

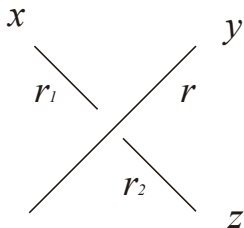
# Coloring link diagrams by Alexander quandles

Yongju Bae

Department of Mathematics  
College of Natural Sciences  
Kyungpook National University

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A *coloring* on an oriented classical knot diagram  $D$  by a set  $X$  is a function  $C : R \rightarrow X$ , where  $R$  is the set of over-arcs in the diagram.



## Definition (D. Joyce and S. Matveev, 1982)

A *quandle* is a non-empty set  $X$  equipped with a binary operation  $*$  satisfying the following three axioms:

(Q1) For any  $x \in X$ ,  $x * x = x$ .

(Q2) For any  $x, y \in X$ , there is a unique element  $z \in X$  such that  $x = z * y$ .

(Q3) For any  $x, y, z \in X$ ,  $(x * y) * z = (x * z) * (y * z)$ .

The property (Q2) is equivalent to the following property that

(Q2') There is a binary operation  $\bar{*} : X \times X \rightarrow X$  such that for any  $x, y \in X$ ,  $(x * y)\bar{*}y = (x\bar{*}y) * y = x$ .

A *quandle homomorphism* is a map between two quandles preserving the quandle operation.

## Example

- ▶ Let  $X$  be a subset of a group closed under conjugations. Then  $X$  is a quandle, called a *conjugation quandle*, under the operation  $x * y = y^{-1}xy$  for all  $x, y \in X$ .
- ▶ Let  $\Lambda = \mathbb{Z}[t, t^{-1}]$  be the Laurent polynomial ring over the integers. Then any  $\Lambda$ -module  $M$  has a quandle structure, called an *Alexander quandle*, under the operation

$$a * b = ta + (1 - t)b$$

for  $a, b \in M$ .

## Definition

An Alexander quandle is said to be *finitely generated* if its underlying abelian group is finitely generated.

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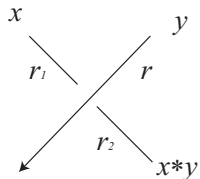
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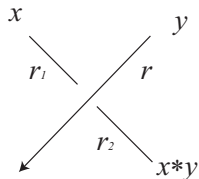
A *coloring* on an oriented classical knot diagram  $D$  by a *quandle*  $Q$  is a function  $C : R \rightarrow Q$ , where  $R$  is the set of over-arcs in the diagram, satisfying the condition depicted in the figure.



## Remark

- ▶ *Locally the colors do not depend on the orientation of the under-arc.*
- ▶ *Any constant function  $C_q : R \rightarrow Q$  at  $q \in Q$  is a coloring, called the trivial coloring at  $q \in Q$ .*

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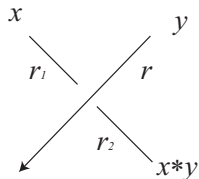


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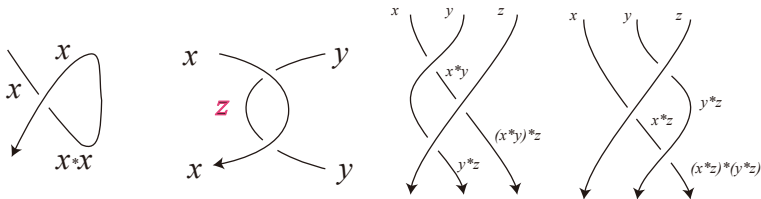
A diagram  $D$  of a link  $L$  is said to be *colorable* by a quandle  $Q$  if it admits a non-trivial coloring by  $Q$ .

## Proposition

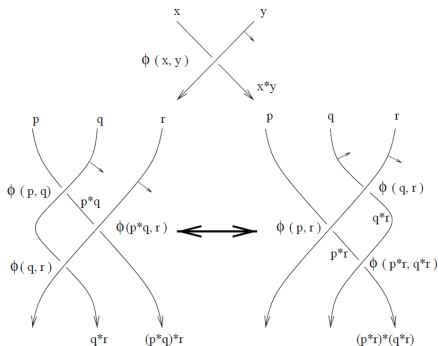
*Colorability by a quandle is an invariant of links.*

## Proof.

The defining Axioms (Q1), (Q2) and (Q3) of the quandle correspond to the Reidemeister Moves  $\Omega_1, \Omega_2$  and  $\Omega_3$ , respectively.



Let  $D$  be a diagram of a link  $L$  colored by a quandle  $(X, *)$ , and  $A$  an abelian group. Let  $\phi : X \times X \rightarrow A$  be a map. For each crossing of  $D$ , assign  $\phi(p, q)$  as follows.



Suppose that  $\phi(p, r) \cdot \phi(p * r, q * r) = \phi(p, q) \cdot \phi(p * q, r)$ . Then  $\prod_{\tau : \text{crossing}} \phi(p, q)^{\varepsilon(\tau)}$  is a link invariant, which depends on the coloring by the quandle  $Q$ .

For a map  $\phi : X \times X \rightarrow A$  satisfying

$$\phi(p, r) \cdot \phi(p * r, q * r) = \phi(p, q) \cdot \phi(p * q, r),$$

$$\Phi_Q(L) = \sum_{\text{all colorings by } Q} \prod_{\text{all crossings}} \phi(p, q)$$

is a link invariant, called a *quandle cocycle* invariant.

To get such an invariant, we need to know that

- ▶ Given a quandle  $Q$ , determine whether a link  $L$  is colorable by  $Q$  or not.
- ▶ How many colorings by  $Q$  are there, if exists?
- ▶ How can one find such a function  $\phi : X \times X \rightarrow A$ ?

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It is known that, for a finite quandle  $X$ , there is a one-to-one correspondence between quandle homomorphisms  $Q(K) \rightarrow X$  and colorings  $C : R \rightarrow X$ .

### Proposition (A. Inoue, 2001)

*Let  $p$  be a prime number,  $J$  an ideal of the ring  $\Lambda_p$  and  $Q(K)$  a knot quandle. For each  $i \geq 0$ , we put  $e_i(t) = \Delta_K^{(i)}(t)/\Delta_K^{(i+1)}(t)$ . Then the number of all quandle homomorphisms of the knot quandle  $Q(K)$  to the Alexander quandle  $\Lambda_p/J$  is equal to the cardinality of the module  $\Lambda_p/J \oplus \bigoplus_{i=0}^{n-2} \{\mathbb{Z}_p[t, t^{-1}]/(e_i(t), J)\}$ .*

### Remark

*As a corollary, he showed that for an Alexander quandle  $\Lambda_p/J$  and for a knot diagram  $K$ , there are only trivial colorings of a diagram of  $L$  by the quandle  $\Lambda_p/J$  if and only if the ideal generated by  $J$  and  $\Delta_K(t)$  is equal to  $\Lambda_p$ , where  $p$  is a prime number.*

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## Linear Algebra with coefficient ring $\Lambda$ and $\Lambda/(f(t))$

We need to check the properties of matrices whose entries are in  $\Lambda$  or  $\Lambda/(f(t))$ , where  $f(t)$  is a fixed non-zero polynomial in  $\Lambda$ . Consider

$$\begin{pmatrix} a_{11}(t) & \cdots & a_{1n}(t) \\ \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ a_{m1}(t) & \cdots & a_{mn}(t) \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}. \quad (*)$$

If the coefficients are in a field, then the solution of the system (\*) of linear equations does not change by the following elementary row operations, and every matrix can be changed to a row-echelon form by using elementary row operations.

- $\mathcal{R}_1$  Row switching (a row within the matrix is switched with another row),
- $\mathcal{R}_2$  Row multiplication (each element in a row is multiplied by a non-zero constant) and
- $\mathcal{R}_3$  Row addition (a row is replaced by the sum of that row and a multiple of another row).

For the matrices with coefficients in  $\Lambda$  or  $\Lambda/(f(t))$ , we modify the operation  $\mathcal{R}_2$  as

$\mathcal{R}'_2$  Row multiplication for  $\Lambda$ (each element in a row is multiplied by a non-zero polynomial  $\alpha(t)$ )

$\mathcal{R}'_2$  Row multiplication for  $\Lambda/(f(t))$ (each element in a row is multiplied by a non-zero polynomial  $\alpha(t)$  with  $(\alpha(t), f(t)) = 1$ )

Elementary row operations  $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}'_2$  and  $\mathcal{R}_3$  do not change the solution of the system (\*), and every matrix with coefficients in  $\Lambda$  or  $\Lambda/(f(t))$  can be changed by a row-echelon form by using elementary row operations  $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}'_2$  and  $\mathcal{R}_3$ .

We will use the terminology “rank” for the matrices with coefficients in  $\Lambda$  or  $\Lambda/(f(t))$ , too.

Consider the system  $(*)'$  of linear equations:

$$Ax = \begin{pmatrix} a_1(t) & * & * & \cdots & * & \cdots & * \\ 0 & 0 & a_2(t) & \cdots & * & \cdots & * \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & a_k(t) & \cdots & * \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x_1 \\ \vdots \\ x_n \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}. \quad (*')$$

## Proposition

- (1) *If  $\text{rank}(A) < n$ ,  $(*)'$  has infinitely many solutions.*
- (2) *If  $\text{rank}(A) = n$  and if the coefficient ring is  $\Lambda$ ,  $(*)'$  has the only trivial solution.*
- (3) *If  $\text{rank}(A) = n$  and if the coefficient ring is  $\Lambda/(f(t))$ , then*
  - (i) *if  $a_i(t)$  and  $f(t)$  are relatively prime for all  $i$ , then  $(*)'$  has the only trivial solution;*
  - (ii) *if there exist  $i$  such that  $a_i(t)$  and  $f(t)$  are not relatively prime, then  $(*)'$  has infinitely solutions.*

## Proposition

For  $A = (a_{ij})$  an  $n \times n$ -matrix with coefficients in  $\Lambda$ , if  $a_{11} \neq 0$ , then define

$$b_{ij}(t) = \det \begin{pmatrix} a_{11}(t) & a_{1j}(t) \\ a_{j1}(t) & a_{ij}(t) \end{pmatrix}$$

for  $i, j$  with  $2 \leq i \leq m$  and  $2 \leq j \leq n$ .

Let  $B = (b_{ij})_{(n-1) \times (n-1)}$ . Then

$$\det(B) = a_{11}^{n-2} \det(A).$$

## Colorability by Alexander quandles

- ▶  $Q$  an Alexander quandle
- ▶  $\phi : B_n \rightarrow GL(n, \Lambda)$  the Burau representation for the braid group  $B_n$ , which is defined by

$$\phi(\sigma_i) = \begin{pmatrix} I_{n-1} & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & t & 1-t & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & I_{n-i-2} \end{pmatrix}, i = 1, \dots, n-1.$$

- ▶ For a braid  $w \in B_n$ , suppose that the diagram of  $w$ , presented by the standard generators, is colored by  $Q$ .
- ▶  $(c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n)$  in  $Q^n$  the vector obtained by colors assigned to the top arcs of  $w$  in the given order, the *coloring of the braid*  $w \in B_n$ .
- ▶  $(d_1, d_2, \dots, d_n)$  in  $Q^n$  the vector obtained by colors assigned to the top arcs of  $w$  in the given order
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- ▶ For  $A \in M(n, \Lambda)$  an  $n \times n$ -matrix, put 
$$E(A) = \{(c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n) \in Q^n \mid A(c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n)^T = (c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n)^T\}.$$
- ▶ For any  $w \in B_n$ ,  $E(\phi(w)) \neq \emptyset$  because  $\phi(w)(c, c, \dots, c) = (c, c, \dots, c)$  for all  $c \in Q$ .
- ▶ Since  $\phi(w) \in GL(n, \Lambda) \subset M(n, \Lambda)$  and  $Q$  a  $\Lambda$ -module,  $\phi(w)$  can be seen as a module homomorphism  $\phi(w) : Q^n \rightarrow Q^n$  defined by the matrix multiplication  $\phi(w)(x) = \phi(w)x$  for all  $x \in Q^n$ . Since  $E(\phi(w))$  is the kernel of  $(\phi(w) - id)$ , it is a submodule of  $Q^n$ .

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- ▶ Since  $\phi(w) \in GL(n, \Lambda) \subset M(n, \Lambda)$  and  $Q$  a  $\Lambda$ -module,  $\phi(w)$  can be seen as a module homomorphism  $\phi(w) : Q^n \rightarrow Q^n$  defined by the matrix multiplication  $\phi(w)(x) = \phi(w)x$  for all  $x \in Q^n$ . Since  $E(\phi(w))$  is the kernel of  $(\phi(w) - id)$ , it is a submodule of  $Q^n$ .

- ▶ The coloring  $(c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n)$  of  $w$  induces a coloring of the closure  $\bar{w}$  if and only if  $(c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n) = (d_1, d_2, \dots, d_n)$ .
- ▶ For  $A \in M(n, \Lambda)$  an  $n \times n$ -matrix, put  $E(A) = \{(c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n) \in Q^n \mid A(c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n)^T = (c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n)^T\}$ .
- ▶ For any  $w \in B_n$ ,  $E(\phi(w)) \neq \emptyset$  because  $\phi(w)(c, c, \dots, c) = (c, c, \dots, c)$  for all  $c \in Q$ .
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- ▶ Let  $D$  be a diagram of a link  $L$  and  $Q$  an Alexander quandle.
- ▶ Let  $\mathcal{VC}_D(Q)$  be the set of all colorings on a link diagram  $D$  by  $Q$ .
- ▶ Define the addition of colorings and scalar multiplication by adding the quandle elements assigned on each arc of  $D$  by  $\mathcal{C}_1$  and  $\mathcal{C}_2$  and by multiplying  $\alpha(t)$  to the quandle elements assigned on each arc of  $D$  by  $\mathcal{C}_1$  where  $\mathcal{C}_1$  and  $\mathcal{C}_2$  are two colorings on a diagram  $D$  and  $\alpha(t)$  is in  $\Lambda$ .
- ▶  $\mathcal{VC}_D(Q)$  is a  $\Lambda$ -module under the addition and the scalar multiplication, and is isomorphic to the submodule  $E(\phi(w))$  of  $\phi(w)$  of  $Q^n$ , where  $D$  is the diagram of the closure  $\bar{w}$  given by the braid diagram.
- ▶ A. Inoue mentioned about the sum of colorings and scalar multiplication to colorings by the Alexander quandle  $\Lambda_p/J$ .



## Lemma

Let  $\phi : B_n \rightarrow GL(n, \Lambda)$  be the Burau representation and  $Q$  any non-trivial Alexander quandle. If the closure of a braid  $w \in B_n$  admits only the trivial coloring by  $Q$ , then  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = n - 1$ . In particular, if  $Q$  is torsion-free and finitely generated as a  $\Lambda$ -module, the converse holds.

It is known that, for a braid word  $w \in B_n$ ,

$$\phi(w) = C \begin{bmatrix} \tilde{\phi}(w) & * \\ 0 & 1 \end{bmatrix} C^{-1} \text{ for some } C \in GL(n, \Lambda), \text{ and}$$

$$\det(\tilde{\phi}(w) - id) = (1 + t + \cdots + t^{n-1})\Delta_L(t),$$

where  $L$  is the closure of  $w$  and  $\Delta_L(t)$  is the reduced Alexander polynomial of the link  $L$ .

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## Theorem

*If the reduced Alexander polynomial  $\Delta_L(t)$  of a link  $L$  is zero, then  $L$  admits a non-trivial coloring by any non-trivial Alexander quandle  $Q$ .*

## Proof.

Suppose that  $L$  is the closure of  $w \in B_n$ . Since

$$\phi(w) - id = C \begin{bmatrix} \tilde{\phi}(w) - id & * \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} C^{-1} \text{ and}$$

$\det(\tilde{\phi}(w) - id) = (1 + t + \cdots + t^{n-1})\Delta_L(t)$ ,  $\Delta_L(t) = 0$  if and only if  $\det(\tilde{\phi}(w) - id) = 0$  if and only if

$\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = \text{rank}(\tilde{\phi}(w) - id) \leq n - 2$ . By Lemma 4,  $L$  admits a non-trivial coloring by any Alexander quandle  $Q$ .  $\square$

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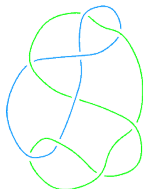
$$\phi(w) - id = C \begin{bmatrix} \tilde{\phi}(w) - id & * \\ 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix} C^{-1} \text{ and}$$

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$\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = \text{rank}(\tilde{\phi}(w) - id) \leq n - 2$ . By Lemma 4,  $L$  admits a non-trivial coloring by any Alexander quandle  $Q$ . □

## Example

$L9n27$  is the closure of  $w = \sigma_3^{-1}\sigma_2^{-1}\sigma_1^2\sigma_2^{-1}\sigma_3\sigma_2\sigma_1^{-1}\sigma_2\sigma_1^{-1}\sigma_2 \in B_4$ , and its Alexander polynomial is vanishing.



By the matrix calculation, one can see that  $(\phi(w) - id)$  can be changed to the following by the elementary row operations  $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}'_2$  and  $\mathcal{R}_3$ .

$$\begin{bmatrix} -\frac{-1+4t-3t^2+t^3}{t} & -1+4t-3t^2+t^3 & -\frac{2-6t+7t^2-4t^3+t^4}{t} & -\frac{-1+t}{t} \\ 0 & 0 & \frac{(-1+t)^3}{t^2} & -\frac{(-1+t)^3}{t^2} \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Since  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = 2$ ,  $(\phi(w) - id)(x_1, x_2, x_3, x_4)^T = (0, 0, 0, 0)^T$  has non-constant solutions, e.g.,  $(t, 1, 0, 0)$  and  $(1 - 2t, -1, 1, 1)$ . For any Alexander quandle  $Q$  and  $q \in Q$ , by coloring the top strands of the braid  $w$  by  $(1 - 2t)q, -q, q$  and  $q$  in the given order, one can obtain a non-trivial coloring of  $L9n27$  by  $Q$  whenever  $(1 - 2t)q, -q, q$  are not all equal in  $Q$ .

It is well-known that if  $L$  is a split link, then  $\Delta_L(t) = 0$ , but the converse does not hold. There are 11 prime links with up to 11 crossings whose multi-variable Alexander polynomial is 0:  $L9n27$ ,  $L10n32$ ,  $L10n36$ ,  $L10n107$ ,  $L11n244$ ,  $L11n247$ ,  $L11n334$ ,  $L11n381$ ,  $L11n396$ ,  $L11n404$  and  $L11n406$  in Thistlethwaite Link Table. One can see that  $\dim E(\phi(w)) = 2$  for the above 11 links, where  $w$  is the braid presentation of the link given in Thistlethwaite Link Table.

Now, assume that the reduced Alexander polynomial  $\Delta_L(t)$  of  $L$  is non-vanishing. If  $\Delta_L(t) = 1$ ,  $L$  admits only the trivial coloring by the quandle  $\Lambda/(\Delta_L(t))$  because  $\Lambda/(\Delta_L(t)) = \{1\}$ .

## Theorem

*Let  $L$  be a link with non-trivial and non-vanishing reduced Alexander polynomial  $\Delta_L(t)$ . Then  $L$  admits a non-trivial coloring by the Alexander quandle  $\Lambda/(\Delta_L(t))$ .*

## Proof.

Let  $w \in B_n$  be a braid presentation of  $L$ . Observe that the sum of entries in each row of the matrix  $(\phi(w) - id)$  is zero. Since  $\Delta_L(t) \neq 0$ ,  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = n - 1$ , so that  $(\phi(w) - id)$  can be changed to the matrix of the following form.

$$\begin{bmatrix} a_{11}(t) & a_{12}(t) & a_{13}(t) & \cdots & a_{1(n-1)}(t) & a_{1n}(t) \\ 0 & a_{22}(t) & a_{23}(t) & \cdots & a_{2(n-1)}(t) & a_{2n}(t) \\ 0 & 0 & a_{33}(t) & \cdots & a_{3(n-1)}(t) & a_{3n}(t) \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & a_{(n-1)(n-1)}(t) & a_{(n-1)n}(t) \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

□

Since the sum of each row entries is zero, it is enough to solve the following system:

$$\begin{bmatrix} a_{11}(t) & a_{12}(t) & a_{13}(t) & \cdots & a_{1(n-1)}(t) \\ 0 & a_{22}(t) & a_{23}(t) & \cdots & a_{2(n-1)}(t) \\ 0 & 0 & a_{33}(t) & \cdots & a_{3(n-1)}(t) \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \ddots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \cdots & a_{(n-1)(n-1)}(t) \end{bmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} x_1(t) \\ \vdots \\ x_{n-1}(t) \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ \vdots \\ 0 \end{pmatrix}. \quad (1)$$

Since

$$\begin{aligned} & a_{11}(t)a_{22}(t) \cdots a_{(n-1)(n-1)}(t) \\ &= a_{11}(t)^{n-2} a_{22}(t)^{n-3} \cdots a_{(n-2)(n-2)}(t)^1 \det(\tilde{\phi}(w) - id). \end{aligned}$$

and since  $\det(\tilde{\phi}(w) - id) = \Delta_L(t)(1 + t + \cdots + t^{n-1})$ , there exists  $j$  such that  $a_{jj}(t)$  is not relatively prime with  $\Delta_L(t)$ . If  $a_{jj}(t)$  is a multiple of  $\Delta_L(t)$ , it is zero in  $\Lambda/(\Delta_L(t))$  so that the rank of the coefficient matrix is less than  $n - 1$  so that the system (1) has infinitely many solutions.

If all diagonal entries which are not relatively prime with  $\Delta_L(t)$  are not a multiple of  $\Delta_L(t)$ , then the rank of the coefficient matrix is  $n - 1$ . Hence, the system (1) has infinitely many solutions.



From the proof of the above theorem, one can see that

- (1) if  $f(t)$  is a factor of  $\Delta_L(t)$ , then  $L$  admits a non-trivial coloring by the Alexander quandle  $\Lambda/(f(t))$ .
- (2) in particular, if  $f(t)$  is irreducible, then only one diagonal entry will be zero in  $\Lambda/(f(t))$  so that  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = n - 2$  in  $\Lambda/(f(t))$ .
- (3) if  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = n - 2$  in  $\Lambda/(f(t))$  and if  $(x_1(t), \dots, x_n(t))$  is a non-trivial coloring of  $\bar{w}$  by  $\Lambda/(f(t))$ , all colorings of  $\bar{w}$  by  $\Lambda/(f(t))$  are linear combinations of  $(x_1(t), \dots, x_n(t))$  and  $(1, \dots, 1)$ .

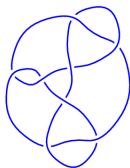
## Example

The knot  $8_{15}$  is the closure of  $w = \sigma_1^2 \sigma_2^{-1} \sigma_1 \sigma_3 \sigma_2^3 \sigma_3$  in  $B_4$  and its Alexander polynomial is

$$\Delta_{8_{15}}(t) = 3 - 8t + 11t^2 - 8t^3 + 3t^4 = (3t^2 - 5t + 3)(1 - t + t^2).$$

Notice that  $(\phi(w) - id)$  can be changed to the following matrix by elementary row operations  $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}'_2, \mathcal{R}_3$ .

$$\begin{bmatrix} -2 + 2t - t^2 & -(-2t^2 - 1 + 3t + t^3)(-1 + t) & 1 - t & 6t^2 + 2 - 5t - 3t^3 + t^4 \\ 0 & (-t + 1 + t^2)(t^2 - 3t + 3) & t - 1 - t^2 & -6t^2 + 5t - 2 + 4t^3 - t^4 \\ 0 & 0 & 3t^2 - 5t + 3 & 5t - 3t^2 - 3 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$



Note that every diagonal entries of the above matrix can not be zero in  $\Lambda/(\Delta_{8_{15}}(t))$  so that  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = n - 1$ . Since the second and the third diagonal entries are not relatively prime with  $\Delta_{8_{15}}(t)$ ,  $8_{15}$  admits infinitely many non-trivial colorings by  $\Lambda/(\Delta_{8_{15}}(t))$ . For example, the colorings  $(5t - 3t^2 - 3, (-1 + t)(3t^2 - 5t + 3), 0, 0)$  and  $(t(5t - 3t^2 - 3), 5t - 3t^2 - 3, 0, 0)$  of  $w$  give non-trivial colorings of  $8_{15}$ .

For the irreducible factor  $(1 - t + t^2)$  of  $\Delta_{8_{15}}(t)$ , only the second diagonal entry is zero in  $\Lambda/(1 - t + t^2)$  so that  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = n - 2$ . Note that  $(1, 1 - t, 0, 0)$  is a non-trivial coloring of  $8_{15}$  by  $\Lambda/(1 - t + t^2)$ , and that all colorings of  $8_{15}$  by  $\Lambda/(1 - t + t^2)$  are linear combinations of  $(1, 1 - t, 0, 0)$  and  $(1, 1, 1, 1)$ .

For the other irreducible factor  $(3t^2 - 5t + 3)$  of  $\Delta_{8_{15}}(t)$ , one can obtain the similar result.

## Example

(1) For the trefoil knot  $3_1 = \overline{\sigma_i^3}$ ,  $\Delta_{3_1}(t) = 1 - t + t^2$  is irreducible, and hence  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = 0$ . Hence one can choose any non-constant element, say  $(1, 0)$ , in  $(\Lambda/(\Delta_{3_1}(t)))^2$  as a non-trivial coloring of  $3_1$  (the first arc is colored by 1 and the second by 0). Since  $\{(1, 0), (1, 1)\}$  generates  $(\Lambda/(\Delta_{3_1}(t)))^2$ , every element of  $(\Lambda/(1 - t + t^2))^2$  can be a coloring of  $3_1$ .

(2) The knot  $8_{20}$  is the closure of  $w = \sigma_1^3 \sigma_2^{-1} \sigma_1^{-3} \sigma_2^{-1}$  in  $B_4$  and  $\Delta_{8_{20}}(t) = 1 - 2t + 3t^2 - 2t^3 + t^4 = (1 - t + t^2)^2$ . One can see that  $(\phi(w) - id)$  can be changed to the following row-echelon form by elementary row operations  $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}'_2, \mathcal{R}_3$ :

$$\begin{bmatrix} \frac{-t+1+t^2}{t^2} & \frac{(-1+t)^2}{t^3} & -\frac{1-t+t^3}{t^3} \\ 0 & -\frac{-t+1+t^2}{t^2} & \frac{-t+1+t^2}{t^2} \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{bmatrix}.$$

Note that  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = 2$  in  $\Lambda/(\Delta_{8_{20}}(t))$  so that  $8_{20}$  admits a non-trivial coloring by  $Q = \Lambda/(\Delta_L(t))$ , e.g.,  $(1 - t + t^2, 0, 0)$ . Note that, in  $\Lambda/(1 - t + t^2)$ ,  $\text{rank}(\phi(w) - id) = 1$  and that  $(1, 0, 0)$  is a non-trivial coloring of  $8_{20}$  by  $Q = \Lambda/(1 - t + t^2)$ , and hence every coloring of  $8_{20}$  by  $Q = \Lambda/(1 - t + t^2)$  is of the form  $\alpha(t)(1, 0, 0) + \beta(t)(1, 1, 1) = (\alpha(t) + \beta(t), \beta(t), \beta(t))$ .

**Non-Trivial Coloring Table.**

The table in the last page is a list of non-trivial colorings, in which we used the braid notations and Alexander polynomials in *KnotInfo: Table of Knot Invariants*.

Non-Trivial Coloring Table.

Name	non-trivial coloring by Alexander quandle $\Lambda/(\Delta_L(t))$
3 <sub>1</sub>	(1, 0)
4 <sub>1</sub>	(-1 + t, -1 + 2t, 0)
5 <sub>1</sub>	(1, 0)
5 <sub>2</sub>	(3t - 2, 4 - 2t, 0)
6 <sub>1</sub>	(2t - 1, -1 + t, 3t - 2, 0)
6 <sub>2</sub>	(t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, 2t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, 0)
6 <sub>3</sub>	(-t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, -2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, 0)
7 <sub>1</sub>	(1, 0)
7 <sub>2</sub>	(11t - 12, -5t + 3, 6t - 9, 0)
7 <sub>3</sub>	(t <sup>3</sup> - t <sup>2</sup> + 3t - 2, -2t <sup>3</sup> + 2t <sup>2</sup> - 2t + 4, 0)
7 <sub>4</sub>	(-53t + 76, 56t - 32, -96t + 128, 0)
7 <sub>5</sub>	(-t <sup>3</sup> + 2t <sup>2</sup> - 2t, 4t - 4t <sup>2</sup> - 4 + 2t <sup>3</sup> , 0)
7 <sub>6</sub>	(3t <sup>3</sup> - 6t <sup>2</sup> + 5t - 1, 4t <sup>3</sup> - 6t <sup>2</sup> + 5t - 1, -4t <sup>2</sup> - 1 + 4t + 2t <sup>3</sup> , 0)
7 <sub>7</sub>	(2t <sup>3</sup> - 7t <sup>2</sup> + 5t - 1, 2t <sup>3</sup> - 8t <sup>2</sup> + 5t - 1, -6t <sup>2</sup> + 2t <sup>3</sup> - 1 + 4t, 0)
8 <sub>1</sub>	(2t - 2, 3t - 2, -1 + t, 4t - 3, 0)
8 <sub>2</sub>	(t <sup>5</sup> - 2t <sup>4</sup> + 2t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, t <sup>5</sup> - 2t <sup>4</sup> + 2t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, 0)
8 <sub>3</sub>	(13t - 12, 21t - 12, 5t - 4, 29t - 20, 0)
8 <sub>4</sub>	(5t <sup>3</sup> - t <sup>2</sup> + 3t - 2, t <sup>3</sup> - t <sup>2</sup> + 3t - 2, 9t <sup>3</sup> - 9t <sup>2</sup> + 11t - 6, 0)
8 <sub>5</sub>	(t <sup>3</sup> - t <sup>2</sup> + t - 1, 2t <sup>3</sup> - t <sup>2</sup> + t - 1, 0)
8 <sub>6</sub>	(2t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, 3t <sup>3</sup> - 4t <sup>2</sup> + 4t - 2, 0)
8 <sub>7</sub>	(-t <sup>4</sup> + 2t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, -2t <sup>4</sup> + 2t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, 0)
8 <sub>8</sub>	(-2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, -t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, -3t <sup>2</sup> + 4t - 2, 0)
8 <sub>9</sub>	(t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, 2t <sup>3</sup> - 2t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, 0)
8 <sub>10</sub>	(-t <sup>4</sup> + 2t <sup>3</sup> - 3t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, -2t <sup>4</sup> + 3t <sup>3</sup> - 3t <sup>2</sup> + 2t - 1, 0)

8 <sub>11</sub>	$(3t^3 - 5t^2 + 5t - 2, 2t^3 - 5t^2 + 5t - 2, 4t^3 - 6t^2 + 5t - 2, 0)$
8 <sub>12</sub>	$(t^3 - 4t^2 + 3t, t^3 - 4t^2 + 2t, -4t^2 + 4t + t^3 - 1, 2t^3 - 8t^2 + 6t - 1, 0)$
8 <sub>13</sub>	$(-3t^3 + 3t^2 - 5t + 2, -3t^3 + 7t^2 - 5t + 2, -3t^3 - t^2 + 3t - 2, 0)$
8 <sub>14</sub>	$(3t^3 - 5t^2 + 5t - 2, 2t^3 - 5t^2 + 5t - 2, 4t^3 - 7t^2 + 6t - 2, 0)$
8 <sub>15</sub>	$(5t - 3t^2 - 3, (-1 + t)(3t^2 - 5t + 3), 0, 0), (t(5t - 3t^2 - 3), 5t - 3t^2 - 3, 0, 0)$
8 <sub>16</sub>	$(-2t^4 + 3t^3 - 4t^2 + 3t - 1, t^5 - 4t^4 + 5t^3 - 5t^2 + 3t - 1, 0)$
8 <sub>17</sub>	$(2t^3 - 3t^2 + 3t - 1, -t^4 + 4t^3 - 4t^2 + 3t - 1, 0)$
8 <sub>18</sub>	$(2t - 1, t^3 - 2t^2 + 3t - 1, 0)$
8 <sub>19</sub>	$(t, -t^2 + t + 1, 0)$
8 <sub>20</sub>	$(1 - t + t^2, 0, 0)$