

Topological Symmetry Groups and Local Knotting

Erica Flapan

August 18, 2010

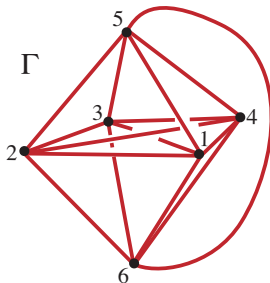
International Workshop on Spatial Graphs
Waseda University

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A rotation by 90° followed by a reflection induces the automorphism $(1234)(56)$.

Definition

An automorphism φ of an abstract graph γ is **realizable** if there is some embedding Γ of γ in S^3 such that a homeomorphism h of (S^3, Γ) induces φ on Γ .

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Theorem [F]

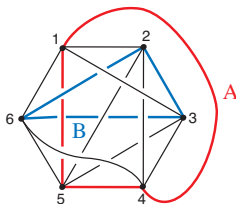
The automorphism (1234) of K_6 is not realizable.

To prove this, we use the following.

Definition

For an embedding Γ of K_6 in S^3 , let Ω be the mod 2 sum of the linking numbers of all triangle pairs in Γ :

$$\Omega(\Gamma) = \sum_{A, B \subseteq \Gamma} \text{lk}(A, B) \pmod{2}$$

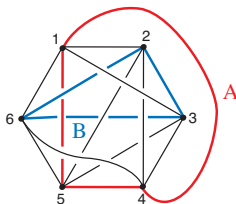


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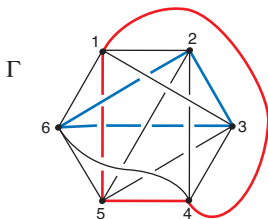
Theorem [Conway and Gordon]

For any embedding Γ of K_6 in S^3 , $\Omega(\Gamma) = 1$.

Proof that (1234) is not realizable

Suppose (1234) is induced by a homeomorphism h of some embedding Γ of K_6 in S^3 .

3 vertices in Γ define a pair of disjoint triangles and hence their linking number.

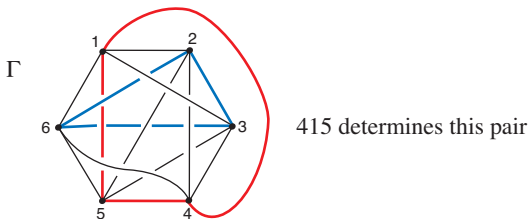


415 determines this pair

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The orbits of all 10 pairs of disjoint triangles in Γ under (1234) are:

$\langle 123, 234, 341, 412 \rangle$

$\langle 125, 235, 345, 415 \rangle$

$\langle 135, 245 \rangle$

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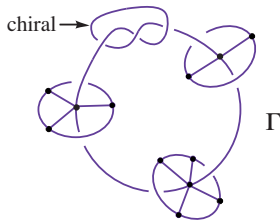
Definition

The **topological symmetry group** of a graph Γ embedded in S^3 $\text{TSG}(\Gamma)$ is the subgroup of the automorphism group, $\text{Aut}(\Gamma)$, induced by homeomorphisms of (S^3, Γ) .

By the above Theorem, for all $n \geq 6$, $\text{TSG}(K_n) \neq S_n$.

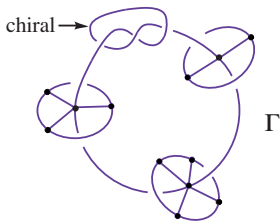
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$$\text{TSG}(\Gamma) = \mathbb{Z}_2 \times \mathbb{Z}_3 \times \mathbb{Z}_4$$

Any finite abelian group can be $\text{TSG}(\Gamma)$

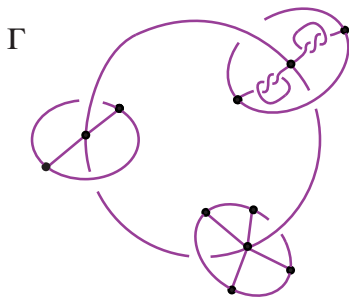
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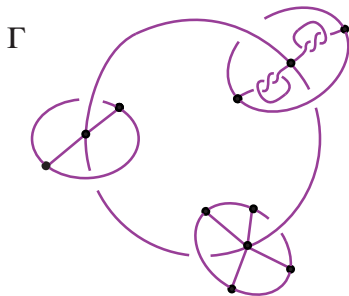
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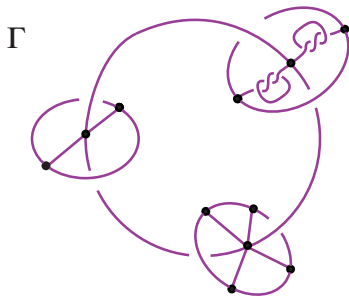


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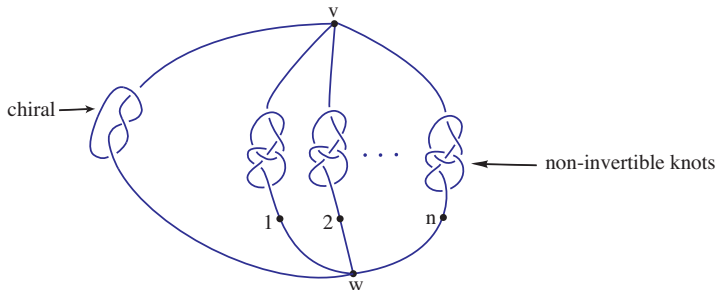
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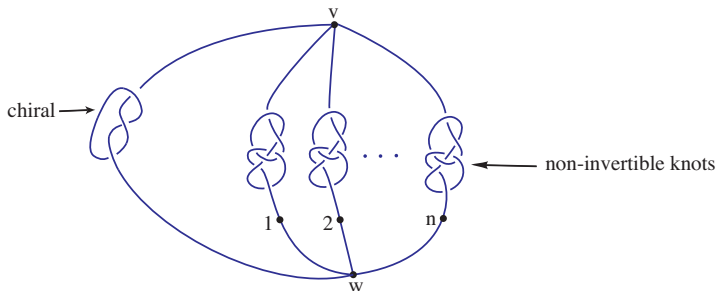
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Similarly, any finite abelian group can be $\text{TSG}(\Gamma)$.



Non-invertible knots $\implies v$ and w cannot be interchanged.

Chiral knot $\implies$ there is no orientation reversing homeomorphism.



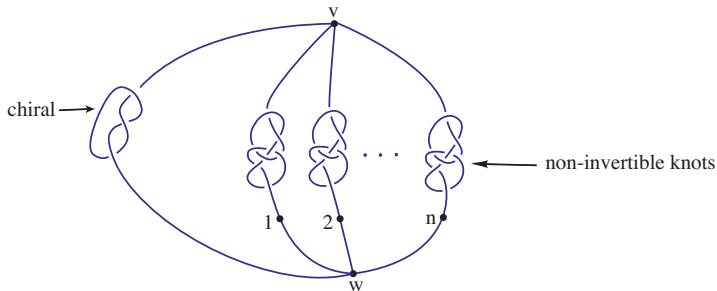
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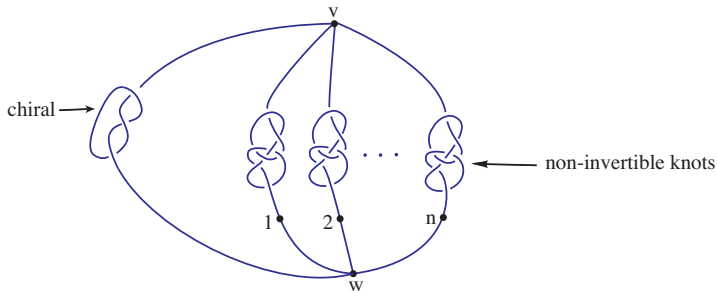
Any transposition (ij) is induced by twisting a pair of strands.

Thus $\text{TSG}(\Gamma) = S_n$.

Can we get the alternating group A_n as $\text{TSG}(\Gamma)$?



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Theorem [Flapan, Naimi, Pommersheim, Tamvakis]

$\text{TSG}(\Gamma)$ can be A_n iff $n \leq 5$.

Thus not every finite group can be $\text{TSG}(\Gamma)$.

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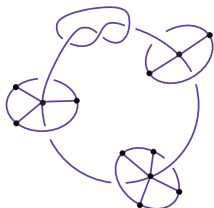
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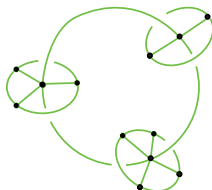
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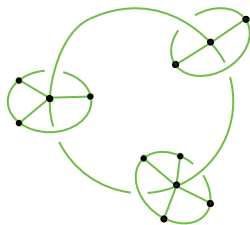


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$\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$ is not always induced by a finite subgroup of $\text{Diff}_+(S^3)$ (group of orientation preserving diffeomorphisms of S^3).

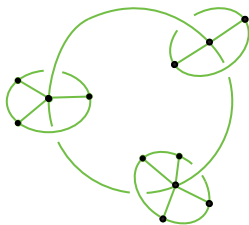
Example:



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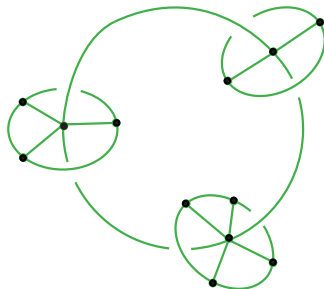
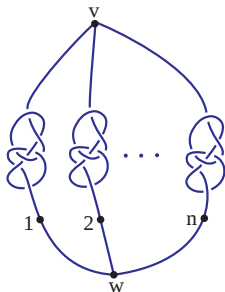


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Not all finite abelian groups are subgroups of $\text{Diff}_+(S^3)$. So $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$ need not even be isomorphic to a subgroup of $\text{Diff}_+(S^3)$.

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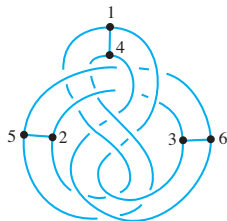
A graph γ is **3-connected** if at least 3 vertices together with their edges must be removed in order to disconnect γ or reduce it to a single vertex.



Neither of these graphs is 3-connected.

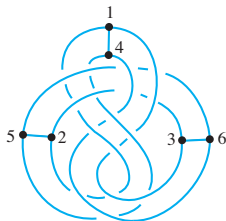
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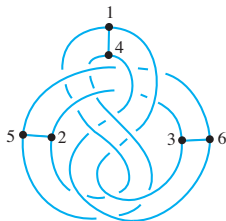


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(153426) is induced by slithering the graph along itself while interchanging the inner and outer knots.

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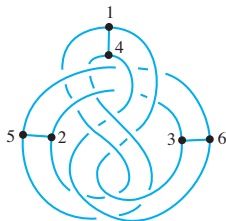
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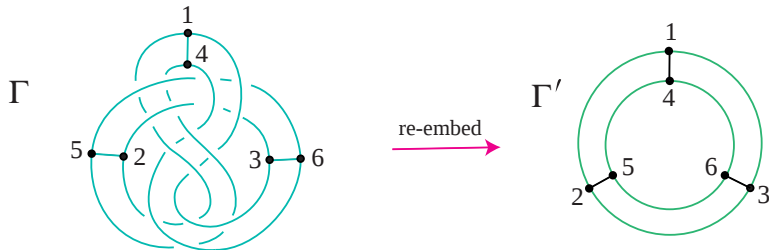
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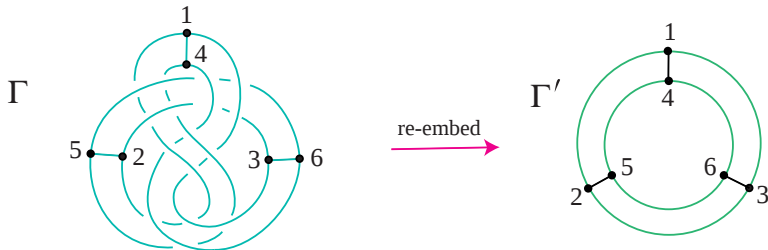
$\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma) = \langle (56)(23), (153426) \rangle = D_6$. But is not induced by a finite group of homeomorphisms.

A more symmetric embedding of Γ



Γ' is a more symmetric embedding of Γ .

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$(56)(23)$ is induced by turning Γ' over left to right.

(153426) is induced by a glide rotation of Γ' that interchanges the inner and outer circles while rotating counterclockwise.

$D_6 = \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma')$ is induced by an isomorphic finite subgroup of $\text{Diff}_+(S^3)$.

The theorem below shows that all 3-connected graphs have symmetric embeddings like the above example.

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Theorem [Flapan, Naimi, Pommersheim, Tamvakis]

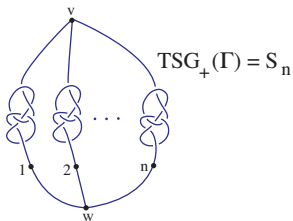
- Any 3-connected graph Γ embedded in S^3 can be re-embedded as Γ' so that $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma) \leq \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma')$ and $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma')$ is induced by an isomorphic finite subgroup of $\text{SO}(4)$.
- A finite group G is isomorphic to $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$ for some 3-connected embedded graph Γ iff G is isomorphic to a finite subgroup of $\text{SO}(4)$.

$\text{SO}(4)$ = the group of orientation preserving isometries of S^3 .

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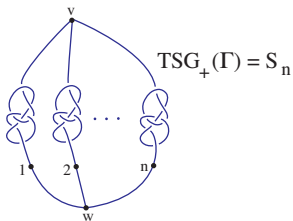
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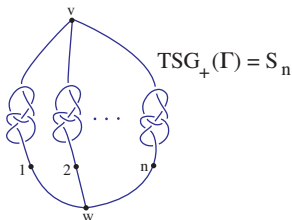


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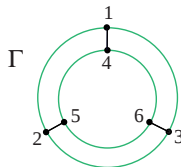


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Example:

$$\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma) = \langle (153426), (12)(45) \rangle = D_6$$



Is every subgroup $H \leq D_6$ realizable by some embedding Γ' ?
 To answer this we use local knotting.

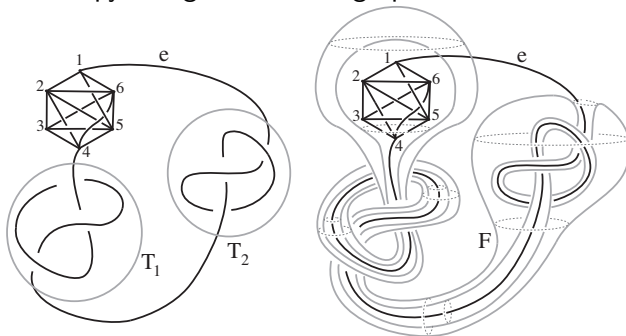
Schubert proved that every knot can be uniquely factored into prime knots.

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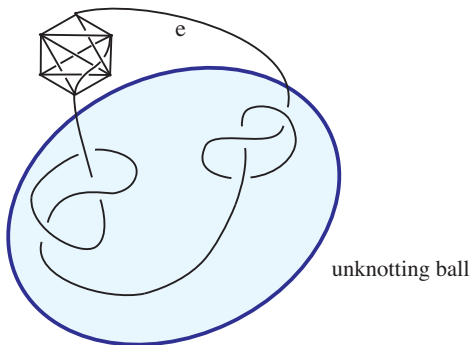
However, the splitting spheres are not necessarily unique up to an isotopy fixing the knot or graph.



F is not isotopic to
 T_1 or T_2

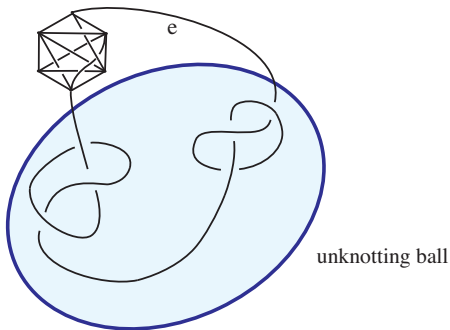
Definition

Let Γ be a 3-connected embedded graph. A ball meeting Γ in an arc containing all of the local knots of an edge e is an *unknotting ball* for e .



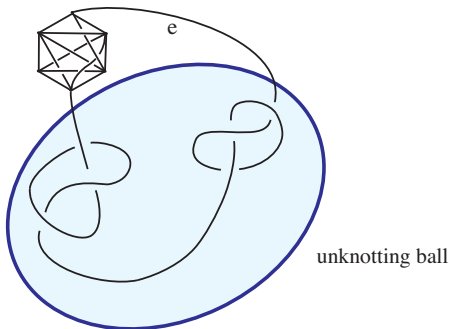
Uniqueness of Unknotting Balls [Flapan, Mellor, Naimi]

Let Γ be a 3-connected embedded graph. Then every locally knotted edge has an unknotting ball, and this ball is unique up to an isotopy of (S^3, Γ) fixing every vertex of Γ .



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Proof uses JSJ characteristic decomposition of $S^3 - N(\Gamma)$

We use Uniqueness of Unknotting Balls to prove

Knot Addition Lemma [Flapan, Mellor, Naimi]

Let e be an edge of a 3-connected embedded graph Γ and $H \leq \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$. Let K be a prime knot not in Γ which is invertible iff e is inverted by an element of H . Then K can be added to the edges in $\langle e \rangle_H$ to obtain Γ' such that $H \leq \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma') \leq \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$ and e is inverted by an element of $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma')$ iff e is inverted by an element of H .

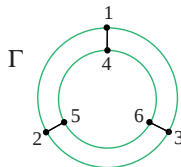
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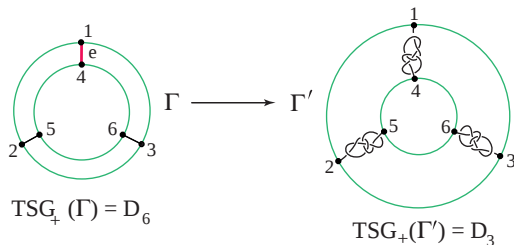


Let $e = \overline{14}$ and $H = \langle (123) \rangle = \mathbb{Z}_3$. Then $\langle e \rangle_H = \{\overline{14}, \overline{25}, \overline{36}\}$.

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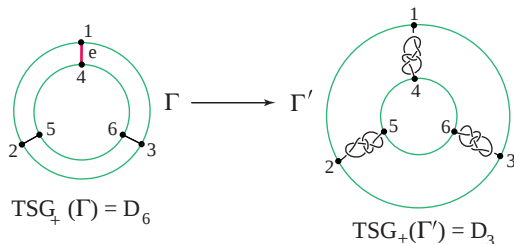
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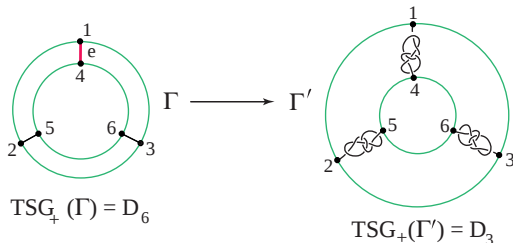


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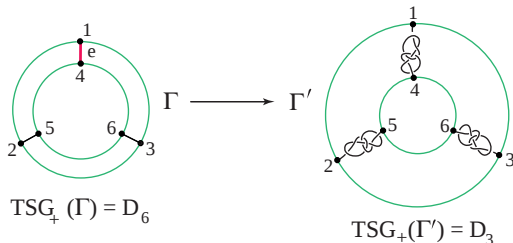
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By Uniqueness of Unknotting balls, we can assume g' leaves the set of unknotting balls for Γ' setwise invariant.

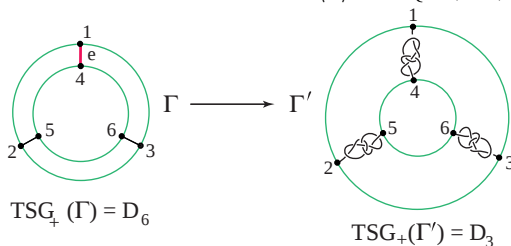
Then define $g : (S^3, \Gamma) \rightarrow (S^3, \Gamma)$ as g' outside of unknotting balls, and extend to Γ within these balls.

For a given $H \leq \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$, can we re-embed Γ as Γ' such that $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma') = H$?

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Example

$H = \langle (123) \rangle = \mathbb{Z}_3$ and $e = \overline{14}$. Then $\langle e \rangle_H = \{\overline{14}, \overline{25}, \overline{36}\}$.



By Knot Addition Lemma, we get

$$\mathbb{Z}_3 = H \leq \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma') = D_3 \leq \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma) = D_6$$

But we don't get $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma') = H$.

Subgroup Theorem [Flapan, Mellor, Naimi]

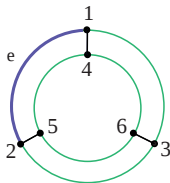
Let Γ be a 3-connected graph embedded in S^3 with an edge e that is not pointwise fixed by any non-trivial element of $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$. Then for every $H \leq \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$, there is an embedding Γ' of Γ with $H = \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma')$.

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Example:



$$\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma) = D_6$$

e is not pointwise fixed by any non-trivial element of $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$. Thus by Subgroup Theorem, for every $H \leq D_6$, there is some embedding Γ' of Γ with $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma') = H$.

We use the Subgroup Theorem to study topological symmetry groups of complete graphs.

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Complete Graph Theorem [Flapan, Naimi, Tamvakis (2006)]

A finite group H is isomorphic to $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$ for some embedding Γ of a complete graph in S^3 if and only if H is a finite cyclic group, a dihedral group, a subgroup of $D_m \times D_m$ for some odd m , or A_4 , S_4 , or A_5 .

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However, for a given n , this theorem does not tell us the groups that can occur as $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$ for some embedding Γ of K_n .

Subgroups of topological symmetry groups of K_n

We use the Subgroup Theorem to prove:

Theorem [Flapan, Mellor, Naimi]

Let $n > 6$ and let Γ be an embedding of K_n in S^3 such that $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$ is a finite cyclic group, a dihedral group, or a subgroup of $D_m \times D_m$ for some odd m . Then for every $H \leq \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$, there is an embedding Γ' of K_n such that $H = \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma')$.

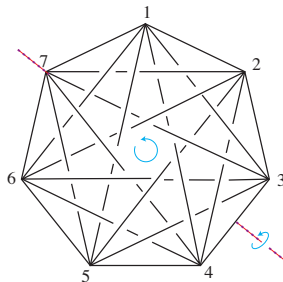
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$$\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma) = D_7$$

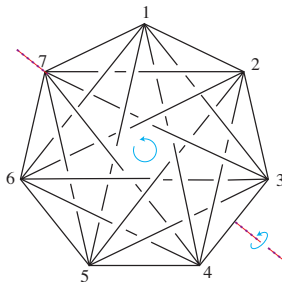
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Example



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By above theorem, there is an embedding Γ' with $\text{TSG}_+(\Gamma') = \mathbb{Z}_7$.

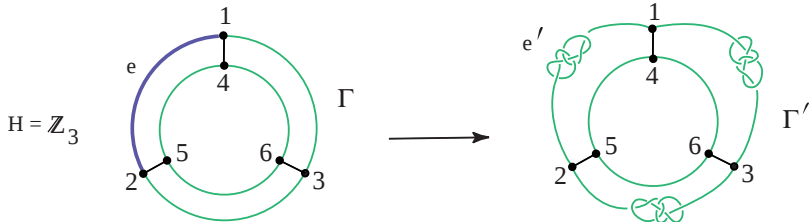
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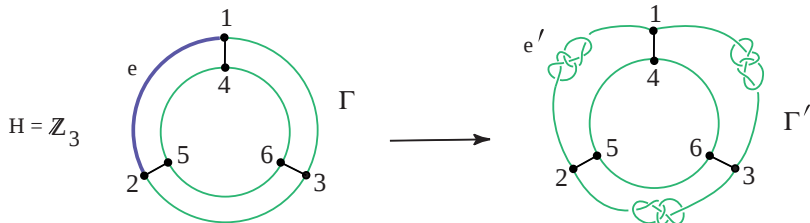
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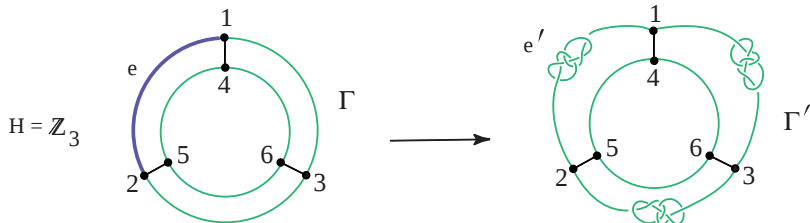


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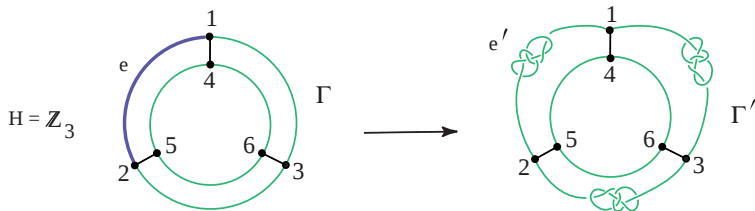
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Recall:

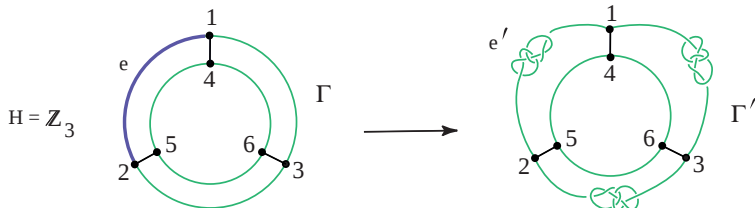
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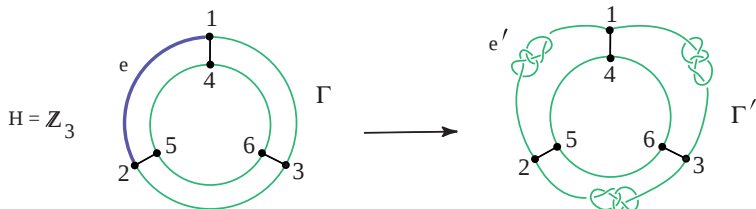


e' contains K . Hence $\varphi(e')$ contains K .

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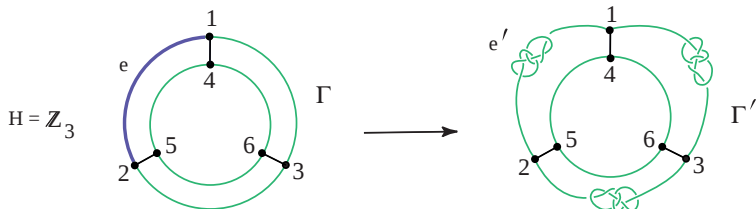
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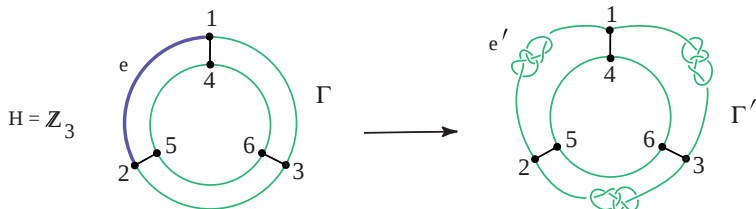
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If $h^{-1}\varphi$ doesn't invert e' , then $g = h^{-1}\varphi \in \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma)$ pointwise fixes e' .

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Thus either $\varphi = h \in H$ or $\varphi = f^{-1}h \in H$.

Hence $\varphi \in H$, and therefore $H = \text{TSG}_+(\Gamma')$. ■