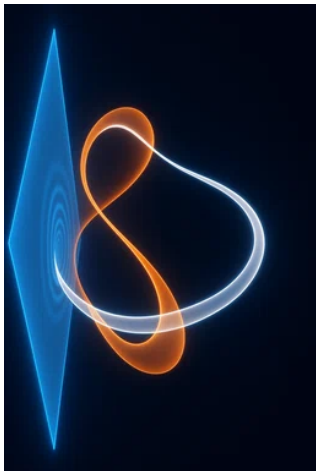


Constructing fully extended functorial 2d chiral CFTs from Conformal Nets

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(from Sept 2026) Perimeter Institute + IAS



Global Categorical Symmetries 2026
Institut Henri Poincaré
Paris

2d Chiral Conformal Field Theory

Vertex Operator Algebra

Conformal Nets

Functorial Chiral CFTs
(Segal's modular functor)

2d Chiral Conformal Field Theory

Vertex Operator Algebra



Conformal Nets

Functorial Chiral CFTs

(Segal's modular functor)

$$\emptyset \mapsto \mathcal{C}$$

$$\mapsto F_{\Sigma}: \mathcal{C}_{\partial\Sigma_{in}} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}_{\partial\Sigma_{out}}$$

$$\mapsto \mathcal{H}_{\Sigma'} \quad \text{the space of conformal blocks}$$

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Vertex Operator Algebra

Functorial Chiral CFTs

(Segal's modular functor)

$$\emptyset \mapsto \mathcal{C}$$



$$\mapsto F_{\Sigma}: \mathcal{C}_{\partial \Sigma_{in}} \rightarrow \mathcal{C}_{\partial \Sigma_{out}}$$



$$\mapsto \mathcal{H}_{\Sigma'} \quad \text{the space of conformal blocks}$$

Conformal Nets



* a Hilbert space $\mathcal{H}_0$, a unit vector $\Omega \in \mathcal{H}_0$

* a strongly cont. representation $\text{Möb} \rightarrow \mathcal{U}(\mathcal{H}_0)$

extending to a strongly cont. projective rep $U: \text{Diff}(S^1) \rightarrow \mathcal{PU}(\mathcal{H}_0)$

* An assignment $I \subset S^1 \mapsto \mathcal{A}(I) \subset \mathcal{B}(\mathcal{H}_0)$

Isotony
+ Locality

• $I \subset J \Rightarrow \mathcal{A}(I) \subset \mathcal{A}(J)$, $I \cap J = \emptyset \Rightarrow [\mathcal{A}(I), \mathcal{A}(J)] = 0$

Covariance

• $U(\varphi) \mathcal{A}(I) U(\varphi)^* = \mathcal{A}(\varphi I)$ for $\varphi \in \text{Diff}(S^1)$

if $\varphi|_I = \text{id}_I$ then $\text{Ad}(U(\varphi))|_{\mathcal{A}(I)} = \text{id}_{\mathcal{A}(I)}$

Positivity
of energy

• $U(\text{Rot}_t) = e^{itL_0}$, L_0 is required to have positive spectrum

Vacuum
vector

• $U|_{\text{Möb}}$ has 1-dim fixed point space spanned by Ω
 Ω is cyclic for $\bigvee_{I \subset S^1} \mathcal{A}(I)$

2d Chiral Conformal Field Theory

^{unitary} Vertex Operator Algebra

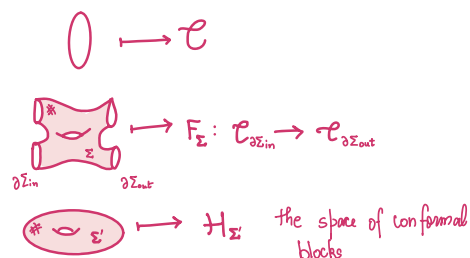
$$A_V(I) := W^* \left(\underbrace{\{Y(a, f) : a \in V, f \in C^\infty S^1\}}_{\text{smearred vertex operator}} \right)$$

Corpi-Kawahigashi-Longo-Weiner 2018



Conformal Nets

Functorial Chiral CFTs (Segal's modular functor)



- * a Hilbert space $\mathcal{H}_0$, a unit vector $\Omega \in \mathcal{H}_0$
- * a strongly cont. representation $\text{Möb} \rightarrow \mathcal{U}(\mathcal{H}_0)$
- extending to a strongly cont. projective rep $U: \text{Diff}(S^1) \rightarrow \mathcal{PU}(\mathcal{H}_0)$
- * An assignment $I \subset S^1 \mapsto A(I) \subset \mathcal{B}(\mathcal{H}_0)$
- Isotony + Locality • $I \subset J \Rightarrow A(I) \subset A(J)$, $I \cap J = \emptyset \Rightarrow [A(I), A(J)] = 0$
- Covariance • $U(\varphi) A(I) U(\varphi)^* = A(\varphi I)$ for $\varphi \in \text{Diff}(S^1)$
if $\varphi|_I = \text{id}_I$ then $\text{Ad}(U(\varphi))|_{A(I)} = \text{id}_{A(I)}$
- Positivity of energy • $U(\text{Rot}_t) = e^{itL_0}$, L_0 is required to have positive spectrum
- Vacuum vector • $U|_{\text{Möb}}$ has 1-dim fixed point space spanned by Ω
 Ω is cyclic for $\bigvee_{I \subset S^1} A(I)$

2d Chiral Conformal Field Theory

Vertex Operator Algebra

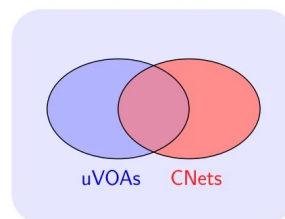
Henriques-Tener 2025

Conformal Nets

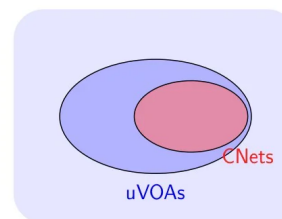
Th (Henriques-Tener 25)

Every conformal net has an associated unitary vertex operator algebra.

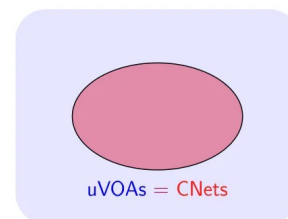
Functorial Chiral CFTs (Segal's modular functor)



Caspi-Kawahigashi-Long-Weiner 2018



Henriques-Tener 2025



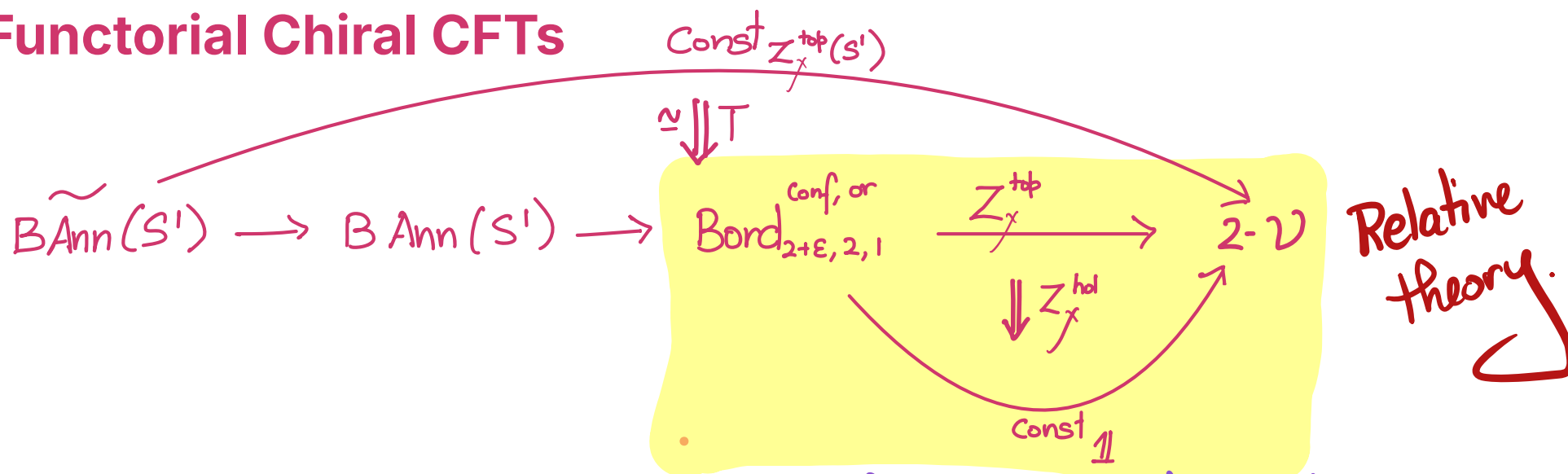
Conjecturally

2d Chiral Conformal Field Theory

Vertex Operator Algebra

Conformal Nets

Functorial Chiral CFTs



Relative theory.

closed 1-manifold $S \mapsto$ an algebra A_S
 a complex cobordism $\Sigma \mapsto A_{\partial \text{in } \Sigma} - A_{\partial \text{out } \Sigma}$ bimodule
 $H_\Sigma, \Omega_\Sigma \in \mathcal{H}_\Sigma$.

† axiom that implies that $\mathcal{H}_\Sigma$ depends-topologically on Σ
 and $\Omega_\Sigma \in \mathcal{H}_\Sigma$ depends holomorphically on Σ .

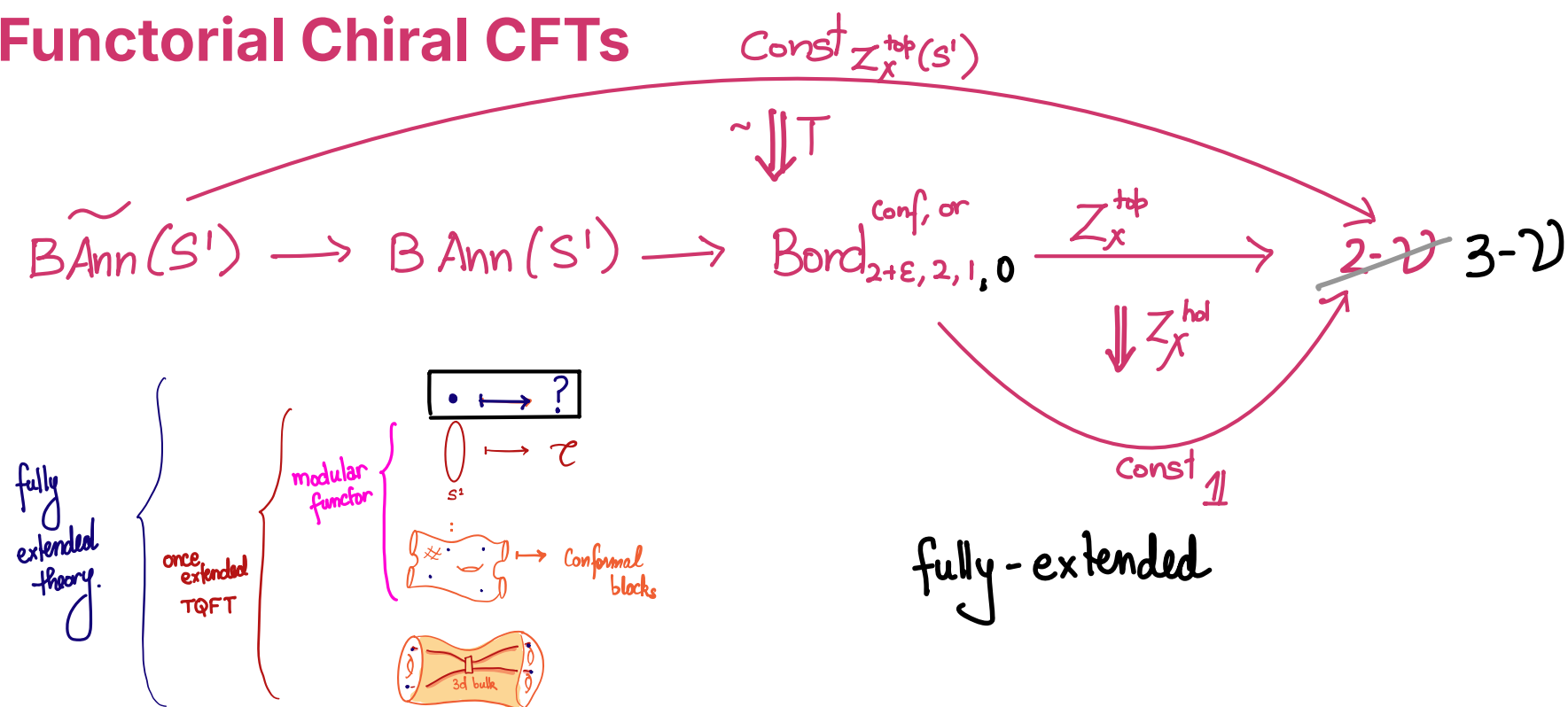
if $\Sigma_1 \sim_{\text{diff}} \Sigma_2$ then $\mathcal{H}_{\Sigma_1} \simeq \mathcal{H}_{\Sigma_2}$ as bimodules.

2d Chiral Conformal Field Theory

Vertex Operator Algebra

Conformal Nets

Functorial Chiral CFTs



Target categories

$$\underbrace{\Omega \mathbb{1} \quad n-2}_{\text{End}_{n-2}(\mathbb{1})} \simeq (n-1)-2$$

$$\Omega_{\mathbb{I}} \quad n-2 \quad \simeq \quad (n-1)-2$$

Morita theory $n \geq 2$, $n=1$ $\mathcal{V} = \text{Vect}_{\mathbb{C}}$

$$\text{Mor}(\mathbb{E}_1((n-1)-2)) \xrightarrow{\square\text{-Mod}} \text{Lin}(n-1)\text{Cat}$$

associative algebra objects.

$$\Omega_{\mathbb{I}} \quad n-2 \quad \simeq \quad (n-1)-2$$

Morita theory $n \geq 2$, $n=1$ $\mathcal{V} = \text{Vect}_{\mathbb{C}}$

$$\text{Mor}(\mathbb{E}_1((n-1)-2)) \xrightarrow{\square\text{-Mod}} \text{Lin}(n-1)\text{Cat}$$

$\text{Vect}_{\mathbb{C}}$

$\text{Mor}(\mathbb{E}_1(\text{Vect}_{\mathbb{C}}))$

$\text{Alg}_{\mathbb{C}}^{\text{bimod}}$

LinCat

Composition of 1-morphism

$${}_A M \otimes_B N_C$$

identity 1-morphism ${}_A A_A$

$\text{Mor}(\mathbb{E}_1(\text{LinCat}))$

$\text{TensCat}^{\text{bimod}}$

Lin 2-Cat

Composition of 1-morphisms

$${}_e M \boxtimes_{\mathcal{D}} N_e$$

identity 1-morphism ${}_e \mathcal{C}_e$

Some constructions

vector space

algebra

linear category

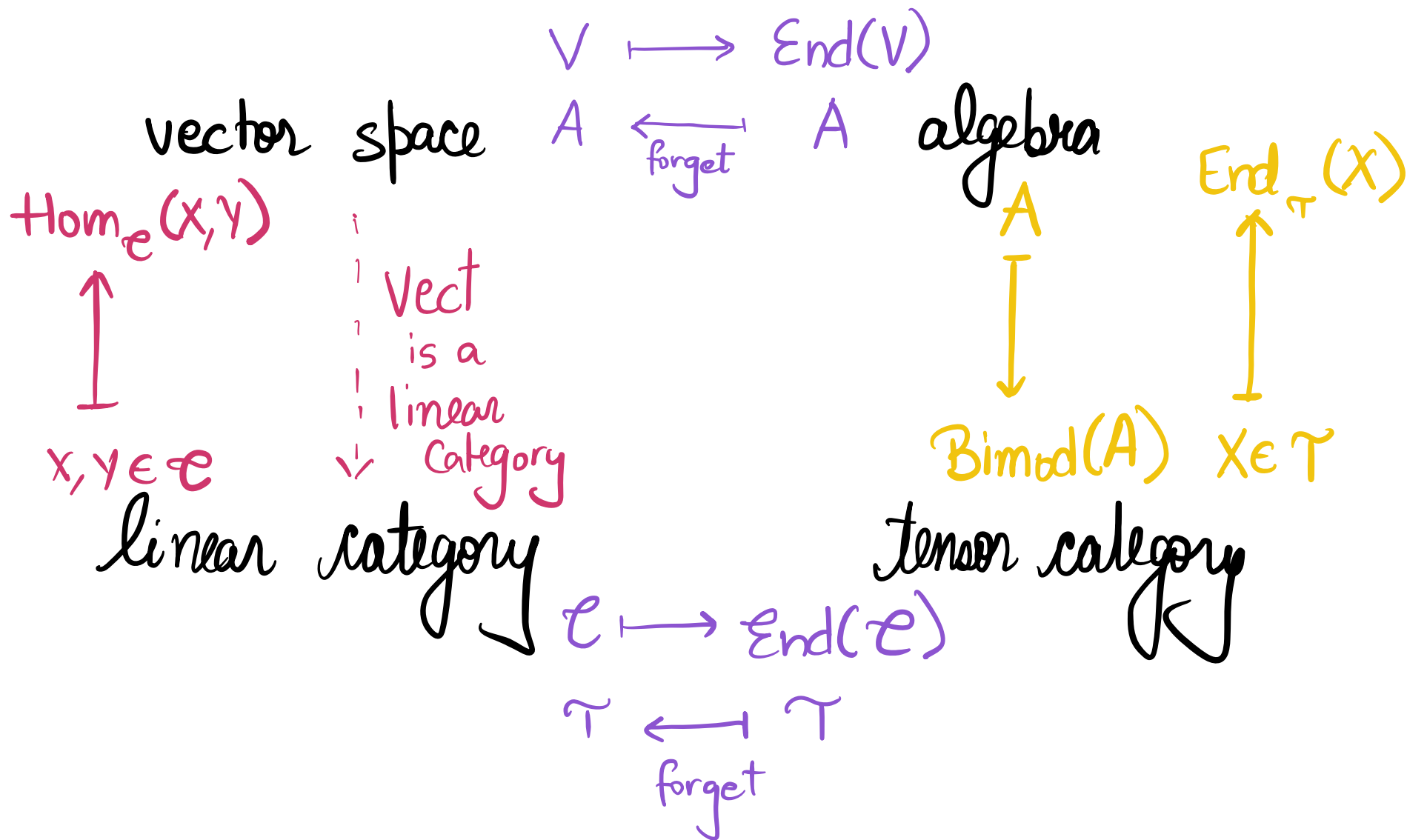
tensor category

Some constructions

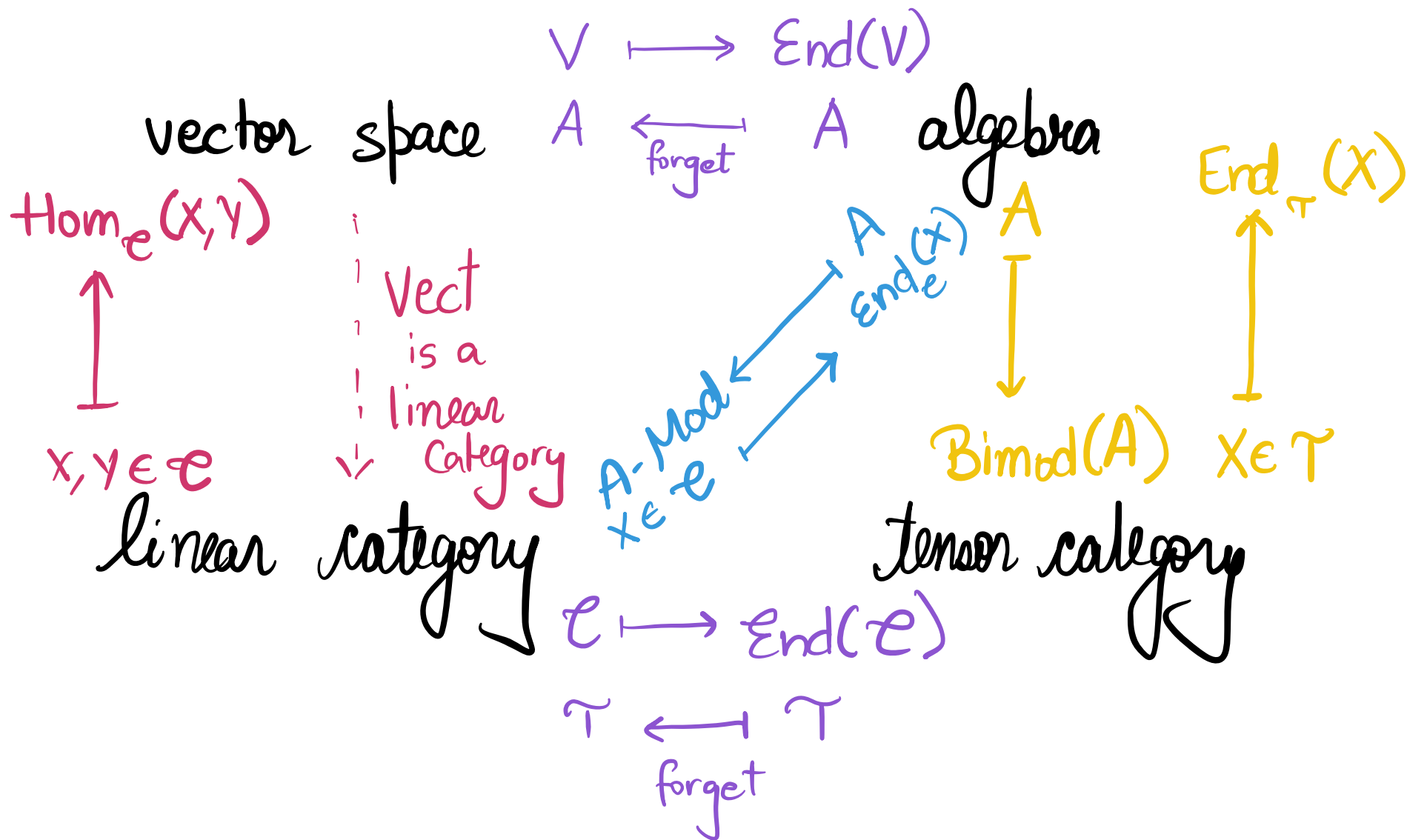
vector space $V \longmapsto \text{End}(V)$
 $A \xleftarrow{\text{forget}} A$ algebra

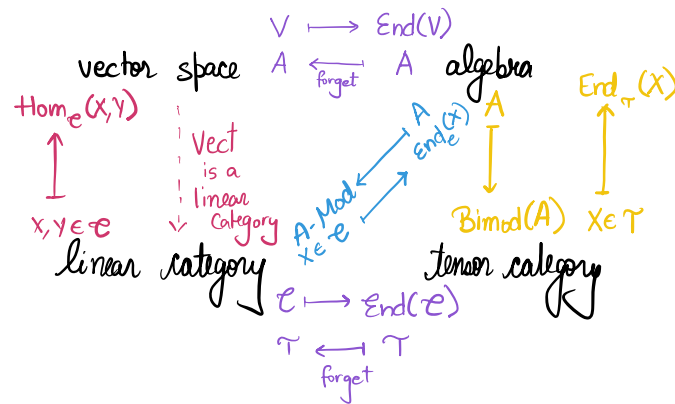
linear category $\mathcal{C} \longmapsto \text{End}(\mathcal{C})$ tensor category
 $\mathcal{T} \xleftarrow{\text{forget}} \mathcal{T}$

Some constructions

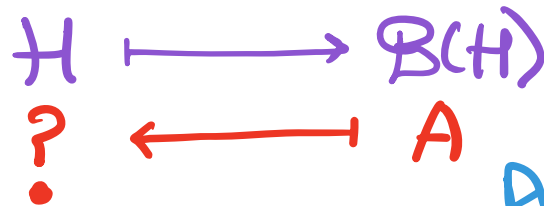


Some constructions





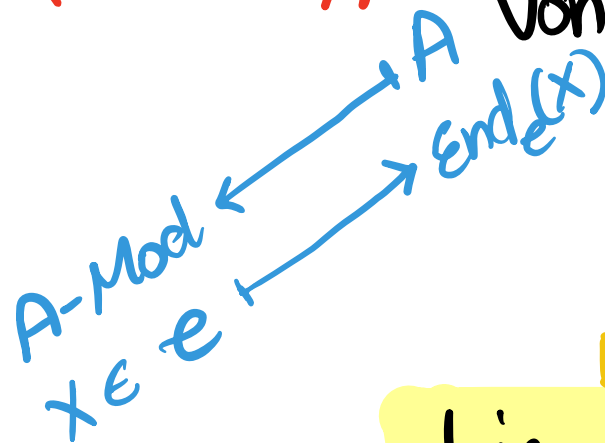
Hilbert space



von Neumann algebra

$x, y \in \mathcal{C}$

complete W^* -category



bicommutant category

- * all direct sums
- * idempotent complete
- * admits a generator

Hilbert spaces

Inner-product

$$\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle : \bar{H} \times H \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$$

$$H \rightarrow \{f: \bar{H} \rightarrow \mathbb{C} \mid f \text{ is bounded}\}$$

$\xi \mapsto \langle \cdot, \xi \rangle$ is an isomorphism.

Complete W^* -categories

Canonical Hilb-valued

$$\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle : \bar{\mathcal{C}} \times \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \text{Hilb}$$

$$\mathcal{C} \rightarrow \text{Func}(\bar{\mathcal{C}}, \text{Hilb})$$

$$X \mapsto \langle \cdot, X \rangle$$

is an equivalence

An anti-linear isometry
'adjoint'

$$\dagger : \text{Hom}(H_1, H_2) \xrightarrow{\cong} \text{Hom}(H_2, H_1)$$

characterized by

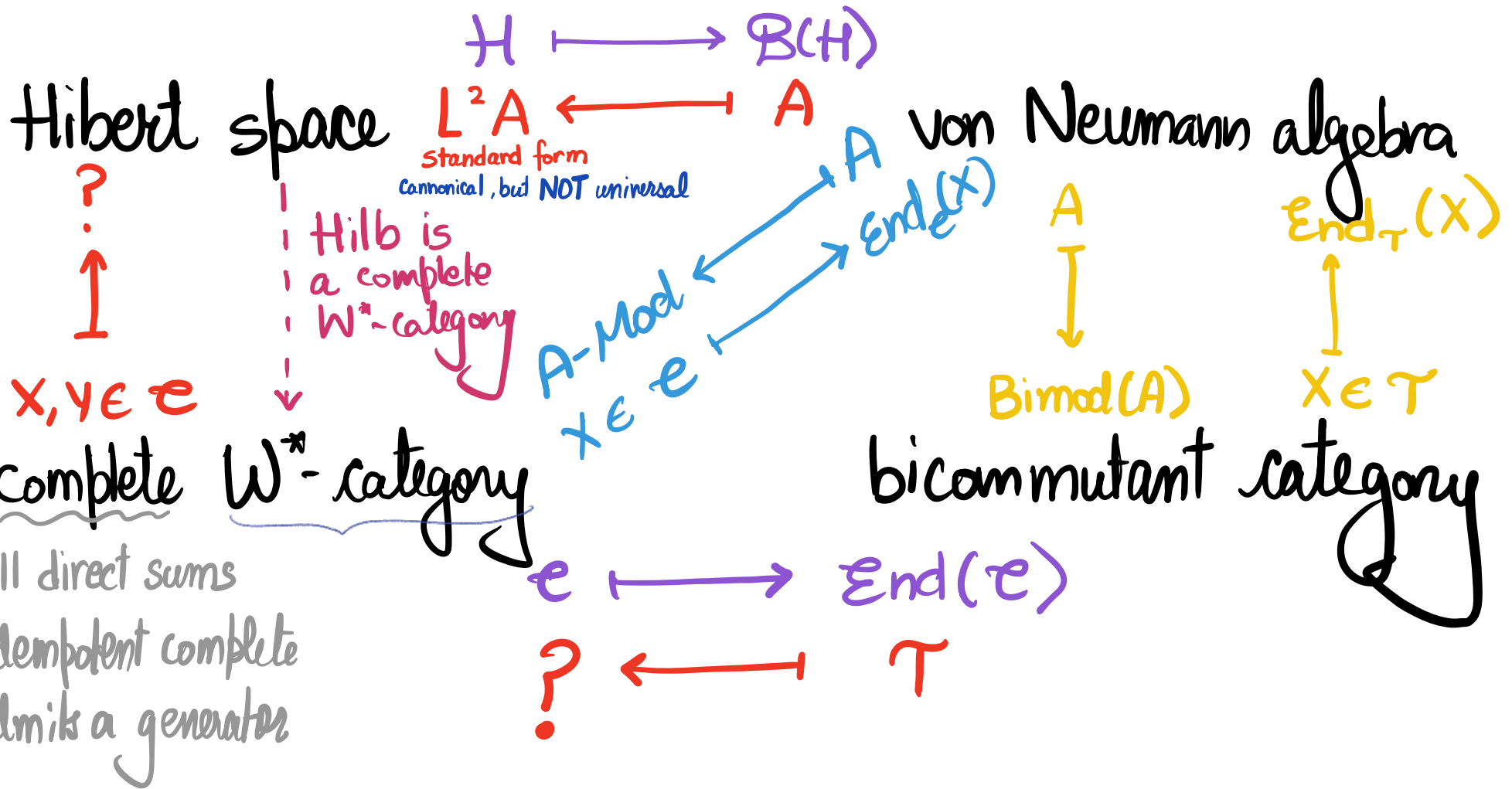
$$\langle \xi, f^\dagger \eta \rangle_{H_1} = \langle f \xi, \eta \rangle_{H_2}$$

An anti-linear equivalence
'adjoint'

$$\dagger : \text{Func}(\mathcal{C}_1, \mathcal{C}_2) \xrightarrow{\cong} \text{Func}(\mathcal{C}_2, \mathcal{C}_1)$$

characterised by natural unitary isos

$$\langle X, F^\dagger Y \rangle_{\mathcal{C}_1} \cong \langle FX, Y \rangle_{\mathcal{C}_2}$$



- * all direct sums
- * idempotent complete
- * admits a generator

Hilbert space

$$\mathcal{H} \xrightarrow{\quad} \mathcal{B}(\mathcal{H})$$

von Neumann algebra

$$L^2 A \xleftrightarrow{\quad} A$$

standard form
canonical, but NOT universal

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & A & \\ & \swarrow \searrow & \\ A\text{-Mod} & & \text{End}_e(X) \\ x \in e & & \end{array}$$

A

$\downarrow$

$\text{Bimod}(A)$

$\text{End}_T(X)$

$\uparrow$

$X \in T$

bicommutant category

$$e \xrightarrow{\quad} \text{End}(e)$$

$$? \xleftrightarrow{\quad} T$$

$$\langle X, Y \rangle_e := p_y L^2 \text{End}_e(X \oplus Y) p_x$$

$\uparrow$

$X, Y \in e$

Hilb is a complete W^* -category

complete W^* -category

- * all direct sums
- * idempotent complete
- * admits a generator

Hilbert space

$$\mathcal{H} \xrightarrow{\quad} \mathcal{B}(\mathcal{H})$$

von Neumann algebra

$$\langle X, Y \rangle_{\mathcal{E}} := \begin{pmatrix} \boxed{} & \boxed{} \\ \boxed{} & \boxed{} \end{pmatrix}_{2 \times 2} L^2 \text{End}_{\mathcal{E}}(X \oplus Y) \begin{pmatrix} \boxed{} \\ \boxed{} \end{pmatrix}$$

$$L^2 A \xleftrightarrow{\quad} A$$

standard form
canonical, but NOT universal

Hilb is
a complete
 W^* -category

$$\begin{matrix} & A \\ & \swarrow \searrow \\ A\text{-mod} & & \text{End}_{\mathcal{E}}(X) \\ \downarrow & & \downarrow \\ X \in \mathcal{E} & & \end{matrix}$$

$$A \downarrow \text{Bimod}(A)$$

$$\text{End}_{\mathcal{T}}(X) \uparrow X \in \mathcal{T}$$

bicommutant category

complete W^* -category

- * all direct sums
- * idempotent complete
- * admits a generator

$$\mathcal{E} \xrightarrow{\quad} \text{End}(\mathcal{E})$$

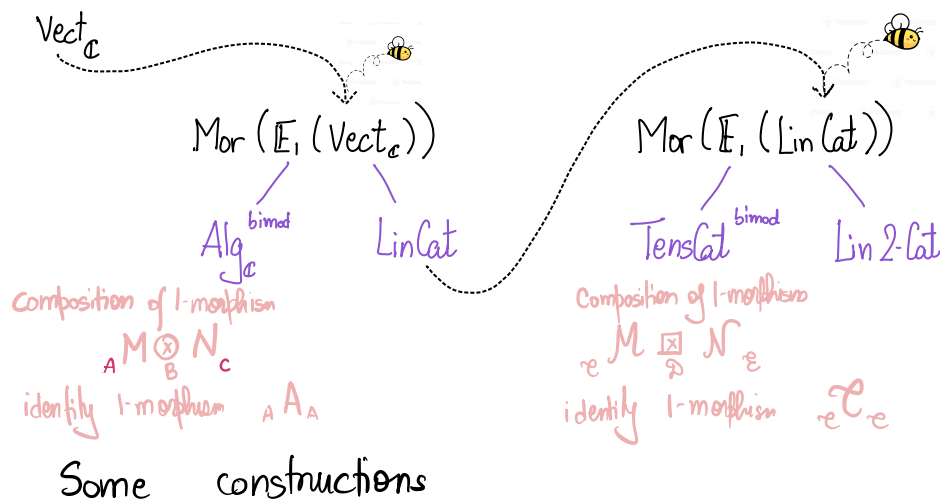
$$\mathcal{T}_{\text{abs}} \xleftrightarrow{\quad} \mathcal{T}$$

2-sided ideal of
absorbing objects

$$\Omega \otimes X \simeq \Omega \simeq X \otimes \Omega \quad \forall X \in \mathcal{T}$$

$$\mathcal{L}^2(\mathcal{H}) = \mathcal{L}^2(\mathcal{B}(\mathcal{H})) \quad \text{Hilbert-Schmidt operators} \xleftrightarrow{\quad} \mathcal{B}(\mathcal{H})$$

2-sided *-ideal



Hilb

$$\text{vNAlg}^{\text{bimod}} \xrightarrow{\text{Thm}} W^*\text{-Cat}$$

[Herique, N, Penneys 2024]

$$\text{BicomCat}^{\text{bimod}}$$

$$W^*2\text{-Cat}$$

composition of 1-mor
Connes fusion

$${}_A H \boxtimes_B K_C$$

$$\text{actions } \begin{cases} \lambda : B \rightarrow \mathcal{B}(L^2 B) \\ \rho : B^{\text{op}} \rightarrow \mathcal{B}(L^2 B) \end{cases}$$

completion of the vector space

$$\text{Hom}_B(L^2 B, {}_A H) \otimes_B L^2 B \otimes_B \text{Hom}_B(L^2 B, {}_C K)$$

$$\text{wrt } \langle \varphi_1 \otimes \vartheta_1 \otimes \psi_1, \varphi_2 \otimes \vartheta_2 \otimes \psi_2 \rangle := \langle \vartheta_1, \lambda^{-1}(\varphi_1^* \circ \varphi_2) \vartheta_2 \rho^{-1}(\psi_1^* \circ \psi_2) \rangle_{L^2 B}$$

$L^2 A$ is the unit

$$\text{vNAlg}^{\text{bimod}} \underset{\text{Thm}}{\simeq} \text{W}^*\text{-Cat} \quad [\text{Teriague, N, Penneys 2024}]$$

$$\text{BicomCat}^{\text{bimod}} \quad \text{W}^*\text{-2-Cat}$$

A bicommutant cat is a categorified analogue of von Neumann algebra.

- algebra _{$\mathbb{C}$}
- $*$ -algebra

- commutant A' in B
 $\{b \in B : ab = ba \ \forall a \in A\}$

commutant of a $*$ -alg
is a $*$ -algebra

a $\mathbb{C}$ -linear monoidal category

bi-involutive structure

$\dagger_0$ anti-linear
anti-tensor
involution

$(*) \dagger_1$ anti-linear

$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Hilb} \\ \text{Bim}(A) \\ \text{End}(W) \end{array} \right\}$

given $\iota: \mathcal{T} \rightarrow \mathcal{E}$

$\mathbb{Z}(\iota: \mathcal{T} \rightarrow \mathcal{E})$ is
relative center

obj: $(X, \{e_{x,y}: X \otimes \iota(y) \xrightarrow{\text{data}} \iota(y) \otimes X\}_{y \in \mathcal{T}})$

mor: $f: X_1 \rightarrow X_2$ in $\mathcal{E}$ such that

$$e \circ f = f \circ e$$

bi-involutive
monoidal

Bicommutant property, $A'' = A$!

(generally) non-unital monoidal
complete W^* -category

Defn. Let $\mathcal{T}$ be a complete bi-involutive W^* -tensor category that admits absorbing objects.

We have commuting W^* -tensor functors

$$L: \mathcal{T} \rightarrow \text{End}(\mathcal{T}^{\text{abs}}) \quad R: \mathcal{T}^{\text{mop}} \rightarrow \text{End}(\mathcal{T}^{\text{abs}})$$

$$X \mapsto X \otimes _ \quad X \mapsto _ \otimes X$$

data : equip $\mathcal{T}$ with structure maps that make L, R bi-involutive functors.

$$\gamma^L: L(_) \Rightarrow L(_)^\dagger$$

$$\gamma^R: R(_) \Rightarrow R(_)^\dagger$$

$$\text{Property: } \left. \begin{array}{l} \mathcal{T} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}(R: \mathcal{T}^{\text{mop}} \rightarrow \text{End}(\mathcal{T}^{\text{abs}})) \\ \mathcal{T}^{\text{mop}} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}(L: \mathcal{T} \rightarrow \text{End}(\mathcal{T}^{\text{abs}})) \end{array} \right\}$$

are equivalence of categories
+ lots of coherences ...

Categorified Connes fusion of modules.

Connes fusion
completion of a vector space wrt a canonical inner product.

$L^2 A$ is the unit

Admits an alternative description

$$H \boxtimes_A K := \text{proj}_{2,1} L^2 \text{End}_{A\text{-Mod}}({}_A \bar{H} \oplus {}_A K)$$

where

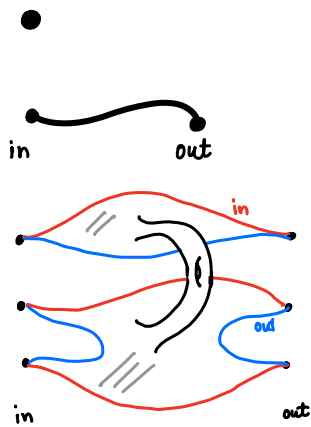
$$\text{proj}_{2,1}(\tau_f) := \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 1_K \end{pmatrix} \tau_f \begin{pmatrix} 1_H & 0 \\ 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$M \boxtimes_T N := \text{proj}_{2,1} \left(\text{End}_{T\text{-Mod}}(\bar{M} \oplus N)^{\text{abs}} \right)$$

$$T^{\text{abs}} \boxtimes_T T^{\text{abs}} \simeq T^{\text{abs}}$$

functorial χ -CFT from Conformal net

* fully local / fully extended *



- bicommutant category ?
- bimodule categories
- bi-linear / bi-equivariant functors

desire

something like $\text{Rep}(V)^A$ for $\cancel{\text{VOA } V}$.
conformal A. net

Drinfeld center
of ? $\approx \text{Rep}(A)$.

Quick fact.

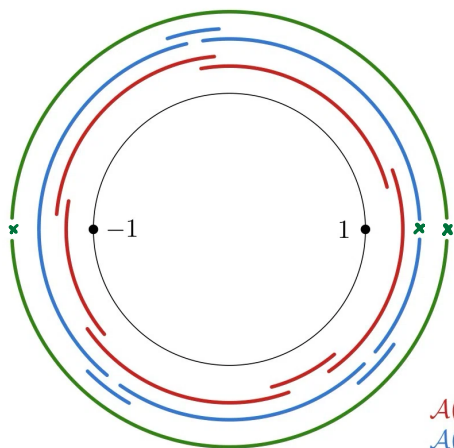
Conformal net A can be used to assign von Neumann algebras to arbitrary, abstract 1-manifolds.

$$\bigcup_{\mathcal{I}} A(\mathcal{I})$$

Different flavours of representations of conformal nets.

Fact given a von Neumann algebra (type-III factor) $\mathcal{A}$
 there is an equivalence of monoidal categories

$$\mathcal{A} \xrightarrow{P} \mathcal{A} \xrightarrow{\lambda} \mathcal{B}(\mathcal{L}(\mathcal{A}))$$



$$(\mathcal{H}, \{\alpha_I: \mathcal{A}(I) \rightarrow \mathcal{B}(\mathcal{H})\} \dots)$$

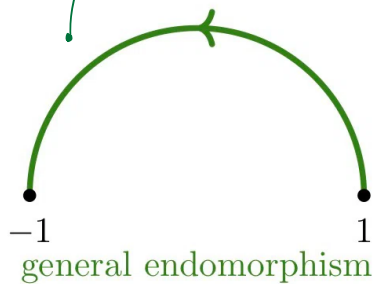
$\mathcal{A}(I) \forall I \subset S^1$ acts: Representation of conformal net $\mathcal{A}$
 $\mathcal{A}(I) \forall I \subset S^1 \mid 1 \notin \bar{I}$ acts: Solitonic Representation of $\mathcal{A}$
 $\mathcal{A}(I) \forall I \subseteq S_+ \wedge \forall I \subseteq S_-$ acts: $\mathcal{A}(S_+) \bar{\otimes} \mathcal{A}(S_-)$ -module

$\text{Rep}(\mathcal{A})$

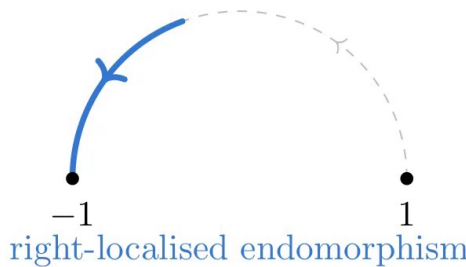
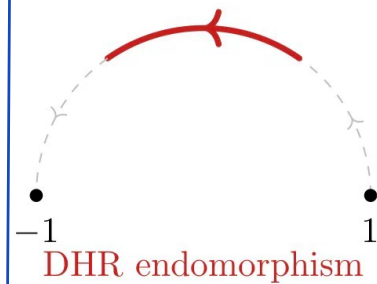
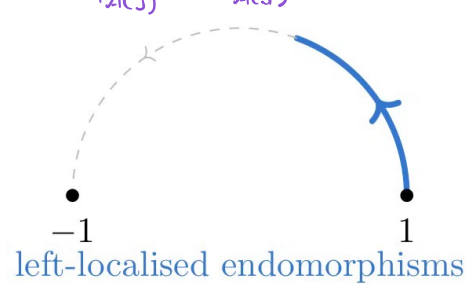
$\text{Sol}(\mathcal{A})$

well known equivalence

easy to establish fact.



$P: \mathcal{A}(I) \rightarrow \mathcal{A}(I)$
 st. $\exists J, \partial I \in J$
 $P|_{\mathcal{A}(J)} = \text{id}_{\mathcal{A}(J)}$



• Thm. (Henriques, N)

$\text{Sol}(\mathcal{A}) \simeq$ left/right

localised

endomorphisms.

(Henriques, N)

• Thm Drinfeld center of $\text{Sol}(\mathcal{A}) \simeq \text{Rep}(\mathcal{A})$.

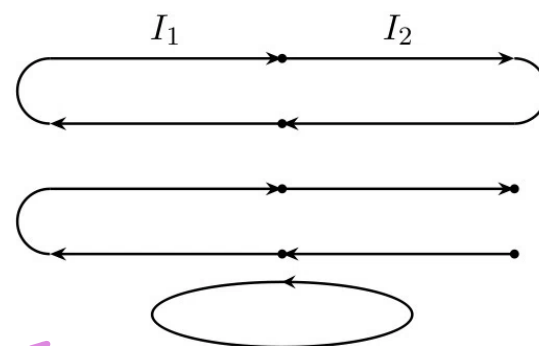
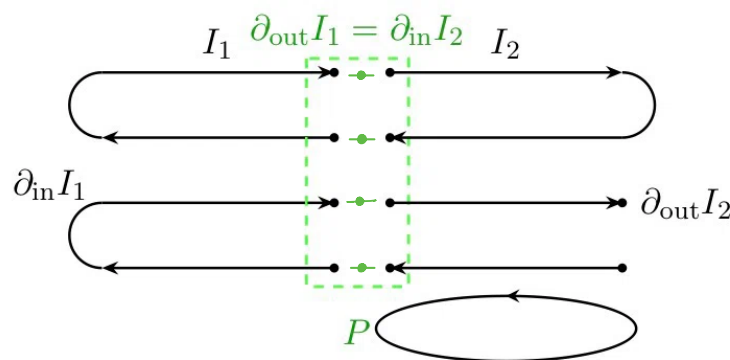
Assignment

Bord	Algebraic Assignment
Point $P + 1\text{-dim collar}$	A Bicommutant category $\mathcal{W}_P$
1-cobordism $I: P_{\text{in}} \rightarrow P_{\text{out}}$	$\mathcal{W}_{\text{out}}\text{-}\mathcal{W}_{\text{in}}\text{-bimodule}$ $W^*\text{-category}$ ${}_{\mathcal{W}_{\text{in}}}\mathcal{M}_{\mathcal{W}_{\text{out}}}$ realised as $A\text{-Mod}$ for a von Neumann algebra A
2-cobordism $\Sigma: M_{\text{in}} \rightarrow M_{\text{out}}$	A concrete equivariant $W^*\text{-functor}$ $F: A_{\text{in}}\text{-Mod} \rightarrow A_{\text{out}}\text{-Mod}$ realised by a pointed $A_{\text{out}}\text{-}A_{\text{in}}\text{-bimodule}$

fact : the support of localised endomorphisms can be shrunk/extended as desired

Construction

$\mathcal{W}_P$: solitonic representations
 $\mathcal{M}_I$: $A(I)\text{-Mod}$



Thm. (N)

$W_{\partial_{\text{in}} I_1}$

$\mathcal{M}_{I_1}$

$\boxtimes_{\mathcal{W}_P}$

$\mathcal{M}_{I_2}$

$\simeq$

$\mathcal{M}_{I_1 \cup_P I_2}$

$W_{\partial_{\text{out}} I_2}$

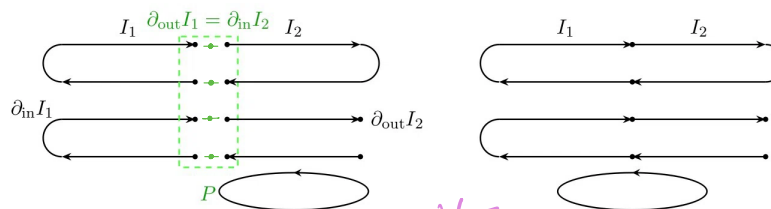
compatible with pointings

Assignment

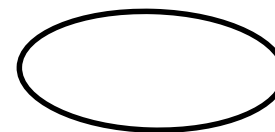
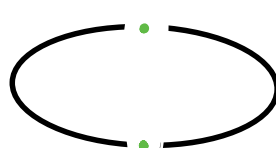
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2-cobordism $\Sigma: M_{\text{in}} \rightarrow M_{\text{out}}$	A concrete equivariant W^* -functor $F: A_{\text{in}}\text{-Mod} \rightarrow A_{\text{out}}\text{-Mod}$ realised by a pointed $A_{\text{out}}\text{-}A_{\text{in}}$ -bimodule

fact : the support of localised endomorphisms can be shrunk/extended as desired

Construction $\mathcal{W}_P$: solitonic representations
 $\mathcal{M}_I$: $A(I)\text{-Mod}$] on 0- and 1-manifolds



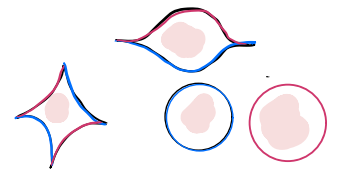
Thm. (N) $\mathcal{M}_{I_1} \boxtimes_{\mathcal{W}_P} \mathcal{M}_{I_2} \simeq \mathcal{M}_{I_1 \cup_P I_2}$



$A(S)\text{-Mod} \simeq \text{Rep}(A)^{\text{abs}}$

for rational (finite index) conformal nets $A(S)\text{-Mod} \simeq \text{Rep}(A)$

- on 2-manifolds (work in progress) generators



- Physical interpretation of $\text{Sol}(A)$

More generally $B \subset A$
 we can consider $\text{Sol}_B(A)$
 Solitonic representations of A that restrict to representations of B .

topological
lines in
bulk

$$\text{Sol}(A) := \text{Sol}_{\mathbb{C}}(A)$$

$$\text{Sol}_A(A) := \text{Rep}(A)$$

$$\text{Sol}_{\text{Vir}}(A) \quad \text{Sol}_B(A)$$

$$\mathcal{Z}^{\text{Drif}}(\text{Sol}_{\mathbb{C}}(A))$$

$$\mathcal{Z}^{\text{Drif}}(\text{Sol}_B(A))$$

$$\mathcal{Z}^{\text{Drif}}(\text{Rep}(A))$$

in rational case

$$\text{Rep}(A) \boxtimes \text{Rep}(A)^{\text{op}}$$

$$\text{Rep}(A)$$

$$\text{Rep}(A) \boxtimes \text{Rep}(\mathbb{C})$$

B -topological defects of bulk/boundary system A .

- recovering central charge

