

# On the ghost conjecture of Bergdall and Pollack, I

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# $p$ -adic slopes of modular forms

- Fix a prime  $p \geq 5$  and a positive integer  $N$  that is prime to  $p$ .
- Let  $v_p(\cdot)$  be the  $p$ -adic valuation of  $\mathbb{C}_p$  normalized by  $v_p(p) = 1$  and  $|\cdot|_p = p^{-v_p(\cdot)}$  be the corresponding  $p$ -adic norm.
- For every integer  $k \geq 2$ , let  $S_k(\Gamma_1(N), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)$  be the space of cuspforms of weight  $k$  and level  $\Gamma_1(N)$ . For a normalized Hecke eigenform  $f \in S_k(\Gamma_1(N), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)$  with  $q$ -expansion  $f = \sum_{n \geq 1} a_n q^n$ , its  $p$ -adic slope is defined to be the number  $v_p(a_p)$ .
- Motivations to study  $p$ -adic slopes of modular forms:
  - ① computational perspective: Gouvêa conjecture, Gouvêa-Mazur conjecture;
  - ② automorphic perspective: geometry of eigencurves (finiteness of irreducible components, spectral halo conjecture etc.);
  - ③ Galois perspective: study of the (crystalline) deformation of the local residual Galois representation  $\bar{\rho} : \text{Gal}(\bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p/\mathbb{Q}_p) \rightarrow \text{GL}_2(\bar{\mathbb{F}}_p)$ .

# Preliminaries I

- Let  $\Delta = \mathbb{F}_p^\times$  and  $\omega : \Delta \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_p^\times$  be the Teichmüller character. We identify  $\Delta$  with the torsion subgroup of  $\mathbb{Z}_p^\times$  via  $\omega$ . Fix a topological generator  $\gamma = \exp(p)$  of  $1 + p\mathbb{Z}_p$ .
- For every character  $\varepsilon : \Delta \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_p^\times$ , let  $\mathcal{W}_\varepsilon$  be the rigid analytic space parametrizing continuous  $p$ -adic valued characters  $\kappa : \mathbb{Z}_p^\times \rightarrow \mathbb{C}_p^\times$  such that  $\kappa|_\Delta = \varepsilon$ . For such a  $\kappa$ , we define its coordinate on  $\mathcal{W}_\varepsilon$  to be

$$w_\kappa := \kappa(\gamma) - 1.$$

- Every integer  $k \geq 2$  gives rise to a classical  $p$ -adic weight  $\kappa_k : z \mapsto z^{k-2}$  with coordinate  $w_k = \exp(p(k-2)) - 1$ .
- Set  $\Gamma = \Gamma_1(N) \cap \Gamma_0(p)$ . For every  $p$ -adic weight  $\kappa$ , let  $S_\kappa^\dagger(\Gamma)$  be the space of overconvergent cuspforms of weight  $\kappa$  and level  $\Gamma$ , equipped with a compact operator  $U_p$ . By a theorem of Coleman, we have

$$S_k(\Gamma, \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p) = S_k^\dagger(\Gamma)^{U_p\text{-slope} \leq k-1}$$

So it suffices to determine the ‘overconvergent slopes’, i.e. the  $p$ -adic valuations of  $U_p$ -eigenvalues in the space  $S_k^\dagger(\Gamma)$ , or equivalently, to determine the Newton polygon of the characteristic power series of the  $U_p$ -operator on  $S_k^\dagger(\Gamma)$ .

## Preliminaries II

- Let  $G_{\mathbb{Q}} = \text{Gal}(\bar{\mathbb{Q}}/\mathbb{Q})$  be the Galois group of  $\mathbb{Q}$ ,  $G_{\mathbb{Q}_p} = \text{Gal}(\bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p/\mathbb{Q}_p)$  be its  $p$ -decomposition group and  $I_{\mathbb{Q}_p} \subset G_{\mathbb{Q}_p}$  be the inertia subgroup. Let  $\omega_1 : G_{\mathbb{Q}} \rightarrow \mathbb{F}_p^\times$  be the mod  $p$  cyclotomic character.
- Fix a continuous irreducible residual Galois representation  $\bar{r} : G_{\mathbb{Q}} \rightarrow \text{GL}_2(\bar{\mathbb{F}}_p)$  that is modular of level  $N$ . Assume that the restriction  $\bar{r}|_{G_{\mathbb{Q}_p}}$  is reducible and satisfies a certain generic assumption.
- Let  $b$  be the unique integer in  $\{2, \dots, p\}$  such that  $\det(\bar{r})|_{I_{\mathbb{Q}_p}} = \omega_1^{b-1}$ . Set  $\varepsilon(b) = \omega^{b-2} : \Delta \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_p^\times$ .
- For every  $p$ -adic weight  $\kappa \in \mathcal{W}_{\varepsilon(b)}$ , let  $S_{\kappa}^{\dagger}(\bar{r})$  be the  $\bar{r}$ -isotypic component of the space  $S_{\kappa}^{\dagger}(\Gamma)$ . It is stable under the  $U_p$ -operator and let

$$C_{\bar{r}}(w_{\kappa}, t) = \det(1 - tU_p|_{S_{\kappa}^{\dagger}(\bar{r})})$$

be the characteristic power series of  $U_p$  on  $S_{\kappa}^{\dagger}(\bar{r})$ .

# Statement of the conjecture

- Bergdall and Pollack constructed a formal series  $G_{\bar{r}}(w, t) \in \mathbb{Z}_p[[w, t]]$  (called the ghost series), which only depends on the dimensions of certain subspaces of classical modular forms. This series will serve as a ‘model’ of the characteristic power series of the  $U_p$ -operator.

## Ghost conjecture of Bergdall-Pollack

For every  $p$ -adic weight  $\kappa \in \mathcal{W}_{\varepsilon(b)}$ , the Newton polygon of  $G_{\bar{r}}(w_{\kappa}, t)$  coincides with the Newton polygon of  $C_{\bar{r}}(w_{\kappa}, t)$ .

- The assumption that  $\bar{r}|_{G_{\mathbb{Q}_p}}$  is reducible is crucial. The conjecture is false without this assumption.
- We will formulate a local version of ghost conjecture and prove it under mild assumptions.

# Set up

- Let  $E/\mathbb{Q}_p$  be a finite extension with integer ring  $\mathcal{O}$ , a uniformizer  $\varpi$  and residue field  $\mathbb{F}$ .
- Define the following subgroups of  $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Q}_p)$ :

$$\mathbf{K}_p := \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Z}_p) \supset \mathrm{Iw}_p := \begin{pmatrix} \mathbb{Z}_p^\times & \mathbb{Z}_p \\ p\mathbb{Z}_p & \mathbb{Z}_p^\times \end{pmatrix} \supset \mathrm{Iw}_{p,1} := \begin{pmatrix} 1 + p\mathbb{Z}_p & \mathbb{Z}_p \\ p\mathbb{Z}_p & 1 + p\mathbb{Z}_p \end{pmatrix}.$$

- Fix a reducible nonsplit residual Galois representation  $\bar{\rho} : \mathrm{I}_{\mathbb{Q}_p} \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{F})$ :

$$\bar{\rho} \simeq \begin{pmatrix} \omega_1^{a+b+1} & * \neq 0 \\ 0 & \omega_1^b \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{for } 1 \leq a \leq p-4 \text{ and } 0 \leq b \leq p-2.$$

Let  $\sigma_{a,b} = \mathrm{Sym}^a \mathbb{F}^{\oplus 2} \otimes \det^b$  be the Serre weight of  $\bar{\rho}$ , considered as a right  $\mathbb{F}$ -representation of  $\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{F}_p)$  (the transpose of the usual left representation). Denote by  $\mathrm{Proj}_{a,b}$  the projective envelope of  $\sigma_{a,b}$  in the category of (right)  $\mathbb{F}[\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{F}_p)]$ -module.

# Augmented modules

- An  $\mathcal{O}[[K_p]]$ -projective augmented module  $\tilde{H}$  is a finitely generated *right* projective  $\mathcal{O}[[K_p]]$ -module equipped with a right  $\mathcal{O}[\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{Q}_p)]$ -module structure such that the two induced  $\mathcal{O}[K_p]$ -structures on  $\tilde{H}$  coincide. We say that  $\tilde{H}$  is of **type  $\bar{\rho}$  with multiplicity  $m(\tilde{H})$**  if
  - (Serre weight)  $\bar{H} := \tilde{H}/(\varpi, I_{1+pM_2(\mathbb{Z}_p)})$  is isomorphic to a direct sum of  $m(\tilde{H})$  copies of  $\mathrm{Proj}_{a,b}$  as a right  $\mathbb{F}[\mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{F}_p)]$ -module, where  $I_{1+pM_2(\mathbb{Z}_p)}$  is the augmentation ideal of  $\mathcal{O}[[1 + pM_2(\mathbb{Z}_p)]]$ .

We say  $\tilde{H}$  is **primitive** if  $m(\tilde{H}) = 1$ .

- $\tilde{H}$  naturally appears in the complete homology groups of certain Shimura varieties. Fix an absolutely irreducible residual Galois representation  $\bar{r} : G_{\mathbb{Q}} \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{F})$  such that  $\bar{r}|_{I_{\mathbb{Q}_p}} \cong \bar{\rho}$ . Fix a neat tame level  $K^p \subseteq \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{A}_f^p)$ . For an open compact subgroup  $K \subseteq \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{A}_f)$ , write  $Y(K)$  for the corresponding open modular curve over  $\mathbb{Q}$ . The  $\bar{r}$ -localized completed homology with tame level  $K^p$  defined by

$$\tilde{H}(K^p)_{\mathfrak{m}_{\bar{r}}} := \varprojlim_m H_1^{\mathrm{Betti}}(Y(K^p(1 + p^m M_2(\mathbb{Z}_p))))_{\mathbb{C}}, \mathcal{O}_{\mathfrak{m}_{\bar{r}}}^{\mathrm{cplx}=1}.$$

is an  $\mathcal{O}[[K_p]]$ -projective augmented module.

# Abstract classical forms I

- We will define various spaces of automorphic forms in our abstract setting that are analogues of notions in modular forms.

modular forms	abstract automorphic forms
$S_k(\Gamma_1(N), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$	$S_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1)$
$S_k(\Gamma_1(N) \cap \Gamma_0(p), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$	$S_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi)$
$S_k^\dagger(\Gamma_1(N) \cap \Gamma_0(p), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$	$S_k^\dagger(\psi)$
family of overconvergent modular forms	$S^{\dagger, (\varepsilon)}$
family of $p$ -adic modular forms	$S_{p\text{-adic}}^{(\varepsilon)}$

- Fix a character  $\varepsilon = \varepsilon_1 \times \varepsilon_2 = \omega^{-s+b} \times \omega^{a+s+b} : \Delta^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_p^\times$  for some  $s \in \{0, \dots, p-2\}$ .
- For  $\alpha \in \mathbb{Z}_p$ , let  $\bar{\alpha}$  be its mod  $p$  reduction. We view  $\varepsilon$  as a character of  $\text{Iw}_p$  via the formula

$$\varepsilon \left( \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \beta \\ \gamma & \delta \end{pmatrix} \right) = \varepsilon(\bar{\alpha}, \bar{\delta}), \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \beta \\ \gamma & \delta \end{pmatrix} \in \text{Iw}_p.$$



# Abstract classical forms II

- For every integer  $k \geq 2$ , let  $\mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2}$  denote the space of polynomials in  $\mathcal{O}$  of degree  $\leq k-2$ . It carries an action of the monoid  $\mathbf{M}_2(\mathbb{Z}_p)^{\det \neq 0}$ :

$$h \left| \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \beta \\ \gamma & \delta \end{pmatrix} \right. (z) = (\gamma z + \delta)^{k-2} h \left( \frac{\alpha z + \beta}{\gamma z + \delta} \right), \text{ for } \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \beta \\ \gamma & \delta \end{pmatrix} \in \mathbf{M}_2(\mathbb{Z}_p).$$

- We define the space of **abstract classical forms of weight  $k$  and character  $\psi = \varepsilon \cdot (1 \times \omega^{2-k})$**  to be the space

$$\mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi) := \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[\text{Iw}_p]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \psi).$$

- Fix a decomposition of the double coset  $\text{Iw}_p \begin{pmatrix} p^{-1} & 0 \\ 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix} \text{Iw}_p = \coprod_{j=0}^{p-1} v_j \text{Iw}_p$  with  $v_j = \begin{pmatrix} p^{-1} & 0 \\ j & 1 \end{pmatrix}$ . Define the  $U_p$ -operator on the spaces  $\mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi)$  by the formula

$$U_p(\varphi)(x) = \sum_{j=0}^{p-1} \varphi(xv_j)|_{v_j^{-1}} \quad \text{for all } x \in \tilde{\mathbf{H}} \text{ and } \varphi \in \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi).$$

# Abstract classical forms III

- For  $k \geq 2$  satisfying  $k \equiv 2 + a + 2s \pmod{p-1}$ , the character  $\psi = \varepsilon \cdot (1 \times \omega^{2-k})$  is of the form  $\psi = \varepsilon_1 \times \varepsilon_1$  with  $\varepsilon_1 = \omega^{-s+b}$ . Define the space of **abstract classical forms with  $K_p$ -level of weight  $k$  and central character  $\varepsilon_1$**  to be

$$S_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1) := \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[K_p]}(\tilde{H}, \mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \varepsilon_1 \circ \det).$$

classical modular forms	abstract automorphic forms
$S_k(\Gamma_1(N), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$	$S_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1) = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[K_p]}(\tilde{H}, \mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \varepsilon_1 \circ \det)$
$S_k(\Gamma_1(N) \cap \Gamma_0(p), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$	$S_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi) = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[Iw_p]}(\tilde{H}, \mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \psi)$
$S_k^{\dagger}(\Gamma_1(N) \cap \Gamma_0(p), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$	?

# Abstract automorphic forms I

- Let  $\mathcal{C}^0(\mathbb{Z}_p; \mathcal{O}[[w]])$  denotes the space of continuous functions on  $\mathbb{Z}_p$  with values in  $\mathcal{O}[[w]]$ .
- We can define right actions of the monoid

$$\mathbf{M}_1 = \left\{ \begin{pmatrix} \alpha & \beta \\ \gamma & \delta \end{pmatrix} \in \mathbf{M}_2(\mathbb{Z}_p); p \mid \gamma, p \nmid \delta, \alpha\delta - \beta\gamma \neq 0 \right\}.$$

on  $\mathcal{C}^0(\mathbb{Z}_p; \mathcal{O}[[w]])$  and the Tate algebra  $\mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle\langle z \rangle$ . When endowed with such an action, these spaces will be denoted by  $\mathcal{C}^0(\mathbb{Z}_p; \mathcal{O}[[w]]^{(\varepsilon)})$  and  $\mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle^{(\varepsilon)}\langle z \rangle$ .

- We define the space of **abstract  $p$ -adic forms** and the space of **family of abstract overconvergent forms** to be

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{S}_{p\text{-adic}}^{(\varepsilon)} &:= \operatorname{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[[w_p]]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{C}^0(\mathbb{Z}_p; \mathcal{O}[[w]]^{(\varepsilon)})), \\ \mathbf{S}^{\dagger, (\varepsilon)} &:= \operatorname{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[[w_p]]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle^{(\varepsilon)}\langle z \rangle). \end{aligned}$$

We can define  $U_p$ -operator on these spaces by the same formula as on  $\mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi)$ .

- For any  $k \geq 2$ , we have an  $\mathbf{M}_1$ -equivariant inclusion

$$\mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \psi \hookrightarrow \mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle^{(\varepsilon)}\langle z \rangle \otimes_{\mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle, w \mapsto w_k} \mathcal{O}$$

and a similar inclusion for  $\mathcal{C}^0(\mathbb{Z}_p; \mathcal{O}[[w]]^{(\varepsilon)})$ .

# Abstract automorphic forms II

- For every integer  $k$ , we define the space of **abstract overconvergent forms of weight  $k$  and character  $\psi = \varepsilon \cdot (1 \times \omega^{2-k})$**  by evaluating  $S^{\dagger,(\varepsilon)}$  at  $w = w_k := \exp((k-2)p) - 1$ :

$$S_k^{\dagger}(\psi) := S^{\dagger,(\varepsilon)} \otimes_{\mathcal{O}_{\langle w/p \rangle, w \mapsto w_k}} \mathcal{O}.$$

- When  $k \geq 2$ , we have a  $U_p$ -equivariant inclusion  $S_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi) \hookrightarrow S_k^{\dagger}(\psi)$ .
- The characteristic power series of the  $U_p$ -action on  $S^{\dagger,(\varepsilon)}$  and  $S_{p\text{-adic}}^{(\varepsilon)}$  are well-defined and are equal; we denote it by

$$C^{(\varepsilon)}(w, t) = \sum_{n \geq 0} c_n^{(\varepsilon)}(w) t^n \in \mathcal{O}[[w, t]].$$

- For any integer  $k$ , the evaluation  $C^{(\varepsilon)}(w_k, t) \in \mathcal{O}[[t]]$  is the characteristic power series of  $U_p$ -operator on  $S_k^{\dagger}(\psi)$ .

# A digestion of notations

modular forms	abstract automorphic forms
$S_k(\Gamma_1(N), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$	$S_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1) = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[\mathbb{K}_p]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \varepsilon_1 \circ \det)$
$S_k(\Gamma_1(N) \cap \Gamma_0(p), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$	$S_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi) = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[\text{Iw}_p]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \psi)$
$S_k^\dagger(\Gamma_1(N) \cap \Gamma_0(p), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$	$S_k^\dagger(\psi) = S^{\dagger,(\varepsilon)} \otimes_{\mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle, w \mapsto w_k} \mathcal{O}$
family of overconvergent modular forms	$S^{\dagger,(\varepsilon)} = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[\text{Iw}_p]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle^{(\varepsilon)} \langle z \rangle)$
family of $p$ -adic modular forms	$S_{p\text{-adic}}^{(\varepsilon)} = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[\text{Iw}_p]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{C}^0(\mathbb{Z}_p; \mathcal{O}[[w]]^{(\varepsilon)}))$

# Local ghost series I

- From now on, we assume that  $\tilde{H}$  is primitive.
- For every integer  $k \geq 2$ , we set

$$d_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi) := \text{rank}_{\mathcal{O}} \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\psi).$$

For  $k \equiv 2 + a + 2s \pmod{p-1}$ , we set

$$d_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1) := \text{rank}_{\mathcal{O}} \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1) \quad \text{and} \quad d_k^{\text{new}}(\varepsilon_1) := d_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1) - 2d_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1)$$

We know that  $d_k^{\text{new}}(\varepsilon_1)$  is always an even integer.

- For  $k \equiv 2 + a + 2s \pmod{p-1}$ , we define a sequence  $(m_n^{(\varepsilon)}(k))_{n \geq 1}$  of integers as

$$\underbrace{0, \dots, 0}_{d_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1)}, 1, 2, 3, \dots, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}(\varepsilon_1) - 1, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}(\varepsilon_1), \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}(\varepsilon_1) - 1, \dots, 3, 2, 1, 0, 0, \dots,$$

## Local ghost series II

- Let  $\bar{\rho} = \begin{pmatrix} \omega_1^{a+b+1} & * \neq 0 \\ 0 & \omega_1^b \end{pmatrix} : \mathbf{I}_{\mathbb{Q}_p} \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{F})$  be a reducible, nonsplit, and generic residual representation with  $a \in \{1, \dots, p-4\}$  and  $b \in \{0, \dots, p-2\}$ . Let  $\tilde{\mathbf{H}}$  be a primitive  $\mathcal{O}[[K_p]]$ -projective augmented module of type  $\bar{\rho}$ .
- Fix a character  $\varepsilon = \omega^{-s+b} \times \omega^{a+s+b} : \Delta^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_p^\times$  as before. Define the *ghost series* of type  $\bar{\rho}$  to be the formal power series

$$G^{(\varepsilon)}(w, t) = G_{\bar{\rho}}^{(\varepsilon)}(w, t) = 1 + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} g_n^{(\varepsilon)}(w) t^n \in \mathbb{Z}_p[w][[t]] \subset \mathcal{O}[[w, t]],$$

where each coefficient  $g_n^{(\varepsilon)}(w)$  is a product

$$g_n^{(\varepsilon)}(w) = \prod_{\substack{k \geq 2 \\ k \equiv 2+a+2s \pmod{p-1}}} (w - w_k)^{m_n^{(\varepsilon)}(k)} \in \mathbb{Z}_p[w]$$

- We call  $w_k = \exp(p(k-2)) - 1$  a ghost zero of  $g_n^{(\varepsilon)}(w)$  and the integer  $m_n^{(\varepsilon)}(k)$  its ghost multiplicity.

# Local ghost conjecture

## Local ghost conjecture

Let  $\bar{\rho} = \begin{pmatrix} \omega_1^{a+b+1} & * \neq 0 \\ 0 & \omega_1^b \end{pmatrix} : \mathbb{I}_{\mathbb{Q}_p} \rightarrow \mathrm{GL}_2(\mathbb{F})$  be a reducible, nonsplit, and generic residual representation with  $a \in \{1, \dots, p-4\}$  and  $b \in \{0, \dots, p-2\}$ . Let  $\tilde{H}$  be a primitive  $\mathcal{O}[[\mathbb{K}_p]]$ -projective augmented module of type  $\bar{\rho}$ . Let  $C^{(\varepsilon)}(w, t)$  be the characteristic power series of  $U_p$ -operator and  $G^{(\varepsilon)}(w, t)$  be the ghost series for  $\tilde{H}$  defined before. Then for every  $w_\star \in \mathfrak{m}_{\mathbb{C}_p}$ , we have  $\mathrm{NP}(G^{(\varepsilon)}(w_\star, -)) = \mathrm{NP}(C^{(\varepsilon)}(w_\star, -))$ .

## Theorem (Liu-Truong-Xiao-Z.)

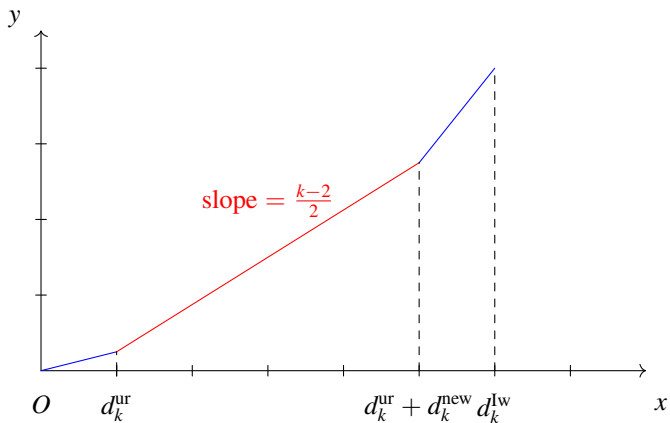
*The local ghost conjecture holds when  $p \geq 11$  and  $2 \leq a \leq p-5$ .*

From now on, we assume that  $b = 0$  and the matrix  $\begin{pmatrix} p & 0 \\ 0 & p \end{pmatrix}$  acts trivially on  $\tilde{H}$ . We will fix a character  $\varepsilon : \Delta^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}_p^\times$  and suppress it from notations.



# Intuition on ghost zeroes

- Let  $f \in S_k(\Gamma_0(Np), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)$  be a normalized Hecke eigenform. We have the following facts about the slopes of classical modular forms:
  - ① When  $f$  is new at  $p$ , we have  $a_p^2 = p^{k-2}$  and hence  $f$  has slope  $\frac{k-2}{2}$ ;
  - ② The other  $U_p$ -eigenvalues in  $S_k(\Gamma_0(Np), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)$  come in pairs: for a normalized eigenform  $g \in S_k(\Gamma_0(N), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)$  with  $T_p$ -eigenvalue  $a_p$ , it has two  $p$ -stabilizations  $f_\alpha(z) = f(z) - \beta f(pz)$ ,  $f_\beta(z) = f(z) - \alpha f(pz)$  in  $S_k(\Gamma_0(Np), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)$  with  $U_p$ -eigenvalues  $\alpha$  and  $\beta$ , where  $\alpha, \beta$  are the roots of  $X^2 - a_p X + p^{k-1}$ . So the slopes of these two  $p$ -old forms sum to  $k - 1$ . In particular,  $v_p(a_p)$  can usually be read off from  $v_p(\alpha)$  and  $v_p(\beta)$ .
- The slopes of  $p$ -oldforms behave very different from those of  $p$ -newforms. Let  $f \in S_k(\Gamma_0(N), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$  with  $\bar{r}|_{\mathbb{I}_{\mathbb{Q}_p}} \cong \bar{\rho}$  be an eigenform with  $T_p$ -eigenvalue  $a_p$ . Berger-Li-Zhu proved that  $v_p(a_p) \leq \lfloor \frac{k-2}{p-1} \rfloor$  (conjecturally this can be strengthened to  $\lfloor \frac{k-2}{p+1} \rfloor$ ).
- The Newton polygon of  $U_p$ -operator on  $S_k(\Gamma_0(Np), \bar{\mathbb{Q}}_p)_{\bar{r}}$  should have a line segment of length  $d_k^{\text{new}}$  and slope  $\frac{k-2}{2}$ . In particular, the point  $(i, v_p(c_i(w_k)))$  is not a vertex of  $\text{NP}(C(w_k, -))$ , for  $i = d_k^{\text{ur}} + 1, \dots, d_k^{\text{ur}} + d_k^{\text{new}} - 1$ . These integers  $i$ 's are exactly those integers with the property  $g_i(w_k) = 0$ .

Newton polygon of  $C(w_k, -)$

# Power basis of abstract automorphic forms

- $\tilde{\mathbf{H}}$  is free of rank 2 as an  $\mathcal{O}[[\mathbf{I}w_{p,1}]]$ -module. There exists a basis  $\{e_1, e_2\}$  of  $\tilde{\mathbf{H}}$  such that  $\begin{pmatrix} \Delta & 0 \\ 0 & \Delta \end{pmatrix} \subset \mathbf{I}w_p$  acts on them via the characters  $1 \times \omega^a$  and  $\omega^a \times 1$  and  $e_i \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ p & 0 \end{pmatrix} = e_{3-i}$  for  $i = 1, 2$ .
- For  $i = 1, 2$  and  $h(z) \in \mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle\langle z \rangle$ , we use  $e_i^* h(z)$  to denote the element in  $\mathbf{S}^{\dagger,(\varepsilon)} = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[[\mathbf{I}w_p]]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle\langle z \rangle)$  which sends  $e_i$  to  $h(z)$  and  $e_{3-i}$  to 0.
- We have a basis of the space  $\mathbf{S}^{\dagger,(\varepsilon)}$  as well as the space  $\mathbf{S}_k^{\dagger}(\psi)$  for every  $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ :

$$\mathbf{B} = \mathbf{B}^{(\varepsilon)} := \{e_1^* z^s, e_1^* z^{p-1+s}, \dots; e_2^* z^{\{a+s\}}, e_2^* z^{p-1+\{a+s\}}, \dots\}.$$

It is called the *power basis* of the above spaces. When  $k \geq 2$ , the subsequence  $\mathbf{B}_k$  consisting of terms whose power in  $z$  is less than or equal to  $k - 2$  forms a basis of  $\mathbf{S}_k^{\text{I}w}(\varepsilon \cdot (1 \times \omega^{2-k}))$ . We order the elements in  $\mathbf{B}$  with increasing degrees on  $z$ .

- The rank  $d_k^{\text{I}w}(\psi) := \text{rank}_{\mathcal{O}} \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{I}w}(\psi)$  can be computed from the above expression for all  $k \geq 2$ . For  $k \equiv 2 + a + 2s \pmod{p-1}$ , the rank  $d_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1) = \text{rank}_{\mathcal{O}} \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1)$  can be computed using representation theory of  $\text{GL}_2(\mathbb{F}_p)$ .

# Atkin-Lehner involution

- For  $k \equiv 2 + a + 2s \pmod{p-1}$ , write  $\tilde{\varepsilon}_1 = \varepsilon_1 \times \varepsilon_1 = \varepsilon \cdot (1 \times \omega^{2-k})$ . We have a well-defined Atkin-Lehner involution on the space of classical automorphic forms  $\mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1) = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[\text{Iw}_p]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \tilde{\varepsilon}_1)$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \text{AL}_{(k, \tilde{\varepsilon}_1)} : \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1) &\longrightarrow \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1) \\ \varphi &\longmapsto \left( \text{AL}_{(k, \tilde{\varepsilon}_1)}(\varphi) : x \mapsto \varphi \left( x \begin{pmatrix} 0 & p^{-1} \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix} \right) \Big|_{\begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ p & 0 \end{pmatrix}} \right). \end{aligned}$$

- Let  $\mathbf{B}_k = \{\mathbf{e}_1, \dots, \mathbf{e}_{d_k^{\text{Iw}}}\}$  be the power basis of  $\mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1)$ . The degree of an element  $\mathbf{e}_i$  is the exponent of  $z$  in  $\mathbf{e}_i$ .
- Let  $\mathbf{L}_k \in \mathbf{M}_{d_k^{\text{Iw}}}(\mathcal{O})$  be the matrix of the map  $\text{AL}_{(k, \tilde{\varepsilon}_1)}$  under the basis  $\mathbf{B}_k$ . Then

$$\mathbf{L}_k = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \cdots & 0 & p^{\deg \mathbf{e}_1} \\ 0 & \cdots & p^{\deg \mathbf{e}_2} & 0 \\ 0 & \cdots & 0 & 0 \\ p^{\deg \mathbf{e}_{d_k^{\text{Iw}}}} & \cdots & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

# $p$ -stabilization of abstract classical forms I

We define the following four maps

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1) = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[[\mathbf{K}_p]]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \tilde{\varepsilon}_1) \\
 \begin{array}{c}
 \swarrow \quad \searrow \\
 \downarrow \quad \downarrow \\
 \swarrow \quad \searrow
 \end{array}
 \end{array}
 \begin{array}{c}
 \text{proj}_2 \\
 \text{proj}_1
 \end{array}
 \begin{array}{c}
 \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1) = \text{Hom}_{\mathcal{O}[[\text{Iw}_p]]}(\tilde{\mathbf{H}}, \mathcal{O}[z]^{\leq k-2} \otimes \tilde{\varepsilon}_1)
 \end{array}$$

given by, for  $\phi \in \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1)$ ,  $\varphi \in \mathbf{S}_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1)$ , and  $x \in \tilde{\mathbf{H}}$ ,

$$\iota_1(\phi) = \phi, \quad \text{proj}_1(\varphi)(x) = \sum_{j=0, \dots, p-1, \star} \varphi(xu_j)|_{u_j^{-1}},$$

$$\iota_2(\phi)(x) = \text{AL}_{(k, \tilde{\varepsilon}_1)}(\iota_1(\phi))(x), \quad \text{proj}_2(\varphi)(x) = \text{proj}_1(\text{AL}_{(k, \tilde{\varepsilon}_1)}(\varphi))(x).$$

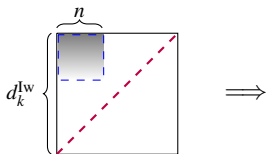
Here  $u_j = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 \\ j & 1 \end{pmatrix}$  for  $j = 0, \dots, p-1$  and  $u_\star = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$  form a set of coset representatives of  $\text{Iw}_p \backslash \mathbf{K}_p$ .

# $p$ -stabilization of abstract classical forms II

- For classical modular forms, we have the stabilization maps  $S_k(\Gamma_0(N)) \rightarrow S_k(\Gamma_0(Np))$ ,  $f(z) \mapsto f(z)$  and  $f(z) \mapsto f(pz)$ . The two embeddings  $\iota_1, \iota_2 : S_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1) \rightarrow S_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1)$  are their analogues in our abstract context.
- The KEY equality is:

$$U_p = \underbrace{\iota_2 \circ \text{proj}_1}_{\text{rank} \leq d_k^{\text{ur}}} - \underbrace{\text{AL}_{(k, \tilde{\varepsilon}_1)}}_{\text{antidiagonal}} : S_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1) \rightarrow S_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1).$$

The matrix  $U_k^{\text{Iw}}$  of the  $U_p$ -operator on  $S_k^{\text{Iw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1)$  with respect to the power basis  $\mathbf{B}_k$  is the sum of the anti-diagonal matrix  $-\text{L}_k$  and a matrix with rank  $\leq d_k^{\text{ur}}$ .



Rank of upper left  $n \times n$   
submatrix of  $U_k^{\text{Iw}}$  is  
 $\leq n - m_n(k)$

# $p$ -stabilization of abstract classical forms III

- Let  $U^\dagger \in M_\infty(\mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle)$  be the matrix of  $U_p$ -operator on  $S^\dagger$  with respect to the power basis  $\mathbf{B}$ . The upper left  $d_k^{Iw} \times d_k^{Iw}$  submatrix of  $U^\dagger|_{w=w_k}$  is  $U_k^{Iw}$ .
- The determinant of upper left  $n \times n$  submatrix of  $U^\dagger$  has zero of multiplicity  $m_n(k)$  at  $w = w_k$ .
- The matrix  $U^\dagger \in M_\infty(\mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle)$  has a (row) Hodge bound so that one should expect

$$c_n(w) \approx \det \left( \text{upper-left } n \times n \text{ minor of } U^\dagger \right).$$

- In summary it is natural to expect  $c_n(w) \approx g_n(w)$ .

# Properties of ghost series

- When studying the local conjecture, it is natural and necessary to consider the following equation:  
given  $w_\star \in \mathfrak{m}_{\mathbb{C}_p}$  and a positive integer  $n$ , how can we determine whether the point  $(n, v_p(g_n(w_\star)))$  is a vertex of the Newton polygon  $\text{NP}(G(w_\star, -))$ ?
- When  $k \equiv 2 + a + 2s \pmod{p-1}$  and  $m_n(k) \neq 0$ , it is clear that  $(n, v_p(g_n(w_k)))$  is not a vertex. The intuition is that when  $w_\star$  is sufficiently  $p$ -adically close to such a  $w_k$ , then  $(n, v_p(g_n(w_\star)))$  cannot be a vertex either.
- Fix  $k \equiv 2 + a + 2s \pmod{p-1}$ . Write  $g_{n, \hat{k}}(w) := g_n(w)/(w - w_k)^{m_n(k)}$ . Set

$$\Delta'_{k, \ell} = \Delta_{k, \ell}^{(\varepsilon)'} := v_p(g_{\frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}} + \ell, \hat{k}}(w_k)) - \frac{k-2}{2}\ell, \quad \text{for } \ell = -\frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}, \dots, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}.$$

Let  $\underline{\Delta}_k = \underline{\Delta}_k^{(\varepsilon)}$  denote the convex hull of the points  $(\ell, \Delta'_{k, \ell})$  for  $\ell = -\frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}, \dots, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}$ , and let  $(\ell, \Delta_{k, \ell})$  denote the corresponding points on  $\underline{\Delta}_k$ .

- We have the ghost duality equalities

$$\Delta'_{k, \ell} = \Delta'_{k, -\ell} \quad \text{and} \quad \Delta_{k, \ell} = \Delta_{k, -\ell} \quad \text{for all } \ell = -\frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}, \dots, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}.$$



## near Steinberg range I

- For  $k \equiv 2 + a + 2s \pmod{p-1}$  and  $w_\star \in \mathfrak{m}_{\mathbb{C}_p}$ , let  $L_{w_\star, k}$  denote the largest number (if it exists) in  $\{1, \dots, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}}\}$  such that

$$v_p(w_\star - w_k) \geq \Delta_{k, L_{w_\star, k}} - \Delta_{k, L_{w_\star, k}-1}.$$

When such  $L_{w_\star, k}$  exists, we call the interval

$$nS_{w_\star, k} := \left( \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{lw}} - L_{w_\star, k}, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{lw}} + L_{w_\star, k} \right)$$

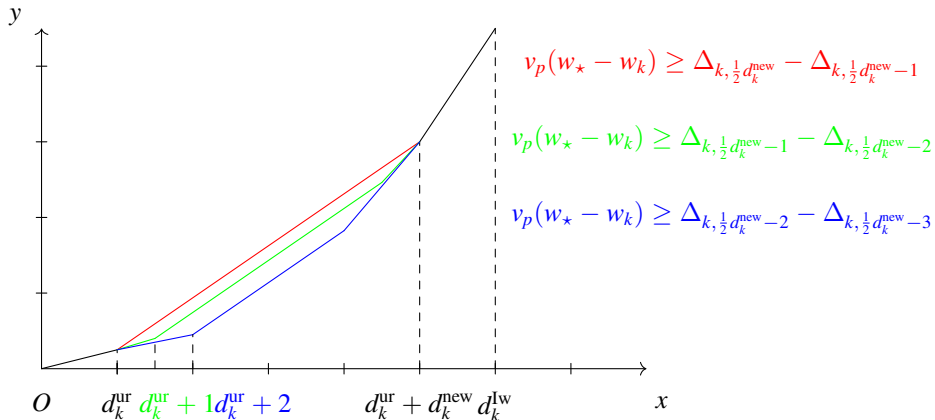
the near Steinberg range for  $(w_\star, k)$ .

- For a positive integer  $n$ , we say that  $(w_\star, n)$  is *near-Steinberg* if  $n$  belongs to the near-Steinberg range  $nS_{w_\star, k}$  for some  $k$ .

### Proposition

For every  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ , the point  $(n, v_p(g_n(w_\star)))$  is a vertex of  $\text{NP}(G(w_\star, -))$  if and only if  $(w_\star, n)$  is not near-Steinberg.

## near Steinberg range II



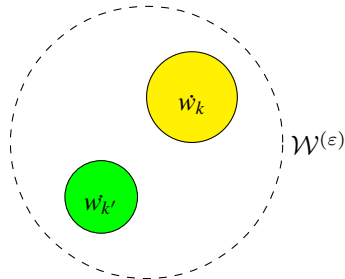
Newton polygon of  $G(w_*, -)$  when  $w_*$  leaves away from  $w_k$

## near Steinberg range III

For a fixed  $n \in \mathbb{N}$ , the set of elements  $w_\star \in \mathfrak{m}_{\mathbb{C}_p}$  for which  $(n, v_p(g_n(w_\star)))$  is a vertex of  $\text{NP}(G(w_\star, -))$  form a quasi-Stein open subset of the weight disk  $\mathcal{W}^{(\varepsilon)}$

$$\text{Vtx}_n^{(\varepsilon)} := \mathcal{W}^{(\varepsilon)} \setminus \bigcup_k \left\{ w_\star \in \mathfrak{m}_{\mathbb{C}_p} \mid v_p(w_\star - w_k) \geq \Delta_{k, |\frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{lw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1) - n| + 1} - \Delta_{k, |\frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{lw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1) - n|} \right\},$$

where the union is taken over all  $k = k_\varepsilon + (p-1)k_\bullet$  with  $k_\bullet \in \mathbb{Z}$  such that  $n \in (d_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1), d_k^{\text{lw}}(\tilde{\varepsilon}_1) - d_k^{\text{ur}}(\varepsilon_1))$ , i.e.  $w_k$  is a ghost zero of  $g_n(w)$ .



Shape of the space  $\text{Vtx}_n^{(\varepsilon)}$

# Lagrange interpolation I

- The key tool to compare the Newton polygon of the characteristic power series

$$C(w, t) = \sum_{n \geq 0} c_n(w) t^n \in \mathcal{O}[[w, t]]$$

and the ghost series

$$G(w, t) = \sum_{n \geq 0} g_n(w) t^n \in \mathbb{Z}[w][[t]]$$

is Lagrange interpolation formula.

- Fix a positive integer  $n$  and a positive integer  $k \equiv 2 + a + 2s \pmod{p-1}$  with  $m_n(k) > 0$ , let  $g_{n, \hat{k}}(w) = g_n(w) / (w - w_k)^{m_n(k)}$  as before. We consider the formal expansion in  $E[[w - w_k]]$ :

$$\frac{c_n(w)}{g_{n, \hat{k}}(w)} = \sum_{i \geq 0} A_{k, i}^{(n)} (w - w_k)^i,$$

and let  $A_k^{(n)}(w) = \sum_{i=0}^{m_n(k)-1} A_{k, i}^{(n)} (w - w_k)^i$  be its truncation up to the term  $(w - w_k)^{m_n(k)-1}$ .

# Lagrange interpolation II

## Lagrange interpolation formula

There exists  $h_n(w) \in E\langle w/p \rangle$ , such that we have an equality in  $E\langle w/p \rangle$ :

$$c_n(w) = \sum_{\substack{k \equiv 2+a+2s \pmod{p-1} \\ m_n(k) \neq 0}} (A_k^{(n)}(w) \cdot g_{n,\hat{k}}(w)) + h_n(w) \cdot g_n(w).$$

It is called the Lagrange interpolation of  $c_n(w)$  along  $g_n(w)$ .

The main technical result of our proof is the following:

### Proposition

*To prove the local ghost conjecture, it suffices to prove that for any positive integer  $n$  and every ghost zero  $w_k$  of  $g_n(w)$ , we have*

$$v_p(A_{k,i}^{(n)}) \geq \Delta_{k, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}} - i} - \Delta'_{k, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}} - m_n(k)} \quad \text{for } i = 0, 1, \dots, m_n(k) - 1.$$

# Lagrange interpolation III

$$c_n(w) = \sum_{\substack{k \equiv 2+a+2s \pmod{p-1} \\ m_n(k) \neq 0}} \underbrace{(A_k^{(n)}(w) \cdot g_{n,\hat{k}}(w))}_{\text{error term}} + \underbrace{h_n(w) \cdot g_n(w)}_{\text{main term}}.$$

- The estimate  $v_p(A_{k,i}^{(n)}) \geq \Delta_{k, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}} - i} - \Delta'_{k, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}} - m_n(k)}$  implies  $v_p(A_{k,i}^{(n)}) > 0$ . Since  $c_n(w) \in \mathcal{O}[[w]]$  and  $g_n(w) \in \mathcal{O}[w]$ , we have  $h_n(w) \in \mathcal{O}[[w]]$ . We can actually show  $h_n(w)$  is a unit in  $\mathcal{O}[[w]]$ . Hence  $v_p(h_n(w_\star)) = 1$  for all  $w_\star \in \mathfrak{m}_{\mathbb{C}_p}$ .
- Assuming the estimate in the proposition, we can prove the following facts for all  $w_\star \in \mathfrak{m}_{\mathbb{C}_p}$ , every positive integer  $n$  and every ghost zero  $w_k$  of  $g_n(w)$ :
  - 1 The point  $(n, v_p(A_k^{(n)}(w_\star)g_{n,\hat{k}}(w_\star)))$  lies on or above the Newton polygon  $\text{NP}(G(w_\star, -))$ ; and
  - 2 moreover if  $(n, v_p(g_n(w_\star)))$  is a vertex of  $\text{NP}(G(w_\star, -))$ , then  $v_p(A_k^{(n)}(w_\star)g_{n,\hat{k}}(w_\star)) > v_p(g_n(w_\star))$ .

The first statement implies that  $\text{NP}(C(w_\star, -))$  always lies on or above  $\text{NP}(G(w_\star, -))$ , while the second statement says that these two polygons meet at all vertices of  $\text{NP}(G(w_\star, -))$ . So the local ghost conjecture follows!

# Ingredients to prove the technical proposition

- Let  $\underline{\zeta} = \{\zeta_1, \dots, \zeta_n\}$  and  $\underline{\xi} = \{\xi_1, \dots, \xi_n\}$  be two sets of  $n$  positive integers. We apply the Lagrange interpolation to  $\det(\mathbf{U}^\dagger(\underline{\zeta} \times \underline{\xi}))$  along  $g_n(w)$  and we have

$$\det(\mathbf{U}^\dagger(\underline{\zeta} \times \underline{\xi})) = \sum_{\substack{k \equiv k_\varepsilon \pmod{p-1} \\ m_n(k) \neq 0}} (A_k^{(\underline{\zeta} \times \underline{\xi})}(w) \cdot g_{n, \hat{k}}(w)) + h_{\underline{\zeta} \times \underline{\xi}}(w) \cdot g_n(w).$$

We prove a similar estimate:

$$v_p(A_{k,i}^{(\underline{\zeta} \times \underline{\xi})}) \geq \Delta_{k, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}} - i} - \Delta'_{k, \frac{1}{2}d_k^{\text{new}} - m_n(k)} + \frac{1}{2}(\deg(\underline{\zeta}) - \deg(\underline{\xi})).$$

- A decomposition  $\mathbf{U}^\dagger = \mathbf{T}_k - \mathbf{L}_k$  which allows us to express  $\det(\mathbf{U}^\dagger(\underline{\zeta} \times \underline{\xi}))$  in term of determinants of smaller minors;
- A refined halo bound on the infinite matrix  $\mathbf{U}^\dagger \in \mathbf{M}_\infty(\mathcal{O}\langle w/p \rangle)$ .

Thank you!