# The combinatorics of random tensors: from random geometry to strongly-coupled phenomena 

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Radboud University 邹<br>Random Tensors at CIRM, Marseille March 14-18, 2022

## Random tensors

Space of tensors $T=T_{a_{1} \ldots a_{p}}, a_{i} \in\{1, \ldots, N\}$, equipped with measure of the form:

$$
\mathrm{d} \nu(T)=\mathrm{d} \mu_{\boldsymbol{P}}(T) \mathrm{e}^{-S_{N}(T)}
$$

- $\mathrm{d} \mu_{P}$ is Gaussian with covariance $P$ :

$$
\int \mathrm{d} \mu_{P}(T) T_{a_{1} \ldots a_{p}} T_{b_{1} \ldots b_{p}}=P_{a_{1} \ldots a_{p}, b_{1} \ldots b_{p}}
$$

- both $P$ and $S_{N}$ are invariant under the action of a product of unitary groups: $\mathrm{O}(N), \mathrm{U}(N)$ or $\mathrm{Sp}(N)$.

What type of universal behaviour can we obtain in the asymptotic limit

$$
N \rightarrow \infty ?
$$

## LARGE $N$ EXPANSION: BASIC IDEA

$$
\mathcal{F}(\lambda, N)=\ln \left(\int \mathrm{d} \mu_{\boldsymbol{P}}(T) \mathrm{e}^{-\frac{\lambda}{N \alpha} \operatorname{Inv}(T)}\right)
$$

Main steps:

1. Formal perturbative expansion in $\lambda$.
$\Rightarrow$ combinatorial interpretation: sum over Feynman graphs
2. Find $\alpha$ such that a $1 / N$ expansion exists.
3. Resum $\mathcal{F}_{\omega}(\lambda)$.
4. Non-perturbative analysis of $1 / \mathrm{N}$ expansion. (won't be discussed in these lectures)

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## LARGE $N$ EXPANSION: MAIN APPLICATIONS

- Matrix models
- Random surfaces / 2D quantum gravity from matrix integrals.
- Large $N$ limit as an approximation tool in quantum (field) theory.
- Tensor models
- Random geometry / quantum gravity in $D \geq 3$.
- New generic class of large $N$ theories: more solvable than matrix theories, but still physically interesting.


## TENSORS AND INVARIANTS

Real symmetric tensor:


Connected invariants:

## Tensors and invariants

Real symmetric tensor:



Connected invariants:

$$
p=1 \quad \longleftrightarrow \quad\left(\phi_{a} \phi^{a}\right)
$$

## Tensors and invariants

Real symmetric tensor:

$$
T_{a_{1} a_{2} \cdots a_{p}}=\bigwedge_{a_{1}} \bigwedge_{a_{2}}
$$

$$
\sum_{c=1}^{N} T_{a b c} T_{c d e}=\prod_{a}^{c} \prod_{d}
$$

Connected invariants:

$$
p=2
$$


$\left(\operatorname{tr}\left(M^{n}\right)\right)$

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$$

Connected invariants:

$$
p=3
$$


$\#\{$ invariants of order $2 n\} \sim\left(\frac{3}{2}\right)^{n} n!$
$\Rightarrow$ Rapid growth of theory space for $p \geq 3$ :

- large $N$ behaviour explicitly depends on the combinatorial structure of the invariants which contribute to the action;
- this dependence is hard to characterize in full generality.


## OutLine

## Lecture 1

Large $N$ expansion of matrix models

First generalization: complex colored tensor models

Random geometry applications

## Lecture 2

Other ensembles of random tensors and QFT applications

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Large $N$ expansion of matrix models

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Random geometry applications

## HERMITIAN MATRIX ENSEMBLE

$$
\begin{aligned}
\mathcal{Z}_{N}(\lambda)=\int_{H_{N}} \mathrm{~d} M \exp (-N & \left.\left(\frac{1}{2} \operatorname{Tr} M^{2}+\frac{\lambda}{4} \operatorname{Tr} M^{4}+\ldots\right)\right) \\
& \left(\mathrm{d} M:=\prod_{k} \mathrm{~d} M_{k k} \prod_{i<j} \mathrm{dRe} M_{i j} \mathrm{dIm} M_{i j}\right)
\end{aligned}
$$

- Basic question: determine expectation values of $\mathrm{U}(\mathrm{N})$-invariant observables

$$
\left\langle\operatorname{Tr}\left(M^{n_{1}}\right) \operatorname{Tr}\left(M^{n_{2}}\right) \ldots \operatorname{Tr}\left(M^{n_{k}}\right)\right\rangle
$$

- Gaussian theory $(\lambda=0)$ : entirely determined by the propagator

$$
P_{i j, k l}:=\left\langle M_{i j} M_{k l}\right\rangle_{0}=\frac{1}{\mathcal{Z}_{N}(0)} \int \mathrm{d} M \mathrm{e}^{-\frac{N}{2} \operatorname{Tr} M^{2}} M_{i j} M_{k l}=\frac{1}{N} \delta_{i l} \delta_{j k}
$$

Higher order moments computed by Wick's theorem.

## GAUSSIAN CORRELATORS

Graphical representation of

- propagator: $\boldsymbol{P}_{i j, k l}=\frac{1}{N} \delta_{i l} \delta_{j k}=i{ }_{j}^{\longrightarrow} l$


Invariant correlators $\rightarrow$ ribbon diagrams


## Ribbon DIAGRAMS

$$
\text { ribbon graph } \simeq \text { combinatorial map } \simeq \text { embedded graph }
$$



## Ribbon diagrams

ribbon graph $\simeq$ combinatorial map $\simeq$ embedded graph


The weight / amplitude of an arbitrary ribbon graph only depends on the topology of the surface it represents:

$$
\begin{aligned}
& N^{V-E+F}=N^{\chi}=N^{2 c-2 g} \\
& V=\#\{\text { vertices }\}, E=\#\{\text { edges }\}, F=\#\{\text { faces }\} \\
& g=\text { genus, } c=\#\{\text { connected components }\}
\end{aligned}
$$

## TOPOLOGICAL EXPANSION OF MATRIX MODELS ['т Hооғт '74]

$$
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\mathcal{Z}_{N}(\lambda) & =\int \mathrm{d} M \exp \left(-N\left(\frac{1}{2} \operatorname{tr}\left(M^{2}\right)+\frac{\lambda}{4} \operatorname{tr}\left(M^{4}\right)\right)\right) \\
& =\sum_{\text {ribbon graph } G} \frac{(-\lambda)^{V(G)}}{s(G)} N^{\chi(G)}=\sum_{\text {quandrangulation } \Delta} \frac{(-\lambda)^{n(\Delta)}}{s(\Delta)} N^{\chi(\Delta)}
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Universal large- $N$ expansion
$\ln \mathcal{Z}_{N}(\lambda)=\sum_{g \in \mathbb{N}} N^{2-2 g} \mathcal{F}_{g}(\lambda) \quad$ with $\quad \mathcal{F}_{g}(\lambda)=\sum_{\substack{G \text { connected } \\ g(G)=g}} \frac{(-\lambda)^{V(G)}}{s(G)}$


## Generalizations

- General potential: $\operatorname{Tr}\left(M^{4}\right) \rightarrow \operatorname{Tr}(V(M))$



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- $\beta$-ensembles:

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$\Rightarrow$ generate non-orientable surfaces.



## Applications of the large $N$ limit

- Random surfaces and QG in $D=2$

Matrix integral at large $N \rightarrow$ statistical sum of
Feynman graphs $\simeq$ Euclidean space-time geometries


- Strongly-coupled QFT

Large number of fields/symmetries e.g. $\mathrm{SU}(3) \rightarrow \mathrm{SU}(N)$

- perturbation theory in $1 / \mathrm{N}$
- non-perturbative effects in coupling constants $\lambda$

Key probe of holographic dualities:

- gauge theory $\leftrightarrow$ Einstein gravity
- vector models $\leftrightarrow$ higher-spin gravity

What are tensor models good for in these two lines of thoughts?

## QG in $D=2$ AS A MATRIX INTEGRAL

$$
\ln \int \mathrm{d} M e^{-N\left(\frac{1}{2} \operatorname{tr} M^{2}-\frac{\lambda}{q} \operatorname{tr} M^{q}\right)} \underset{N \rightarrow \infty}{\rightarrow} \mathcal{F}_{0}(\lambda)=\sum_{\Delta} \lambda^{n_{\Delta}}
$$



- Large- $N$ limit $\Rightarrow$ generating function of planar $q$-angulations $\Delta$, weighted by $n_{\Delta} \sim$ area.
- Critical regime: $\quad \lambda \rightarrow \lambda_{c} \Rightarrow$ continuum limit.
- Double-scaling $\Rightarrow$ non-trivial sum over topologies.

Universality: the distribution over 2d metrics converges to the Brownian sphere in the continum limit, independently of the details of the potential (e.g. value of $q$ ).
$\rightarrow$ basic random geometry behind Liouville QG.

## Brownian sphere

$$
\#\{\text { rooted planar } \Delta\} \sim K \lambda_{c}^{-n_{\Delta}} n_{\Delta}^{-5 / 2}
$$

$$
d_{\text {spectral }}=2 \quad ; \quad \text { distance scale } \sim n_{\Delta}^{1 / 4} \quad \text { and } \quad d_{\text {Hausdorff }}=4
$$

## QG in $D \geq 3$ AS A $D$-INDEX TENSOR INTEGRAL?

$$
\begin{aligned}
\left.\mathcal{F}(\lambda)=\ln \int \mathrm{d} T \exp \left(-T_{a b c} T_{a b c}+\frac{\lambda}{N^{\alpha}} T_{a e b} T_{b f c} T_{c e d} T_{d f a}\right) \geqslant>\lll \ll\right]_{c} \\
\text { [Ambjørn, Durhuss, Jónsson '91; Gross '91; Sasakura '91;...] }
\end{aligned}
$$

- Challenges:
- interplay between combinatorics and topology: nice global properties from local Feynman rules?
- large- $N$ expansion?
- matrix techniques not available (spectral representation?)


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[Ambjørn, Durhuss, Jónsson '91; Gross '91; Sasakura '91;...]

- Challenges:
- interplay between combinatorics and topology: nice global properties from local Feynman rules?
- large- $N$ expansion?
- matrix techniques not available (spectral representation?)
- Path to progress:
[Gurau '09; Gurau, Rivasseau, Bonzom,... '10s]
- more symmetry: $\mathrm{U}(N)^{D} \rightarrow$ colored tensor models
- tractable combinatorics, mapping to sufficiently regular topological spaces.

$$
\begin{gathered}
\Rightarrow \text { universal large- } N \text { expansion, in any } D \geq 3 \\
\text { indexed by Gurau degree } \omega \geq 0
\end{gathered}
$$

## Outline

## Large $N$ expansion of matrix models

First generalization: complex colored tensor models

Random geometry applications

## Colored tensor models

Multipartite pure quantum state

$$
|\Psi\rangle=\sum_{a_{1}, a_{2}, \ldots, a_{D}} T_{a_{1} a_{2} \ldots a_{D}}\left|a_{1}\right\rangle \otimes\left|a_{2}\right\rangle \otimes \cdots \otimes\left|a_{D}\right\rangle
$$

with $a_{k} \in\left\{1, \ldots, N_{k}\right\}$.

- Entanglement structure characterized by local unitary (LU) invariants:

$$
\mathrm{U}\left(N_{1}\right) \times \mathrm{U}\left(N_{2}\right) \times \cdots \times \mathrm{U}\left(N_{D}\right)
$$

- LU invariant (and normalized) random $T_{a_{1} a_{2} \ldots a_{D}}$ $\sim$ distribution over multipartite pure state entanglement structures.

In the rest of the talk, take $N_{k}=N \gg 1$.

## Colored tensor models

$$
T_{a_{1} a_{2} \cdots a_{D}}=\bigcap_{a_{1}} \bigcap_{a_{2}} \quad \bigcap_{a_{D}} \cdots_{a_{2}}=\bar{T}_{a_{1} a_{2} \cdots a_{D}}
$$

$\mathrm{U}(N)^{D}$ invariants indexed by bubble diagrams $\mathcal{B}$ :

$$
(D=2) \circlearrowleft \square<
$$

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## Colored tensor models

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$\mathrm{U}(N)^{D}$ invariants indexed by bubble diagrams $\mathcal{B}$ :


Partition function:

$$
\mathcal{F}\left(\left\{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}\right\}\right)=\ln \int \mathrm{d} T \exp \left(-\bar{T} \cdot T+\sum_{\mathcal{B}} \frac{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}}{N^{\alpha(\mathcal{B})}} \operatorname{Tr}_{\mathcal{B}}(\bar{T}, T)\right)
$$

Feynman graphs


## FEYNMAN GRAPHS



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$F_{0 \mathbf{j}}=\#\{$ faces of color ( $\left.\mathbf{0} \mathbf{j})\right\}$

$$
\mathcal{A}(G) \propto N^{\sum_{j} F_{0 \mathrm{j}}}
$$

## FEYNMAN GRAPHS



$V=\#\{$ vertices $\} ; p=\#\{$ propagators $\}$
$F_{0 \mathrm{j}}=\#\{$ faces of color $(\mathbf{0} \mathbf{j})\} ; F_{\mathrm{ij}}=\#\{$ faces of color $(\mathbf{i j})\}$

$$
\mathcal{A}(G) \propto N^{\sum_{j} F_{0 j}}
$$

## JACKETS

## Colored graph + cyclic permutation $\sigma$ on the colors $\Rightarrow$ combinatorial map $J_{\sigma}$, called jacket.



$$
\sigma^{\prime \prime}=(0213)
$$

$$
g\left(J_{\sigma^{\prime \prime}}\right)=0
$$

$J_{\sigma} \sim J_{\sigma^{-1}} \Rightarrow \exists \frac{D!}{2}$ inequivalent choices of $\sigma$.
E.g. 3 inequivalent jackets for $D=3$.

## Gurau degree

Definition Gurau degree of a $(D+1)$-colored graph $G$ :

$$
\omega(G)=D-F(G)+\frac{D(D-1)}{2} p(G)
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$$
\forall G, \quad \omega(G) \in \mathbb{N}
$$

Proof.

$$
\omega(G)=\frac{1}{(D-1)!} \sum_{\sigma} g\left(J_{\sigma}\right)
$$

## LARGE-N EXPANSION

Scaling of bubbles and Feynman expansion governed by Gurau degree $\omega$ :

$$
\begin{aligned}
\mathcal{F}\left(\left\{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}\right\}\right)= & \ln \int \mathrm{d} T \exp \left(-\bar{T} \cdot T+\sum_{\mathcal{B}} \lambda_{\mathcal{B}} N^{-\frac{2}{(D-2)!} \omega(\mathcal{B})} \operatorname{Tr}_{\mathcal{B}}(\bar{T}, T)\right) \\
= & \sum_{\omega \in \mathbb{N}} N^{D-\frac{2}{(D-1)!} \omega} \mathcal{F}_{\omega}\left(\left\{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}\right\}\right) \\
\text { where } & \quad \omega(G)=D-F(G)+\frac{D(D-1)}{2} p(G)
\end{aligned}
$$

Generalization of the matrix genus expansion:

- $\omega \in \mathbb{N}$
- $D=2 \Rightarrow \omega=g$

Topological/geometric interpretation?

## TYpical questions

- Combinatorial structure of leading-order graphs?


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- Optimal scalings:

Given a bubble $\mathcal{B}$, what is the smallest $\alpha$ such that the interaction $\lambda_{\mathcal{B}} N^{-\alpha} \operatorname{Tr}_{\mathcal{B}}(\bar{T}, T)$ preserves the existence of a large $N$ limit?

## TYpICAL QUESTIONS

- Combinatorial structure of leading-order graphs?
- Nature of $\mathcal{F}_{0}\left(\left\{\lambda_{\mathcal{B}}\right\}\right)$ ? Critical behaviour?
- Optimal scalings:

Given a bubble $\mathcal{B}$, what is the smallest $\alpha$ such that the interaction $\lambda_{\mathcal{B}} N^{-\alpha} \operatorname{Tr}_{\mathcal{B}}(\bar{T}, T)$ preserves the existence of a large $N$ limit?

In contrast to random matrices, answering this question is hard.


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## COLORED TRIANGULATIONS

( $D=3$ )

( $D=4$ )

Theorem:
[Pezzana '74]
$D$-colored graph $\Leftrightarrow$ triangulation $\Delta$ of pseudo-manifold of $\operatorname{dim} . D-1$.
Colors $\rightarrow$ unambiguous identification of sub-simplices and their gluings.

- Bubble $\simeq D$-colored graph $\simeq$ boundary of $D$-cell.

- Feynman graph $\simeq(D+1)$-colored graph $\simeq \Delta$ of dimension $D$.


## $D=2$

Gluing of $2 p$-angles:


Duality:

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \text { 3-colored graph } \longleftrightarrow \text { colored triangulation } \\
& \text { node } \longleftrightarrow \\
& \text { triangle } \\
& \text { line } \longleftrightarrow \\
& \text { edge } \\
& \text { bicolored cycle } \longleftrightarrow \\
& \text { vertex }
\end{aligned}
$$

Any orientable surface with boundaries can be represented by such a 3-colored graph.
$D=3$

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Topological singularities can be generated in $D \geq 3$ :

$g\left(K_{3,3}\right)=1 \Rightarrow$ boundary of a neighborhood not homeomorphic to a ball.
$\rightarrow(D+1)$-colored graphs are dual to pseudo-manifolds of dimension $D$.

## $D=3$

Jackets are dual to embedded quandrangulations in $\Delta$.


More precisely, $J_{\sigma}$ encodes a Heegaard splitting of $\Delta$.

## DUALITY

Colored structure $\Rightarrow$ unambiguous prescription for how to glue $D$-simplices along their sub-simplices.

$$
\begin{aligned}
(D+1) \text {-colored graph } & \longleftrightarrow \text { colored } D \text {-triangulation } \\
\text { node } & \longleftrightarrow D \text {-simplex } \\
\text { connected component with } k \text { colors } & \longleftrightarrow(D-k) \text {-simplex }
\end{aligned}
$$

Essential in $D \geq 3$.

( $D=4$ )

Crystallisation theory [Cagliardi, Ferri et al. '80s; Gurau, Ryan '11]

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where

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\omega(\Delta)=D-n_{D-2}(\Delta)+\frac{D(D-1)}{4} n_{D}(\Delta)
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$$

- $\omega \in \mathbb{N}$
- generalization of the genus: $D=2 \Rightarrow \omega=g$
- not a topological invariant of $\Delta$ when $D \geq 3$
- however: $\omega=0 \Rightarrow \Delta$ is a $D$-sphere


## Botanical interlude: melon diagrams



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Melonic theories $\rightarrow$ Feynman expansion dominated by melon diagrams:

## Botanical interlude: Melon diagrams



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## Botanical interlude: MELON DIAGRams



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## Botanical interlude: Melon diagrams



Melonic theories $\rightarrow$ Feynman expansion dominated by melon diagrams:


## LEADING ORDER



$$
\omega(\Delta)=0 \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad \Delta \text { is melonic }
$$

$\rightarrow$ special triangulations of the $D$-sphere, with a tree-like combinatorial structure.

Closed equation for their generating function:

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G(\lambda)=1+\lambda G(\lambda)^{D+1} \quad \text { (Fuss-Catalan) }
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Critical behaviour:

$$
\begin{aligned}
& G\left(\lambda_{c}\right)-G(\lambda) \underset{\lambda \rightarrow \lambda_{c}}{\sim} K\left(\lambda_{c}-\lambda\right)^{1 / 2} \\
\Leftrightarrow \quad & \#\{\text { rooted melonic } \Delta\} \sim K \lambda_{c}^{-n_{\Delta}} n_{\Delta}^{-3 / 2}
\end{aligned}
$$

Universal critical exponent $3 / 2$ associated to combinatorial trees.

## Continuum limit

Melons are branched polymers
i.e. they converge to the continuous random tree [Aldous '91].


Credit: I. Kortchemski (https://igor-kortchemski.perso.math.cnrs.fr/images.html)

$$
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$$

$$
d_{\text {spectral }}=4 / 3 \quad ; \quad \text { distance scale } \sim n_{\Delta}^{1 / 2} \quad \text { and } \quad d_{\text {Hausdorff }}=2
$$

$\Rightarrow$ strong universality: limit independent of $D$ !

## Further results

- Combinatorial classification of graphs at order $\omega>0$ : "it's melons all the way down".
[Gurau, Schaeffer '13]
- Double-scaling. [Bonzom, Gurau, Kaminski, Dartois, Oriti, Ryan, Tanasa '13 '14]
- Schwinger-Dyson eq. $\rightarrow$ analogue of loop equations.
- Non-perturbative treatment.
- Applications in Group Field Theory:
[Boulatov, Ooguri, '92... Freidel, Gurau, Oriti '00s '10s...]
Melonic behaviour $\Rightarrow$ rigorous renormalization theorems
[Ben Geloun, Rivasseau '11; SC, Oriti, Rivasseau '13;...]
[Review SC '16]


## Beyond branched polymers?

No-go:

- Non-melonic large- $N$ limits have been explored.
[Bonzom, Delpouve, Rivasseau '15; Bonzom, Lionni '16; Lionni, Thüringen '17]
- Universality theorem: $D=3 \Rightarrow$ branched polymers for arbitrary spherical bubbles.
[Bonzom '18]


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Yes go?

- $D$ even $\Rightarrow$ Brownian sphere, branched polymers and mixtures.
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Major open question:
genuinely new random geometric phase suitable for QG in $D \geq 3$ ?
[Lionni, Marckert '19]


## Summary

Tensor models for random geometry:

- well-defined generalization of the matrix models approach;
- reproduce previously known universality classes: continuous random tree, Brownian sphere, and mixtures;
- tend to be dominated by tree-like combinatorial species $\Rightarrow$ no genuinely new universality class discovered so far... ...but a vast parameter space remains to be explored.

Entry points into the literature:

- "Random tensors", Gurau, 2016;
- "The Tensor Track" I-IV, Rivasseau, 2011-2016;
- "Colored Discrete Spaces", Lionni, 2018.

