

Recent progress on rationality

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ADVANCES IN ALGEBRA AND APPLICATIONS
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Goal: overview of a recent (2013-2022) progress on rationality questions, after

C. Voisin, J.-L. Colliot-Thélène, A. Pirutka, B. Totaro, A. Beauville, B. Hassett, A. Kresch, Y. Tschinkel, A. Chatzistamatiou, M. Levine, A. Auel, C. Böhning, H.-C. Graf von Bothmer, S. Schreieder, H. Ahmadienezhad, T. Okada, J. Nicaise, E. Shinder, M. Kontsevich, I. Krylov, J.-C. Ottem et al.

Plan

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- 1 Reminders on «rationality», classical examples.

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- 2 Recent progress, specialization method.

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- ① Reminders on «rationality», classical examples.
- ② Recent progress, specialization method.
- ③ Examples of computation of some birational invariants in the tradition of Belarusian school: Brauer group, conic and quadric bundles (V.I. Yanchevskiĭ, V.P. Platonov, S.V. Tikhonov, D.F. Bazyleu, and others).

Reminders on «rationality»

Objects/questions of interest

- X a (projective) algebraic variety over a field k ;
- For this talk: X_d a **hypersurface of degree d** :
 $f(x_0, \dots, x_n) = 0$, f homogeneous of degree d ;

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 $f(x_0, \dots, x_n) = 0$, f homogeneous of degree d ;;
- Question: find or parametrize all the «solutions».

I.I. Voronovich example:

Look at $x, y, z \in \mathbb{Z}$ integers with $x^2 + y^2 - z^2 = 0$
(a **Pythagorean triple**).

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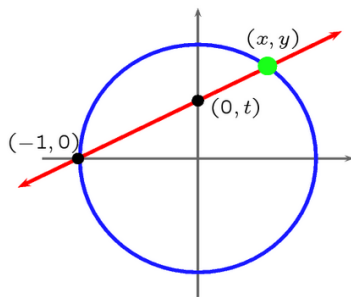
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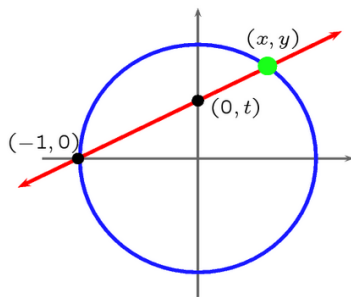


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\Leftrightarrow lines through $(-1, 0)$ and (x, y)
with rational slope t .

Conclusion: rational points on a circle

$$\{x^2 + y^2 = 1, x, y \in \mathbb{Q}\} \leftarrow \mathbb{Q} \stackrel{\text{def}}{=} \mathbb{A}_{\mathbb{Q}}^1$$

$$(x, y) = \left(\frac{1 - t^2}{1 + t^2}, \frac{2t}{1 + t^2} \right) \leftarrow t$$

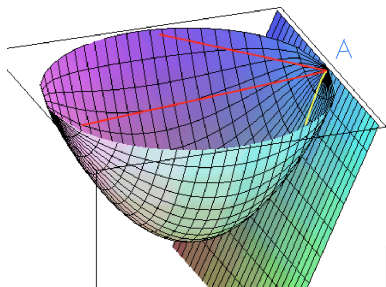
is a **rational** parametrization.

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Assume: there is a point $A \in Q$.



Rational parametrization:

nontangent lines through $A \rightarrow$ second intersection point with Q

Rational, unirational, and stably rational varieties

- X is **rational** if there is an almost everywhere defined isomorphism:

$$k^n = \mathbb{A}_k^n \xrightarrow{\sim} X,$$

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- X is **stably rational** if $X \times \mathbb{P}_k^n$ is rational, for some $n \geq 1$.

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- (Fano, 1908, 1915, 1947) There are unirational nonrational threefolds and fourfolds: **but all proofs had gaps!**

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 - (Clemens-Griffiths): cubics;
 - (Iskovskikh-Manin): quartics;
 - (Artin-Mumford): conic bundles;
- (Kollár, 1990th): a very general hypersurface X_d of dimension n is not rational if $d \geq 2\lceil \frac{n+3}{3} \rceil$.

Note: «very general» is outside of a countable union of proper closed conditions.

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 - compute some invariant $i(X_0)$;
 - $i(X_0) \neq 0 \Rightarrow X$ is irrational, in some cases, all previously computable $i(X)$ vanish.

Implementation of the specialization method

- **Key invariant:**

$CH_0(X)$, the Chow group of zero-cycles on X ;

- **Key property:** if X is rational, then $CH_0(X_L) = \mathbb{Z}$,
«*universally*» for any field L .

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- Assume that:
 - X_0 has mild singularities;
 - $i(X_0) \neq 0$ (examples later).
- Then:
 - $CH_0(X_t) \neq \mathbb{Z}$ (universally), for t very general;
 - hence X_t is not rational.

RECENT PROGRESS

Applications of the specialization method

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$d = 3$	Clemens-Griffiths	open	open
$d = 4$	Colliot-Thélène-Pirutka	Totaro	Nicaise-Ottem
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In general: a very general X_d is not (stably) rational if

- 1 (Totaro, 2016) $d \geq 2\lceil \frac{n+2}{3} \rceil$;
- 2 (Schreieder, 2019) $d \geq \log_2 n + 2$.

Global properties of rationality

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- (Kontsevich-Tschinkel, Nicaise-Shinder, 2017)
Rationality is a specialization invariant! (invariants of motivic nature)

COMPUTATION

Reminders on $H^i(K, \mathbb{Z}/2)$ and residues

- $H^1(K, \mathbb{Z}/2) \simeq K^*/K^{*2}$ (Kummer),
for $a \in K^*$, we will still denote by a its class in $H^1(K, \mathbb{Z}/2)$.
- $Br(K)[2] = H^2(K, \mathbb{Z}/2)$ (Kummer);
symbols: $(a, b) := a \cup b \in H^2(K, \mathbb{Z}/2)$, $a, b \in K^*$.

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symbols: $(a, b) := a \cup b \in H^2(K, \mathbb{Z}/2)$, $a, b \in K^*$.
- Similarly: $a_1 \cup \dots \cup a_i \in H^i(K, \mu_n^{\otimes i})$, where
 $a_1, \dots, a_i \in H^1(K, \mu_n) \simeq K^*/K^{*n}$.
- Any element is a sum of symbols (Bloch-Kato conjecture:
Merkurjev, Merkurjev-Suslin, Voevodsky).

Residues

- $v : K \rightarrow \mathbb{Z} \cup \infty$ a discrete valuation of rank 1:

Recall: $v(x) = \infty \Leftrightarrow x = 0$

$$v(xy) = v(x) + v(y)$$

$$v(x + y) \geq \min(v(x), v(y))$$

- A be the valuation ring: $A = \{x, v(x) \geq 0\}$,
- $\kappa(v)$ the residue field: $\kappa(v) = A/m$,
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- this gives $\partial_v^i : H^i(K, \mathbb{Z}/2) \rightarrow H^{i-1}(\kappa(v), \mathbb{Z}/2)$,
- $\partial_v^1(a) = v(a) \bmod 2 \in H^0(\kappa(v), \mathbb{Z}/2) \simeq \mathbb{Z}/2$,

$$\partial_v^2(a, b) = (-1)^{v(a)v(b)} \frac{\overline{a^{v(b)}}}{b^{v(a)}}$$

where $\frac{\overline{a^{v(b)}}}{b^{v(a)}}$ is the image of the unit $\frac{a^{v(b)}}{b^{v(a)}}$ in $\kappa(v)^*/\kappa(v)^{*2}$.

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- In particular, $\partial_v^2(a, b) = 0$ if a, b are units in A (i.e. $v(a) = v(b) = 0$).

Properties of residues: compatibility

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- Compatibility:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} H^i(L, \mathbb{Z}/2) & \xrightarrow{\partial_{v_B}^i} & H^{i-1}(\kappa(B), \mathbb{Z}/2) \\ \uparrow & & \uparrow e \\ H^i(K, \mathbb{Z}/2) & \xrightarrow{\partial_{v_A}^i} & H^{i-1}(\kappa(A), \mathbb{Z}/2) \end{array}$$

the vertical arrows are the restriction maps in Galois cohomology.

H_{nr}^i : definition

Definition

X/k an integral variety, then

$$H_{nr}^2(X) = H_{nr}^2(k(X)/k) = \bigcap_v \text{Ker} \partial_v^2$$

where the intersection is over all discrete valuations v on $k(X)$ (of rank one), trivial on the field k .

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Fact: if X is smooth and projective, $H_{nr}^2(X) \simeq Br(X)[2]$.

Similarly: $H_{nr}^i(k(X)/k) = \cap_v \text{Ker} \partial_v^i$.

$H_{nr}^i(k(X)/k) = \cap_v \text{Ker} \partial_v^i$: applications

- ① X/k is a **stably rational** ($X \times \mathbb{P}_k^n$ is rational for some n):
 $H^i(k) \simeq H_{nr}^i(k(X)/k)$, ex: $H_{nr}^i(k(X)/k) = 0$, if $k = \mathbb{C}$.

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- ② Failure of stable rationality (specialization method):
 $X \rightarrow B/\mathbb{C}$ projective, generically smooth, $0 \in B$. If
 - $H_{nr}^i(X_0) \neq 0$;
 - + properties of X_0 or $\alpha \in H_{nr}^2(X_0)$: mild singularities, or (easier) restrictions of α (Schreieder)

Then X_b is not stably rational for a very general $b \in B(\mathbb{C})$.

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③ H_{nr}^3 is related to properties of CH^2 (Colliot-Thélène, Voisin, Kahn).

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- Then $x \in H_{nr}^1(\mathbb{C}(X)/\mathbb{C})$:
 - $v(x) \neq 0 \Rightarrow v(x-1) = v(x+1) = 0$,
 - so $v(x) = v(y^2) = 2v(y)$.

H_{nr}^i for quadrics

- Recall: $H_{nr}^i(k(X)/k) = \cap_v \text{Ker} \partial_v^i$, v are trivial on k .
- We have $\tau_i : H^i(k, \mathbb{Z}/2) \rightarrow H_{nr}^i(k(X)/k) \subset H^i(k(X), \mathbb{Z}/2)$.
- τ_i is an isomorphism if X is rational.

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- τ_i is an isomorphism if X is rational.
- τ_2 is an isomorphism if X is a quadric surface with nonzero discriminant (Arason):
 - $Q \subset \mathbb{P}_k^{n-1}$ is a quadric $q = a_1x_1^2 + \dots + a_nx_n^2 = 0$, write $q \simeq \langle a_1, \dots, a_n \rangle$ is a nondegenerate quadratic form, $n = \dim q$.
 - cases of interest: $\dim q = 3$ (a conic) or $\dim q = 4$ (a quadric surface).
 - the **discriminant** of q is the class $\text{disc}(q) = (-1)^{n(n-1)/2} a_1 \dots a_n$ in $H^1(k, \mathbb{Z}/2) = k^*/k^{*2}$.

More formulas for $\tau_i : H^i(K, \mathbb{Z}/2) \rightarrow H_{nr}^i(K(Q)/K, \mathbb{Z}/2)$

- $\ker \tau_1 = (a)$, $q \simeq \langle 1, -a \rangle$ generated by a
- $\ker \tau_1 = 0$, $\dim(q) > 2$
- $\ker \tau_2 = (a, b)$, $q \simeq \langle 1, -a, -b \rangle$
- $\ker \tau_2 = (a, b)$, $q \simeq \langle 1, -a, -b, ab \rangle$ a Pfister form
- τ_i for $i \geq 3$: Kahn, Rost, Sujatha.

Cohomological properties of function fields of quadrics make computation of unramified cohomology of a **total space of a fibration in quadrics** more tractable.

Fibrations in quadrics: strategy (Colliot-Thélène-Ojanguren)

- Example: $X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2$ with generic fiber $X_{\eta} \simeq Q = \{q = 0\}$ a quadric over $K = \mathbb{C}(\mathbb{P}^2)$;
- Note: $\mathbb{C}(X) = K(Q)$
- Note: $H_{nr}^2(K(Q)/K) \supset H_{nr}^2(\mathbb{C}(X)/\mathbb{C})$
($\Leftrightarrow \cap_{v|K=0} \text{Ker} \partial_v^2 \supset \cap_v \text{Ker} \partial_v^2$)

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Fibrations in quadrics: strategy (Colliot-Thélène-Ojanguren)

- Example: $X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2$ with generic fiber $X_{\eta} \simeq Q = \{q = 0\}$ a quadric over $K = \mathbb{C}(\mathbb{P}^2)$;
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- We know:

$$\tau_2 : H^2(K, \mathbb{Z}/2) \simeq H_{nr}^2(K(Q)/K, \mathbb{Z}/2)$$

- Unramified over \mathbb{C} ? What is $\text{Im } \tau_2 \cap H_{nr}^2(\mathbb{C}(X)/\mathbb{C})$?

Types of valuations

① Data:

- $X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2$ with $X_{\eta} = Q/K$, $K = \mathbb{C}(\mathbb{P}^2)$ a quadric
- $\alpha \in \text{Im}\tau_2$
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- v on $\mathbb{C}(X)$, induces v_K on K via $K \subset K(Q)$;
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 - 2 x_v is the generic point of a curve $C_v \subset \mathbb{P}^2$
 - 3 x_v is a closed point $P_v \in \mathbb{P}^2$.

Properties of residues: local rings and completion

- ① Gersten conjecture for A a dvr:

$$0 \rightarrow H_{\text{ét}}^i(A, \mathbb{Z}/2) \rightarrow H^i(K, \mathbb{Z}/2) \xrightarrow{\partial_v^i} H^{i-1}(\kappa(v), \mathbb{Z}/2) \rightarrow 0$$

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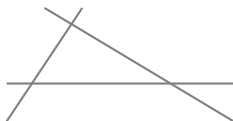
Application: If a is a square in K_v , then $(a, b) = 0$ in K_v
 $\Rightarrow \partial_v^2(a, b) = 0$.

Example

- $X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2$ defined by $yzX_0^2 + xzX_1^2 + xyX_2^2 + F(x, y, z)X_3^2 = 0$.
- $X_{\eta} \simeq Q = \{q = 0\}$ a quadric over $K = \mathbb{C}(\mathbb{P}^2)$;
- $\alpha = (x, y) \in \text{Im} \tau_2$, where
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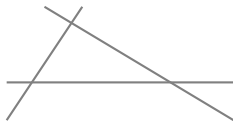
Recall:

$$\partial_v^2(a, b) = (-1)^{v(a)v(b)} \overline{\frac{a^{v(b)}}{b^{v(a)}}}$$

In particular, $\partial_v^2(a, b) = 0$ if a, b are units in A (i.e. $v(a) = v(b) = 0$).

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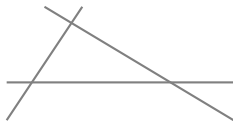
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- Let v on $\mathbb{C}(X)$ a valuation, A the valuation ring, $x_v \in \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2$ its center:
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Example: $x_v = C_{v,\eta}$

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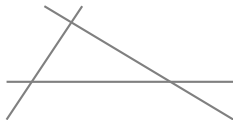
- C_v is not the line $x = 0$, or $y = 0$ or $z = 0$: x, y are units in $\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^2, x_v}$, hence in A (via i), hence $\partial_v^2(\alpha) = 0$.

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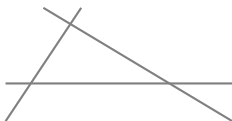
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 - $\alpha \in \ker[H^2(\hat{K}, \mathbb{Z}/2) \rightarrow H^2(\hat{K}(Q), \mathbb{Z}/2)]$ if the discriminant is a square in \hat{K} :
 - then $Q_{\hat{K}}$ is given by $\langle 1, x, y, xy \rangle$.
 - Hence for $Q_{\hat{K}}$ we know $\ker \tau_2 = (x, y)$.
 - for $\partial_v^2(\alpha) = 0$ it is enough to have $F(0, y, z)$ is a square.

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$X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2 : yzX_0^2 + xzX_1^2 + xyX_2^2 + F(x, y, z)X_3^2 = 0$, $\alpha = (x, y)$,
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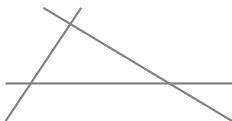


- P_v is not on the lines $x = 0$, or $y = 0$, or $z = 0$, then x, y are units in A_v (via i_v).

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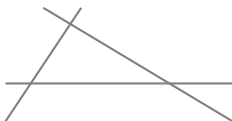


- P_v is not on the lines $x = 0$, or $y = 0$, or $z = 0$, then x, y are units in A_v (via i_v).
- P_v is on one line, for example $x = 0$, then $y \in \widehat{\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^2, x_v}}$ is a square (nonzero complex number in the residue field), hence $\alpha = 0$ over $\widehat{\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}^2, x_v}}$, hence in A_v .

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- P_v is on two curves: $x = 0$ and $y = 0$.
Enough: $F(0, 0, 1)$ is a nonzero complex number, hence a square. (Similarly to C_v case).

Conclusion

$X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2 : yzX_0^2 + xzX_1^2 + xyX_2^2 + F(x, y, z)X_3^2 = 0$,
 $\alpha = (x, y) \in H_{nr}^2(\mathbb{C}(X)/\mathbb{C})$ if:

- 1 $F(x, y, z)$ is not a square,
- 2 $F(0, y, z), F(x, 0, z), F(x, y, 0)$ are squares,
- 3 $F(0, 0, 1), F(0, 1, 0), F(1, 0, 0)$ are nonzero.

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For example, $F(x, y, z) = x^2 + y^2 + z^2 - 2(yz + xz + xy)$ works.

General formulas:

① For conic bundles (Colliot-Thélène)

- $X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2$, generic fiber is a conic $Q = \langle 1, a, b \rangle$.
- Assume the ramification divisor of (a, b) is $C = \cup_i C_i$ is snc.
- $\gamma_i = \partial_{C_i}^2(a, b)$.
- $H = \{(n_i)_{i \in I} \in \{0, 1\} \mid \text{such that :}$
 $\Leftrightarrow n_i = n_j \text{ if } \exists P \in C_i \cap C_j, \partial_P(\gamma_i) = \partial_P(\gamma_j) \neq 0\}$.
- Then $H_{nr}^2(\mathbb{C}(X)/\mathbb{C})$ is the quotient of H by the diagonal $(1, \dots, 1)\mathbb{Z}/2$.

② For quadric surface bundles (P.)

- $X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2$, generic fiber is a quadric surface Q with nonzero discriminant d and Clifford invariant α .
- Similar formula in terms of d and the ramification divisor of α .

General formula for quadric surface bundles

- $X \rightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2$, generic fiber is a quadric surface Q with nonzero discriminant d and Clifford invariant α .
- Assume the ramification divisor of α is $C = \cup C_i$ is snc, \mathcal{P} is the set of singular points of C .
- $T = \{x \in \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^{2,(1)}\} \subset C$ such that:
 - $\partial_x(\alpha) \neq 0$,
 - d , up to a multiplication by a square, is a unit in $\mathcal{O}_{\mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{C}}^2, x}$,
 - the image of d in $\kappa(x)$ is a square.
- $T = \cup_{i=1}^n T_i$ with T_i irreducible, $\gamma_i := \partial_{T_i}(\alpha)$.
- $H_{nr}^2(\mathbb{C}(X)/\mathbb{C}) = \ker[(\mathbb{Z}/2)^n \rightarrow \oplus_{P \in \mathcal{P}} H^0(\kappa(P), \mathbb{Z}/2)],$
 $(n_i)_{i=1}^n \mapsto (\oplus n_i \partial_P^1(\gamma_i)).$
- (n_i) corresponds to a unique class $\beta \in H^2(K, \mathbb{Z}/2)$ with

$$\partial^2(\beta) = (n_i \gamma_i)_i \in \oplus_{i=1}^n H^1(\kappa(T_i), \mathbb{Z}/2).$$

THANK YOU MESSAGE:

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- to the audience;
- to my parents;
- to the Belarusian math olympiads school (S.A. Mazanik, I.I. Voronovich, V.I. Kaskevich, and others)
- Minsk shool 51 (now 29 Gymnaisum), BSU Lyceum, and Belarusian State University, Faculty of Applied Mathematics and Computer Science.