y^2 + \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\alpha\beta^{q^2+q})z^2$$

$$f_3(x, y, z) = \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\alpha\beta^2 + \alpha\beta^{q^2})yz + x^2 + \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\alpha^{q+1}\beta^{q^2})y^2 + \text{Tr}_{q^3/q}(\beta^{q+1})z^2.$$

## CASE $d = 2$

### Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G., Timpanella - 202x)

Let  $q > 6.3 \cdot 3^{13/3}$ . If  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is an ovoid of  $Q^+(7, q)$  and  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  have degree 2, then  $q$  is even and  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is the Kantor (2) ovoid.

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## CASE $d = 3$

If  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is an ovoid of  $Q^+(7, q)$  and  $q > 6.3 \cdot 4^{13/3}$ , then  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  does not contain any absolutely irreducible component defined over  $\mathbb{F}_q$ . Since  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  is of degree 4, it must split into either four hyperplanes or two quadrics

## CASE $d = 2$

### Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G., Timpanella - 202x)

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If  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is an ovoid of  $Q^+(7, q)$  and  $q > 6.3 \cdot 4^{13/3}$ , then  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  does not contain any absolutely irreducible component defined over  $\mathbb{F}_q$ . Since  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  is of degree 4, it must split into either four hyperplanes or two quadrics.

### Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G., Timpanella - 202x)

Assume  $q > 6.3 \cdot 4^{13/3}$  and  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  of degree 3. If  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  splits into four hyperplanes, then the set  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is not an ovoid of  $Q^+(7, q)$ .

$S_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  splits into two quadrics  
 $p > 3$  and  $p = 2$



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### Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G., Timpanella - 202x)

Let  $q > 6 \cdot 3 \cdot 4^{13/3}$ ,  $q \equiv 1 \pmod{3}$ ,  $p > 3$ ,  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  of degree 3, and  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  split into two quadrics. The set  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is not an ovoid of  $Q^+(7, q)$ .

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### Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G., Timpanella - 202x)

Let  $q > 6.3 \cdot 4^{13/3}$ ,  $q \equiv 2 \pmod{3}$ ,  $p = 2$ , and  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  of degree 3. Assume that  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  splits into two quadrics. If  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is an ovoid of  $Q^+(7, q)$ , then

$$\begin{aligned} f_1(X, Y, Z) &= Z^3 + Y^2Z + YZ^2 + (A + B)Y^2 + BZ^2 + XY \\ &\quad + CX + DY + B^2Z, \end{aligned}$$

$$f_2(X, Y, Z) = Y^3 + Z^3 + AY^2 + (A + B)Z^2 + XZ + EX + A^2Y + DZ,$$

$$f_3(X, Y, Z) = Y^2 + Z^2 + YZ + X + EY + CZ.$$

## Theorem (Bartoli, Durante, G., Timpanella - 202x)

Let  $q > 6.3 \cdot 4^{13/3}$ ,  $q \equiv 2 \pmod{3}$ ,  $p > 3$ , and  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  of degree 3. Assume that  $\mathcal{S}_{f_1, f_2, f_3}$  splits into two quadrics. If  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is an ovoid of  $Q^+(7, q)$ , then

$$f_1(X, Y, Z) = -\frac{4}{27}Z^3 + \frac{4\epsilon}{3}Y^3 - \frac{4}{9}Y^2Z + \frac{4\epsilon}{9}YZ^2 + \left(\frac{4\epsilon}{3}A - 2B\right)Y^2 - \frac{2}{3}BZ^2 +$$

$$+ \frac{4\epsilon}{3}XY + \frac{4\epsilon}{3}BZ + CY - B^2Z,$$

$$f_2(X, Y, Z) = -\frac{4}{3}Y^3 - \frac{4\epsilon}{9}Z^3 - \frac{4}{9}YZ^2 + \frac{4\epsilon}{3}Y^2Z - 2C_4Y^2 - \left(\frac{4\epsilon}{3}A - \frac{2}{3}B\right)Z^2$$

$$- \frac{4\epsilon}{3}XZ + \frac{4\epsilon}{3}AYZ + DX - A^2Y - (2AB + C)Z,$$

$$f_3(X, Y, Z) = -2Y^2 - \frac{2}{3}Z^2 - X - (2A + D)Y - (2B + E)Z,$$

where  $\epsilon = \pm 1$ .

## Open Problem

*Determine whether for  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  defined as in the previous statements, the ovoid  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is equivalent to the Kantor (1) ovoid.*

## Open Problem

Determine whether for  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  defined as in the previous statements, the ovoid  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  is equivalent to the Kantor (1) ovoid.

## Open Problem

Obtain a full classification for ovoids  $\mathcal{O}(f_1, f_2, f_3)$  such that  $f_1, f_2, f_3$  have degree 3 when  $p = 3$ .

*Thanks for your attention!*