

# Lecture 9: April 15, 2011

Today we discuss free products. As a refresher, recall:

Def: Let  $\{G_i : i \in I\}$  be a collection of groups. The free product  $G = \ast_{i \in I} G_i$  is the group (unique up to isomorphism) defined by the following universal property. There are homomorphisms  $\theta_i : G_i \rightarrow G$  such that, whenever  $H$  is a group and  $\phi_i : G_i \rightarrow H$  are any group homomorphisms,  $\exists!$  homomorphism  $\Phi : G \rightarrow H$  such that

$$\begin{array}{ccc} G & \xrightarrow{\Phi} & H \\ \theta_i \swarrow & & \nearrow \phi_i \\ & G_i & \end{array} \quad \text{Commutates}$$

By taking the case  $H=G$ , it is easy to see the  $\theta_i$  must be injective; so we think of them just as injections of  $G_i$  as subgroups of  $G$ . The fact that any homomorphisms  $\phi_i$  from the separate  $G_i$  must extend to a single homomorphism  $\Phi$  required that  $G_i$  have no relations between them in  $G$  (otherwise such relations would have to be present in the image  $\Phi$  in any group  $H$ , which is of course impossible).

Following this course, we can do the same for (unital  $\ast$ -) algebras.

Def: Let  $\{\mathcal{A}_i : i \in I\}$  be unital  $\ast$ -algebras over  $\mathbb{C}$ . Their free product  $\mathcal{A} = \ast_{i \in I} \mathcal{A}_i$  is the (unique up to isomorphism) unital  $\ast$ -algebra with the following universal property. There are homomorphisms  $\theta_i : \mathcal{A}_i \rightarrow \mathcal{A}$  s.t., for any unital  $\ast$ -algebra  $\mathcal{B}$  and homomorphisms  $\phi_i : \mathcal{A}_i \rightarrow \mathcal{B}$ ,  $\exists!$  homomorphism  $\Phi : \mathcal{A} \rightarrow \mathcal{B}$  s.t.

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathcal{A} & \xrightarrow{\Phi} & \mathcal{B} \\ \theta_i \swarrow & & \nearrow \phi_i \\ & \mathcal{A}_i & \end{array} \quad \text{Commutates}$$

The above comments apply here: by taking the case  $\mathcal{B}=\mathcal{A}$ , we see that the  $\theta_i$  are injective, so we view  $\mathcal{A}_i$  as subalgebras of  $\mathcal{A}$ . Note: here, all the  $\mathcal{A}_i$  share the same  $1 \in \mathcal{A}$ , so they all intersect along  $\mathbb{C} \cdot 1_{\mathcal{A}}$ . Aside from this, the same "no relations" idea applies in the algebra setting.

Of course, this doesn't mean such an  $\mathcal{A}$  exists!

Construction: To see how to build  $\mathcal{A} \equiv \ast_{i \in I} \mathcal{A}_i$ , we look at some elements it must have.

- As  $\mathcal{A}_i \subset \mathcal{A}$ , we must have all words of the form  $a_1 \cdots a_n$  ( $n \in \mathbb{N}$ ) where (as usual)  $a_j \in \mathcal{A}_{i_j}$  and  $i_1 \neq i_2 \neq \cdots \neq i_n$  (for uniqueness).
- Again for uniqueness, since  $\mathbb{C}1_{\mathcal{A}} \subset \mathcal{A}_i$  for all  $i$ , we should exclude the span of  $1_{\mathcal{A}}$  from such words.

A good way to accomplish this, in line with our interests, is to specify a linear functional  $\varphi_i: \mathcal{A}_i \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  on each algebra, with  $\varphi_i(1_{\mathcal{A}}) \in \mathbb{C}^*$  (e.g. = 1). Then define

$$\hat{\mathcal{A}}_i = \ker \varphi_i.$$

So, if  $i_1, \dots, i_n$  are any consecutively-distinct indices in  $I$ , set

$$\hat{W}_{i_1, \dots, i_n} = \text{span}_{\mathbb{C}} \{ a_1 \cdots a_n : a_j \in \hat{\mathcal{A}}_{i_j} \} \subset \mathcal{A}.$$

$$\text{Then } \mathcal{A} \supseteq \mathbb{C}1_{\mathcal{A}} \oplus \bigoplus_{n=1}^{\infty} \bigoplus_{i_1 \neq \dots \neq i_n} \hat{W}_{i_1, \dots, i_n}.$$

In fact, this will be an equality: if  $a_1, \dots, a_n$  are any elements of  $\mathcal{A}_{i_1}, \dots, \mathcal{A}_{i_n}$  (with  $i_1, \dots, i_n$  arbitrary), in the product  $a_1 \cdots a_n$  we first combine adjacent elements in the same algebra, thus we assume wlog that  $i_1 \neq i_2 \neq \dots \neq i_n$ . Then we center  $a_j = \hat{a}_j + \varphi(a_j)1$  with  $\hat{a}_j \in \hat{\mathcal{A}}_{i_j}$ , and so

$$\begin{aligned} a_1 \cdots a_n &= (\hat{a}_1 + \varphi(a_1)1) \cdots (\hat{a}_n + \varphi(a_n)1) = \hat{a}_1 \cdots \hat{a}_n + \sum_{j=1}^n \varphi(a_j) \hat{a}_1 \cdots \hat{a}_j \cdots \hat{a}_n + \cdots \\ &\quad \cdots + \varphi(a_1) \cdots \varphi(a_n)1 \\ &\in \hat{W}_{i_1, \dots, i_n} \oplus \bigoplus_{j=1}^n \hat{W}_{i_1, \dots, \hat{i}_j, \dots, i_n} \oplus \cdots \\ &\quad \cdots \oplus \mathbb{C}1_{\mathcal{A}}. \end{aligned}$$

This is basically how to construct  $\mathcal{A}$ . But if we really want to show the universal property holds, it is convenient to define the product between different algebras using another universal construction: the tensor-product.

Def / Construction: Given unital  $\mathbb{C}$ -algebras  $\{\mathcal{O}_i\}_{i \in I}$  and linear functionals  $\varphi_i: \mathcal{O}_i \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  with  $\varphi_i(1_{\mathcal{O}_i}) = 1$ , define the free product

$$\mathcal{O} = \ast_{i \in I} \mathcal{O}_i = \mathbb{C} \oplus \bigoplus_{n=1}^{\infty} \bigoplus_{i_1 \neq \dots \neq i_n} \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_{i_1} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_{i_n}$$

where  $\mathring{\mathcal{O}}_i = \ker \varphi_i$ .

This defines  $\mathcal{O}$  as a vector-space. The product can then be specified using  $\otimes$  and the product within each algebra. For example, if  $a_1 \otimes \dots \otimes a_n$  and  $b_1 \otimes \dots \otimes b_m$  are words with  $a_n \in \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_{i_n}$ ,  $b_1 \in \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_{j_1}$  and  $i_n \neq j_1$ , we simply have

$$a_1 \otimes \dots \otimes a_n \cdot b_1 \otimes \dots \otimes b_m = a_1 \otimes \dots \otimes a_n \otimes b_1 \otimes \dots \otimes b_m$$

Linearity of  $\otimes$  makes this compatible with the decomposition  $a_i = \mathring{a}_i + \varphi(a_i)1$ , as can be easily worked out.

But if the middle letters are from the same algebra, greater care must be taken. For the lowest case, take

$$a_1, b_1 \in \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_1 \text{ and } a_2, b_2 \in \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_2. \text{ What is } a_1 \otimes a_2 \cdot b_2 \otimes b_1?$$

If we can do this, the general case  $a_1, b_1 \in \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_1, a_2, b_2 \in \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_2$  follows by decomposing  $a_1 = \mathring{a}_1 + \varphi_1(a_1)1$  etc. The naive attempt would be

$$a_1 \otimes a_2 \cdot b_2 \otimes b_1 \stackrel{?}{=} a_1 \otimes (a_2 b_2) \otimes b_1$$

but this is not in  $\mathring{\mathcal{O}}_2$ .

So we center it:  $a_2 b_2 = (a_2 b_2)^{\circ} + \varphi_2(a_2 b_2)1$ . Using this, the above answer would be

$$= a_1 \otimes (a_2 b_2)^{\circ} \otimes b_1 + \varphi_2(a_2 b_2) a_1 \otimes b_1$$

The trick is: in this process, whenever two factors from the same algebra appear next to each other separated by a  $\otimes$ , remove the  $\otimes$ . So the next "approximation" is

$$a_1 \otimes a_2 \cdot b_2 \otimes b_1 \stackrel{?}{=} a_1 \otimes (a_2 b_2)^{\circ} \otimes b_1 + \varphi_2(a_2 b_2) a_1 b_1$$

but this combination  $\mathring{\mathcal{O}}_1 \otimes \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_1$  never appears in  $\mathcal{O}$  (adjacent 1s).

This turns out to be correct, but we need to recenter to put it into the right decomposed form:

$$a_1 \otimes a_2 \cdot b_2 \otimes b_1 = a_1 \otimes (a_2 b_2) \otimes b_1 + \varphi_2(a_2 b_2) (a_1 b_1) + \varphi_2(a_2 b_2) \varphi_1(a_1 b_1) \\ \in \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_1 \otimes \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_2 \otimes \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_1 \oplus \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_1 \oplus \mathbb{C} \subset \mathcal{O}.$$

Through this process, the product on  $\mathcal{O}$  is defined inductively. It is now a simple matter to check that it is well-defined and makes  $\mathcal{O}$  into a  $\mathbb{C}$ -algebra, whose unit is  $1 \in \mathbb{C}$ .

As for the involution (to make it a  $*$ -algebra), it suffices to define  $*$  on the "word spaces"  $\mathring{\mathcal{O}}_{i_1} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_{i_n}$  for  $i_1 \neq \dots \neq i_n$ . There is, of course, only one way to define it so that it is an involution on  $\mathcal{O}$  and reduces to the  $*$  on each  $\mathcal{O}_i$ :

$$\mathring{\mathcal{O}}_{i_1} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathring{\mathcal{O}}_{i_n} \ni a_1 \otimes \dots \otimes a_n \mapsto (a_1 \otimes \dots \otimes a_n)^* = a_n^* \otimes \dots \otimes a_1^*.$$

It is now just an easy matter to check that  $(a \cdot b)^* = b^* \cdot a^*$  for  $a, b \in \mathcal{O}$ . Thus,  $\mathcal{O}$  is a unital  $*$ -algebra that "contains" all the  $\mathcal{O}_i$ : the injections are

$$\theta_i: \mathcal{O}_i \longrightarrow \mathbb{C} \oplus \mathcal{O}_i \subset \mathcal{O} \\ a \longmapsto \varphi_i(a) + \dot{a}$$

Remark: This construction seems to depend on the particular choices of functionals  $\varphi_i$ . Indeed, the specific decomposition above depends on them, but any other choices of  $\varphi_i$  (with  $\varphi_i(1) \neq 0$ ) would yield an isomorphic object, because:

Prop: this construction of  $\mathcal{O} = \bigstar_{i \in I} \mathcal{O}_i$  indeed has the universal property described on page 1.

Pf. Exercise. [Hint: lookup and use the universal property for tensor products of rings.]

Remark: Since the universal object  $\bigstar \mathcal{O}_i$  is uniquely-defined up to isomorphisms, this shows any choices of  $\varphi_i$  will give the same object. Indeed,  $\varphi_i$  just determines the specific form of  $\theta_i$ .



Now, in our world (of NCPS's), having specific choices of linear functionals  $\varphi_i: \mathcal{O}_i \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$  around is quite natural anyhow. This leads us to

## Free Products of NCPS's

Now, suppose we have a collection of non-commutative prob. spaces

$$\{(\mathcal{O}_i, \varphi_i)\}_{i \in I}$$

The  $\varphi_i$  give us a concrete representation of the  $*$ -algebra  $\bigstar_{i \in I} \mathcal{O}_i \equiv \mathcal{O}$ . The question is, is there a faithful positive state  $\varphi$  on  $\mathcal{O}$  such that  $\varphi|_{\mathcal{O}_i} = \varphi_i$ ? This would be the free version of "product measure".

In fact, there is an obvious choice for how such  $\varphi$  must be defined.

Def/Thm: Let  $\varphi \equiv \bigstar_{i \in I} \varphi_i$  be defined on  $\mathcal{O} = \bigstar_{i \in I} \mathcal{O}_i$  by:

- $\varphi(1) = 1$
- $\varphi|_{\mathcal{O} \otimes \mathbb{C}} = 0$

Then  $\varphi$  is a state st.  $\varphi|_{\mathcal{O}_i} = \varphi_i$ . Moreover, the algebras  $\mathcal{O}_i$  are  $(*)$ -free wrt  $\varphi$ .

Pf.  $\varphi$  is defined to be a linear functional on  $\mathcal{O}$  with  $\varphi(1) = 1$ , so  $\varphi$  is a state. Moreover, for  $a \in \mathcal{O}_i$ , the decomposition of  $a \in \mathcal{O}$  is  $a = \varphi_i(a) + a - \varphi_i(a) \in \mathbb{C} \oplus \mathcal{O}_i$ , so  $\varphi(a) = \varphi(\varphi_i(a)) + \varphi(\text{something in } \mathcal{O} \otimes \mathbb{C}) = \varphi_i(a)$ .

Now, if  $a_1, \dots, a_n$  are in  $\mathcal{O}$  with  $a_j \in \mathcal{O}_{i_j}$  where  $i_1 \neq i_2 \neq \dots \neq i_n$ , and such that  $\varphi(a_j) = 0$ , then  $\varphi_{i_j}(a_j) = 0$  so  $a_j \in \mathcal{O}_{i_j} \otimes \mathbb{C}$ , which means

$$a_1 \cdots a_n \in \mathcal{W}_{i_1, \dots, i_n} = \mathcal{O}_{i_1} \otimes \cdots \otimes \mathcal{O}_{i_n} \subset \mathcal{O} \otimes \mathbb{C}$$

Thus, by definition  $\varphi(a_1 \cdots a_n) = 0$ . Hence, the  $\mathcal{O}_i$  are free in  $(\mathcal{O}, \varphi)$ . Since they are  $*$ -algebras, they are  $*$ -free. ///

Exercise: Let  $G_i$  be groups. Show that  $(\ast \mathbb{C}G_i, \ast \varphi_{G_i})$  is isomorphic to  $(\mathbb{C}(\ast G_i), \varphi_{\ast G_i})$ .

Remark: It is easy to see that  $\varphi$  is the only state on  $\mathcal{O}$  that reduces to  $\varphi_i$  on  $\mathcal{O}_i$  such that the  $\mathcal{O}_i$  are free in  $(\mathcal{O}, \varphi)$ .

HOWEVER: we have yet to show that  $\varphi$  is positive & faithful.

To proceed with these properties, we actually need an important result from (classical) matrix theory.

Def: Let  $A, B \in M_n(\mathbb{C})$ . The Schur product  $A \circ B \in M_n(\mathbb{C})$  is the pointwise product

$$[A \circ B]_{ij} = A_{ij} B_{ij} \quad 1 \leq i, j \leq n.$$

Lemma: If  $A, B \in M_n(\mathbb{C})$  are positive, then so is  $A \circ B$ .

Pf. As usual, positive means  $A = XX^*$  and  $B = YY^*$  for some matrices  $X, Y \in M_n(\mathbb{C})$ . But here we utilize standard linear alg.: we can alternatively characterize positivity of a matrix as

$$\begin{aligned} A \geq 0 &\iff A = A^* \text{ and has all } \geq 0 \text{ eigenvalues} \\ &\iff \langle Av, v \rangle \geq 0 \text{ for all } v \in \mathbb{C}^n. \end{aligned}$$

So we will check the last condition for  $A \circ B$ . Fix  $v = (v_1, \dots, v_n) \in \mathbb{C}^n$ . Then

$$\begin{aligned} \langle A \circ B v, v \rangle &= \sum_{j=1}^n [A \circ B v]_j \bar{v}_j = \sum_{i,j=1}^n [A \circ B]_{ij} v_i \bar{v}_j \\ &= \sum_{i,j=1}^n A_{ij} B_{ij} v_i \bar{v}_j. \end{aligned}$$

Now, as  $A \geq 0$ ,  $A = XX^*$  for some  $X \in M_n(\mathbb{C})$ . That is:

$$[A]_{ij} = [XX^*]_{ij} = \sum_{k=1}^n [X]_{ik} [X^*]_{kj} = \sum_{k=1}^n X_{ik} \bar{X}_{jk}.$$

$$\text{Thus: } \langle A \circ B v, v \rangle = \sum_{i,j,k=1}^n X_{ik} \bar{X}_{jk} B_{ij} v_i \bar{v}_j = \sum_{k=1}^n \left( \sum_{i,j=1}^n B_{ij} (v_i X_{ik}) \overline{(v_j X_{jk})} \right)$$

$$w_k \equiv (v_1 X_{1k}, \dots, v_n X_{nk}) \longrightarrow = \sum_{k=1}^n \langle B w_k, w_k \rangle \geq 0. \quad //$$

We need one more little lemma, which is a polarization of the definition of positive in a NCPS.

Lemma: Let  $(\mathcal{O}, \varphi)$  be a NCPS, and let  $a_1, \dots, a_n \in \mathcal{O}$ . Then the matrix

$$[A]_{ij} = \varphi(a_i a_j^*)$$

is positive.

Pf. For any  $v \in \mathbb{C}^n$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned} \langle Av, v \rangle &= \sum_{i,j=1}^n A_{ij} v_i \bar{v}_j = \sum_{i,j=1}^n \varphi(a_i a_j^*) v_i \bar{v}_j \\ &= \varphi\left(\sum_{i,j=1}^n v_i a_i (v_j a_j)^*\right) = \varphi\left(\left(\sum_{i=1}^n v_i a_i\right) \left(\sum_{i=1}^n v_i a_i\right)^*\right) \end{aligned}$$

and this is  $\geq 0$  b/c  $\varphi \geq 0$ .  $\parallel$

Remark: The definition of  $\varphi \geq 0$  is the  $n=1$  case, so in fact the statement of the Lemma is equivalent to  $\varphi \geq 0$ .

Theorem: If  $(\mathcal{O}_i, \varphi_i)$  are NCPS's, then  $(\ast \mathcal{O}_i, \ast \varphi_i)$  is a NCPS.

Pf. This is a fairly involved proof, that uses a lot of the tools we've developed. In particular, we will use the orthogonality relations of freeness we developed in Lecture.

Let  $a \in \mathcal{O} = \ast \mathcal{O}_i$ . Then  $a = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{i_1, \dots, i_n}^{\text{finite}} a_{i_1 \dots i_n}$ , where  $a_{i_1 \dots i_n} \in \mathcal{O}_{i_1} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathcal{O}_{i_n}$ .

Then  $aa^* = \sum_{n,m=0}^{\infty} \sum_{i_1, \dots, i_n}^{\text{finite}} \sum_{j_1, \dots, j_m}^{\text{finite}} a_{i_1 \dots i_n} a_{j_1 \dots j_m}^*$ .

Taking  $\varphi$ , we look at inner-products  $\varphi(a_{i_1 \dots i_n} a_{j_1 \dots j_m}^*)$ .

By the orthogonality relations,  $\varphi(\cdot) = 0$  unless  $(i_1, \dots, i_n) = (j_1, \dots, j_m)$ .

$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{is a lin. comb. of products } a_1 \dots a_n \text{ with } a_\ell \in \mathcal{O}_{i_\ell} \\ \text{is a lin. comb. of products } a'_1 \dots a'_m \text{ with } a'_\ell \in \mathcal{O}_{j_\ell} \end{array} \right.$

$\Rightarrow \varphi(aa^*) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{i_1, \dots, i_n}^{\text{finite}} \varphi(a_{i_1 \dots i_n} a_{i_1 \dots i_n}^*)$   $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Thus, only have to prove that } \varphi|_{\mathcal{O}_{i_1} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathcal{O}_{i_n}} \text{ is } \geq 0 \\ \text{and faithful.} \end{array} \right.$

So, fix a specific  $(i_1, \dots, i_n)$  with  $i_1 \neq i_2 \neq \dots \neq i_n$ . Let  $b \in \mathring{O}_{i_1} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathring{O}_{i_n}$ .

Positivity: Decompose  $b = \sum_{k=1}^L a_1^k a_2^k \dots a_n^k$   $a_i^k \in \mathring{O}_{i_j}$ . So

$$\begin{aligned} \varphi(bb^*) &= \sum_{k,l=1}^L \varphi(a_1^k \dots a_n^k (a_n^l)^* \dots (a_1^l)^*) \\ &= \sum_{k,l=1}^L \varphi(a_1^k (a_1^l)^*) \dots \varphi(a_n^k (a_n^l)^*) \quad \left. \begin{array}{l} \text{again by the} \\ \text{orthogonality} \\ \text{relations} \end{array} \right\} \\ &= \sum_{k,l=1}^L \varphi_{i_1}(a_1^k (a_1^l)^*) \dots \varphi_{i_n}(a_n^k (a_n^l)^*) \quad \left. \begin{array}{l} \text{since } \varphi|_{\mathring{O}_{i_j}} = \varphi_{i_j} \end{array} \right\} \end{aligned}$$

So, for  $1 \leq m \leq n$ , let  $B_m \in M_L(\mathbb{C})$  be the matrix  $[B_m]_{k,l} = \varphi_{i_m}(a_m^k (a_m^l)^*)$ .  
By the second lemma,  $B_m \geq 0$  since  $\varphi_{i_m} \geq 0$ . Hence, by induction on the first lemma, the Schur product  $B_1 \circ \dots \circ B_n \geq 0$ . Thus, taking the vector  $\mathbb{1} = (1, \dots, 1) \in \mathbb{C}^n$ ,

$$0 \leq \langle B_1 \circ \dots \circ B_n \mathbb{1}, \mathbb{1} \rangle = \sum_{k,l=1}^L [B_1 \circ \dots \circ B_n]_{k,l} \mathbb{1}_k \mathbb{1}_l = \sum_{k,l=1}^L [B_1]_{k,l} \dots [B_n]_{k,l} = \varphi(bb^*) \quad //$$

Faithfulness: Proceed by induction on  $n$ . The case  $n=0$  is just the statement  $|z|^2=0 \Rightarrow z=0$  for  $z \in \mathbb{C}$ ; for  $n=1$  it is just the (assumed) statement that  $\varphi_{i_1} \geq 0$ . So, assume we know  $\varphi$  is faithful on words of length  $n-1$ . We can decompose

$$\mathring{O}_{i_1} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathring{O}_{i_n} \ni b = x_1 y_1 + \dots + x_m y_m \text{ for some } m, x_j \in \mathring{O}_{i_1}, y_j \in \mathring{O}_{i_2} \otimes \dots \otimes \mathring{O}_{i_n}.$$

Note: If  $x_1, \dots, x_m$  are linearly-dependent, we can regroup the decomposition shrinking  $m$ ; so wlog they are linearly-independent. So, if  $\varphi(bb^*)=0$ ,

$$0 = \varphi(bb^*) = \sum_{k,l=1}^m \varphi(x_k y_k y_l^* x_l^*) = \sum_{k,l=1}^m \varphi(x_k x_l^*) \varphi(y_k y_l^*) \quad (\text{by the orthogonality relations})$$

Now, as proved above,  $\varphi \geq 0$ , so by the second lemma, the matrix  $[\varphi(y_k y_l^*)]_{k,l}$  is positive. This means we can write it in the form  $BB^*$ . If  $[B]_{k,l} = \beta_{k,l}$ , this means that we can write

$$\varphi(y_k y_l^*) = \sum_{p=1}^m \beta_{k,p} \bar{\beta}_{l,p}, \quad 1 \leq k, l \leq m.$$



