

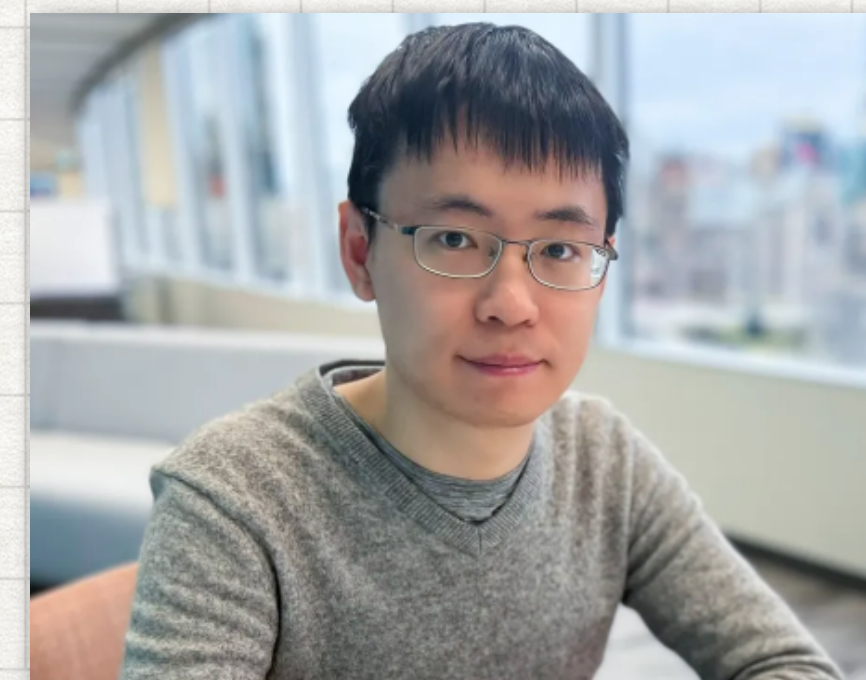
A UNIFIED FRAMEWORK FOR LOCALLY STABLE PHASES

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JOINT WORK WITH ZHI LI AND TIM HSIEH

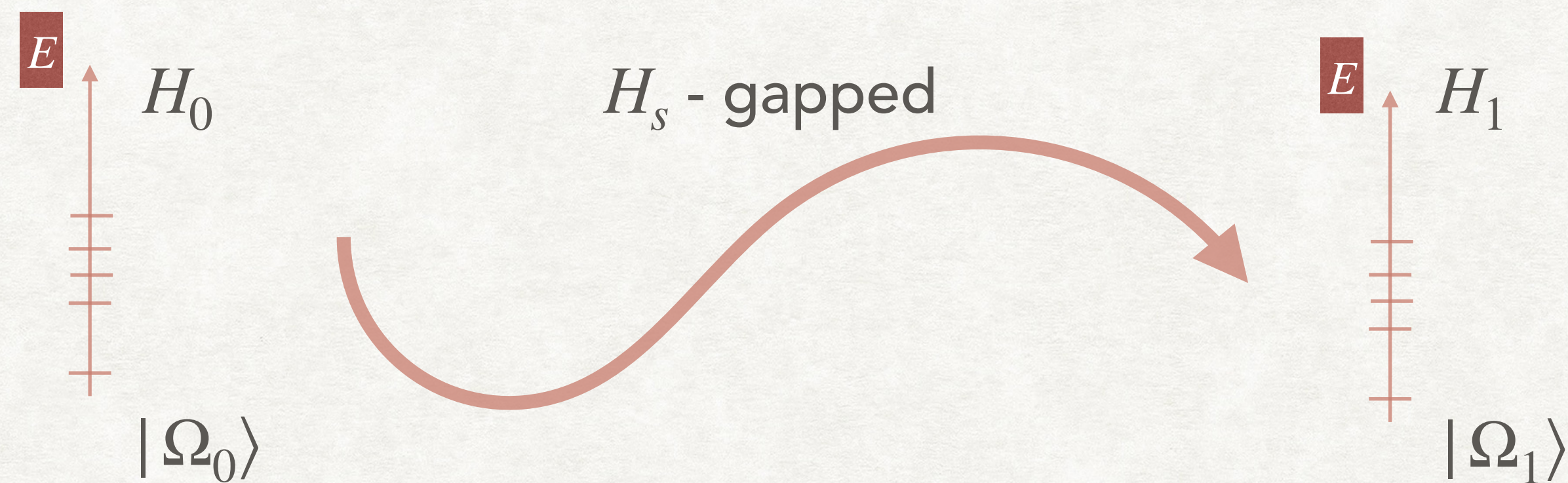
20/06/2026

Based on arXiv:2605.00088



PURE STATE PHASES

- Let $|\Omega_0\rangle, |\Omega_1\rangle$ be ground states of gapped local Hamiltonians H_0, H_1 .
- $|\Omega_0\rangle, |\Omega_1\rangle$ are in the same phase if there is a path



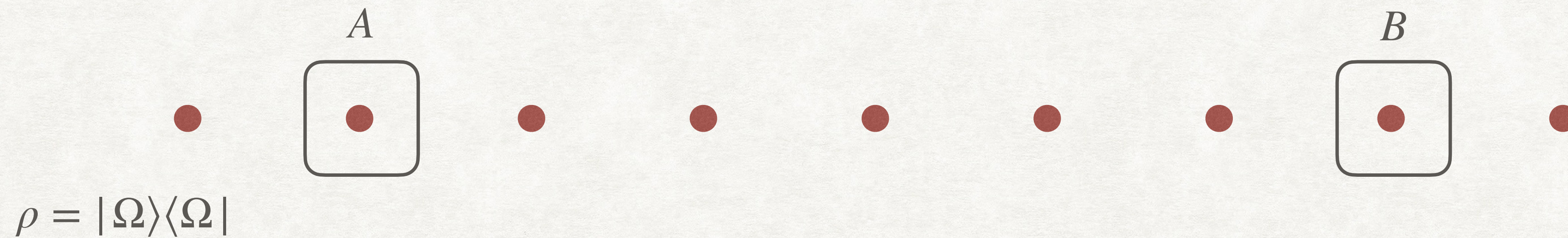
- Quasi-adiabatic continuation -
[Chen, Gun & Wen 10]



$$|\Omega_1\rangle = e^{-i\int_0^1 \tilde{H}_g dg} |\Omega_0\rangle$$

CORRELATION LENGTH

- Locality features of gapped ground states: decay of correlations, area laws,...
- Correlation length is associated with the Hamiltonian's gap [Hastings 03, Hastings & Koma 05]:



- $\langle O \rangle \triangleq \text{Tr}[\rho \cdot O]$

- $|\langle O_A O_B \rangle - \langle O_A \rangle \langle O_B \rangle| \leq f(|A|, |B|) \|O_A\| \|O_B\| e^{-\frac{\text{dist}(A, B)}{\xi}}$

- $\xi \leq \mathcal{O}(1/\Delta E)$

EQUILIBRIUM PHASES

- Thermal state: $\sigma \propto e^{-\beta H}$, $H = \sum H_i$, $\beta = 1/T$.
- Phases have been extensively studied in the literature as well.
 1. Spontaneous symmetry breaking (SSB)
 2. Lindbladian (Gibbs sampler) gap [Kastoryano & Brandao 14, Bergamaschi & Chen 25,...].
 3. Local Stability [Brandao & Kastoryano 19, Capel et al. 25]
 4. Analyticity of partition function [Araki 69,...]
 5. 2-way connectivity by a channel [Hastings 11,...]

$$\mathcal{L} = \sum_i \mathcal{L}_i, \quad \mathcal{L}(\sigma) = 0$$

\mathcal{L} is gapped

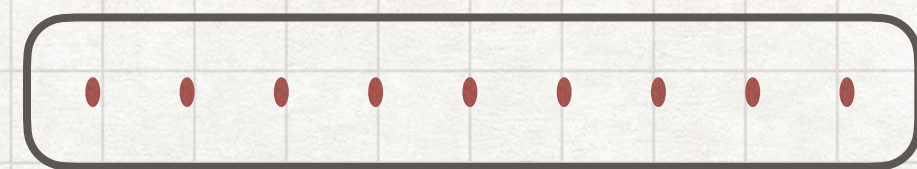


σ has decay of correlations

WHAT ABOUT NON-EQUILIBRIUM?

Steady states of Lindbladians

$$\mathcal{L}(\sigma) = 0$$



Thermal states

$$\sigma \propto e^{-\beta H}$$

Metastable

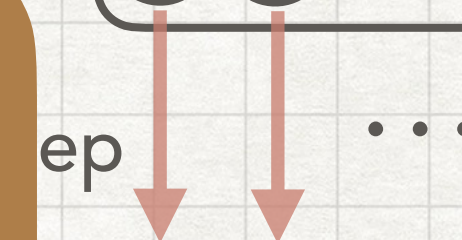
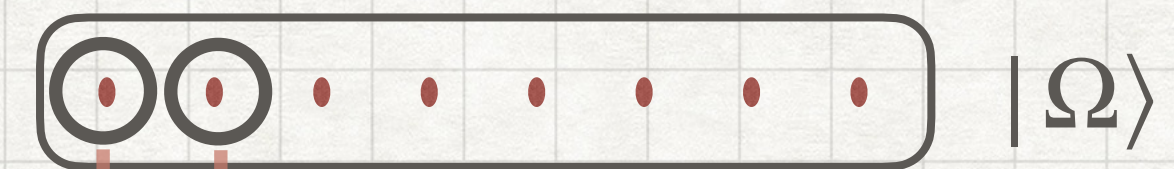
$$\|\mathcal{L}(\sigma)\| \leq \varepsilon$$



" σ IS A "GAPPED PHASE THAT INHIBITS EXPONENTIAL DECAY"

Decohered states

$$\sigma = \mathcal{E}(|\Omega\rangle\langle\Omega|)$$



EXAMPLE - STRONG-WEAK SSB

- Define the n -qubit state

$$\rho_{Ising} = \frac{1}{2^n} (\mathbb{1} + Z_1 \dots Z_n).$$

- Note that for any A and B :

- Regular correlation - $\langle X_A X_B \rangle = 0$

Analog to
 $\langle \psi | X_A X_B | \psi \rangle$

- Fidelity correlation - $\langle X_A X_B \rangle_F \triangleq F(\rho, X_A X_B \rho X_A X_B) = \text{Tr} \left[\sqrt{\sqrt{\rho} X_A X_B \rho X_A X_B \sqrt{\rho}} \right] = 1$



CONDITIONAL MUTUAL INFORMATION (CMI)

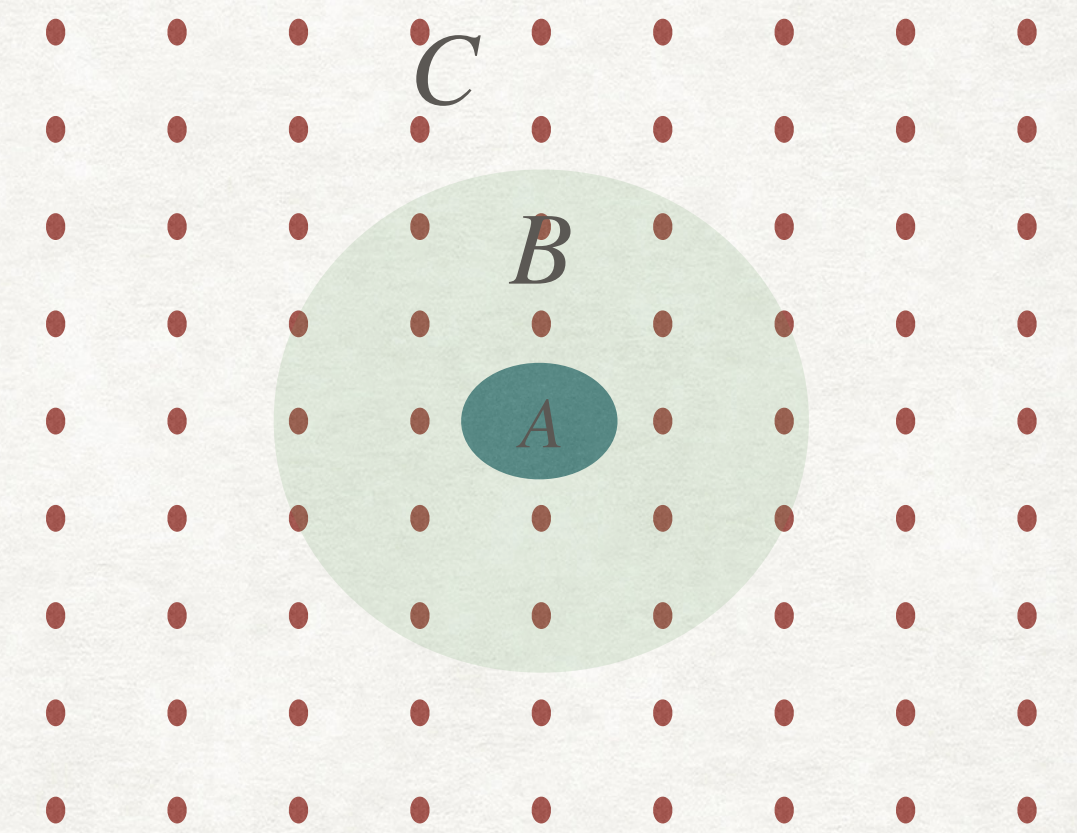
$$\left(S(\rho) = -\text{Tr}[\rho \log \rho] \right)$$

- Correlations are not enough.
- Introduce Conditional Mutual Information (CMI):
- For a tripartition $A : B : C$, B shields A from C ,

$$I(A : C | B) \triangleq S(AB) + S(BC) - S(ABC) - S(B)$$

- Operationally: Petz recovery map $\mathcal{P} : B \rightarrow AB$,

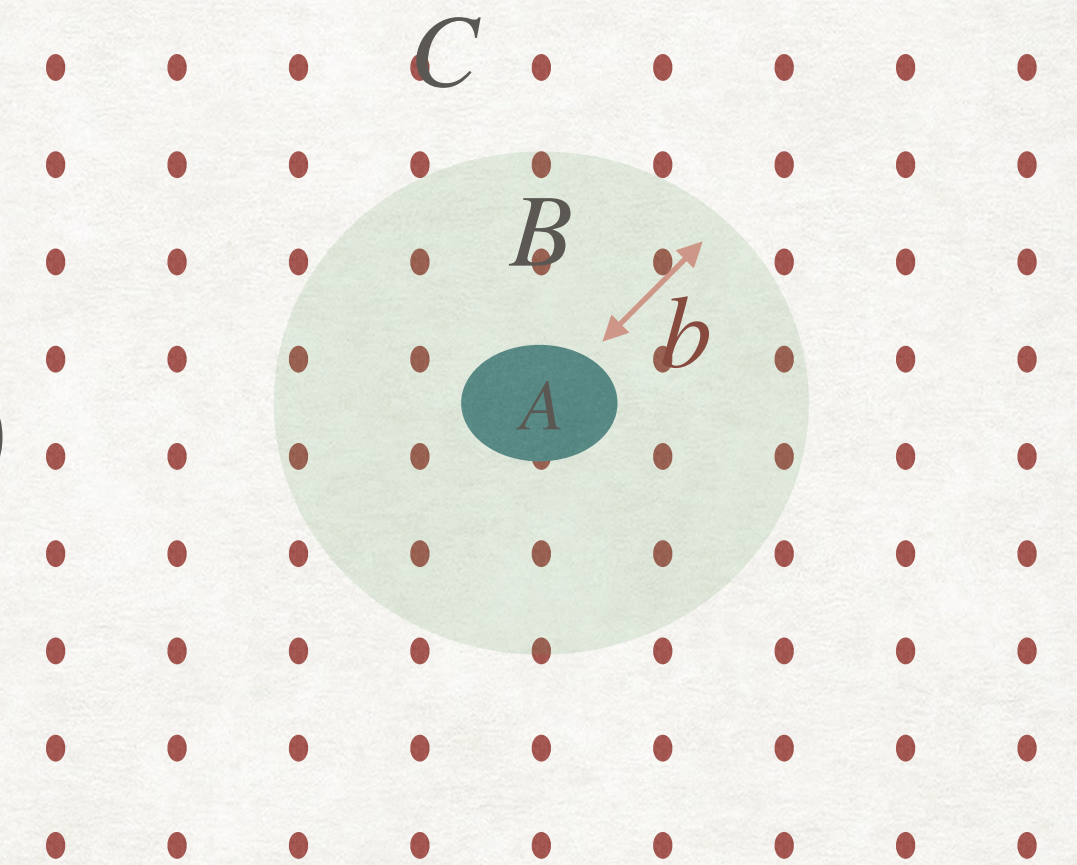
$$\mathcal{P}_{B \rightarrow AB}(\rho_{BC}) = \rho_{ABC} \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad I(A : C | B) = 0$$



CONDITIONAL MUTUAL INFORMATION (CMI)

- Operationally: Petz recovery map $\mathcal{P} : B \rightarrow AB$,

$$\mathcal{P}_{B \rightarrow AB}(\rho_{BC}) = \rho_{ABC} \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad I(A : C | B) = 0$$



- Also works for approximate analog: $\exists \tilde{\mathcal{P}} : B \rightarrow AB$,

$$\left\| \tilde{\mathcal{P}}_{B \rightarrow AB}(\rho_{BC}) - \rho_{ABC} \right\|_1 \approx 0 \quad \Leftrightarrow \quad I(A : C | B) \approx 0$$

- Definition:** A state σ has a finite Markov length $\eta > 0$ if

$$I(A : C | B) \leq f(A) e^{-\frac{b}{\eta}}$$

CONDITIONAL MUTUAL INFORMATION (CMI)

- **Definition:** A state σ has a finite Markov length $\eta > 0$ if

$$I(A : C | B) \leq f(A) e^{-\frac{b}{\eta}}$$

- Non-equilibrium transitions involve loss of Markov length
[Sang & Hsieh 25]

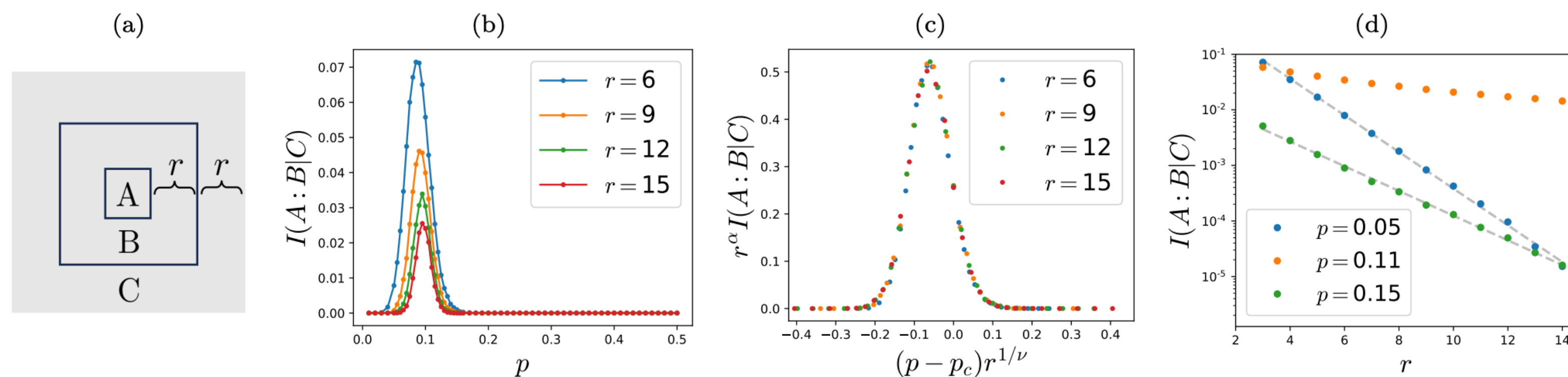
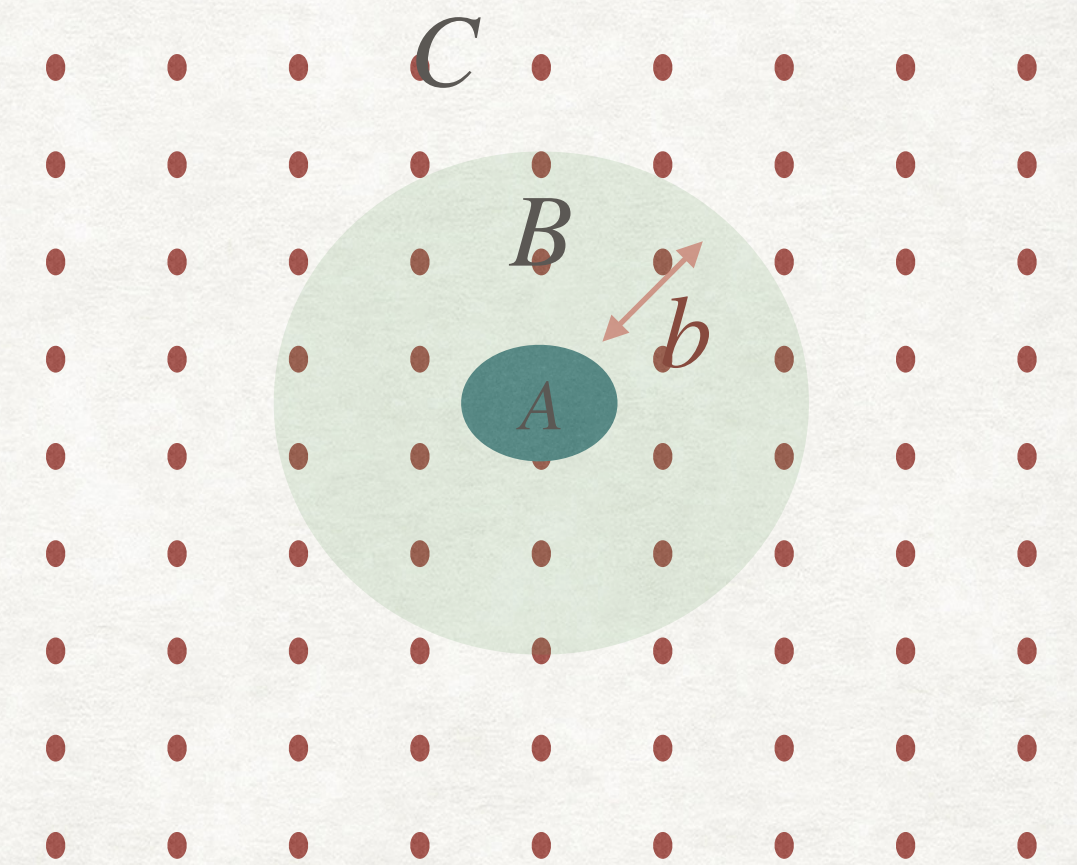


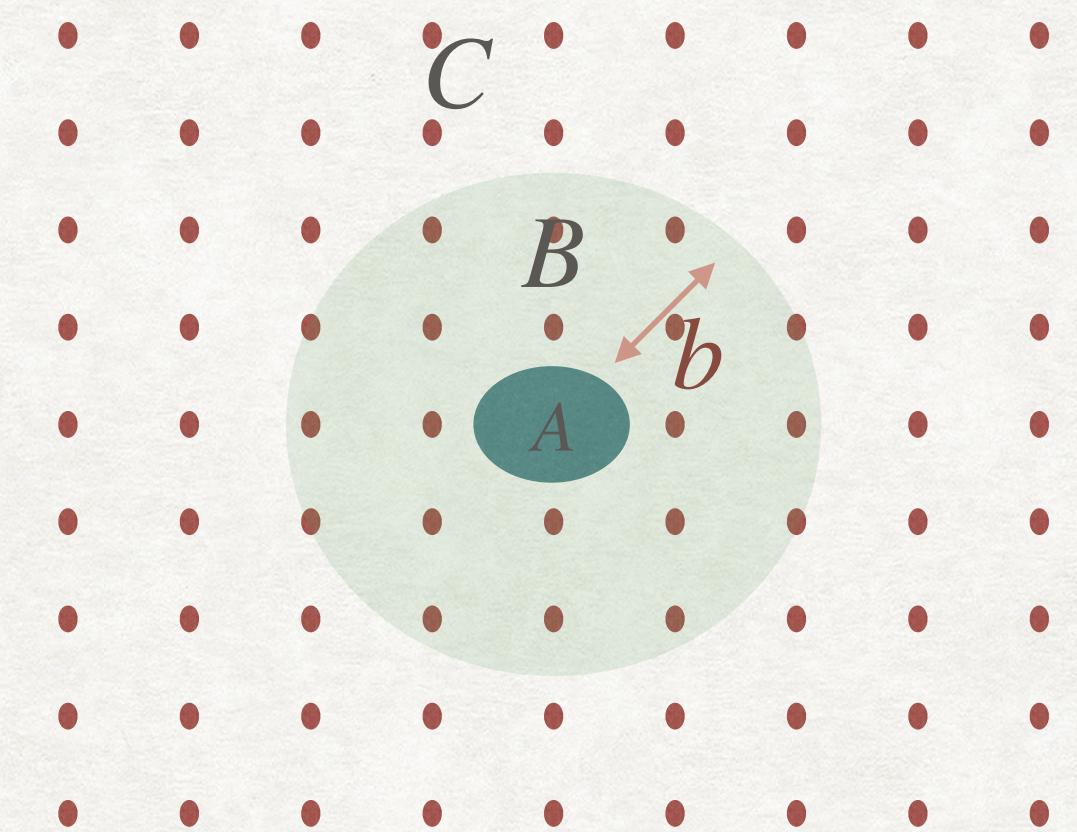
Figure 3. CMI of dephased toric code state — (a) Partition with A fixed and varying r (width of B, C). (b)

$$\rho_{\text{Ising}} \propto \mathbb{1} + Z_1 \dots Z_n$$

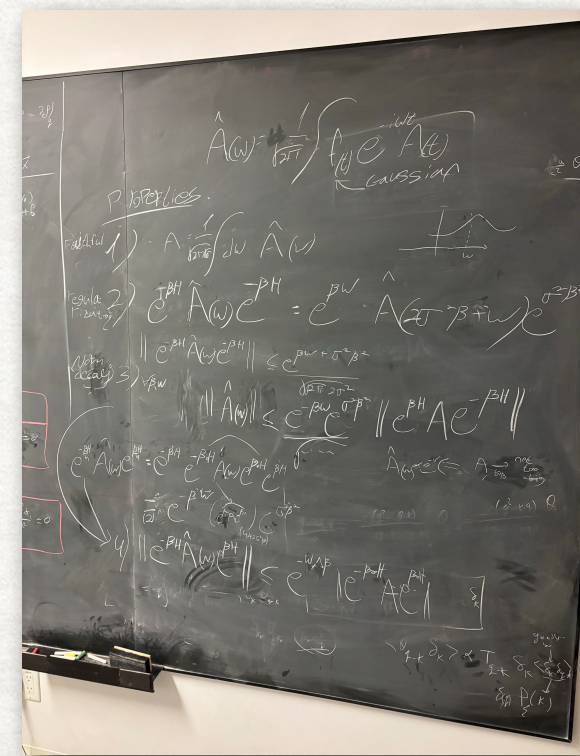
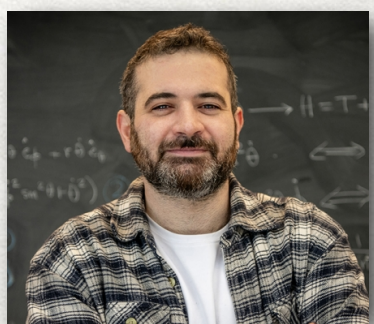
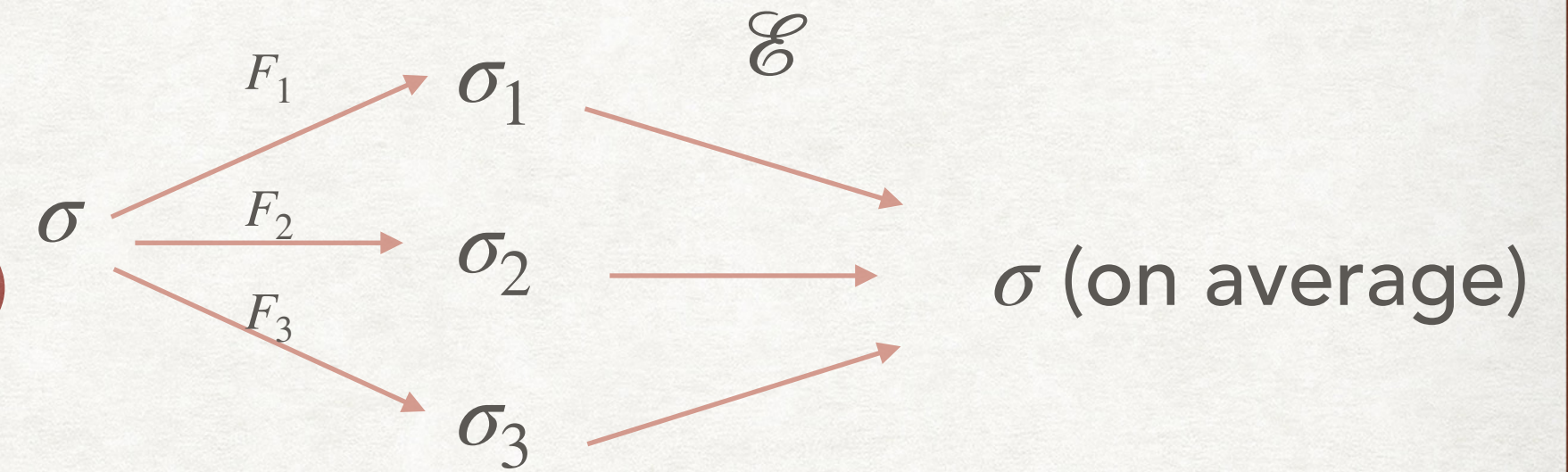
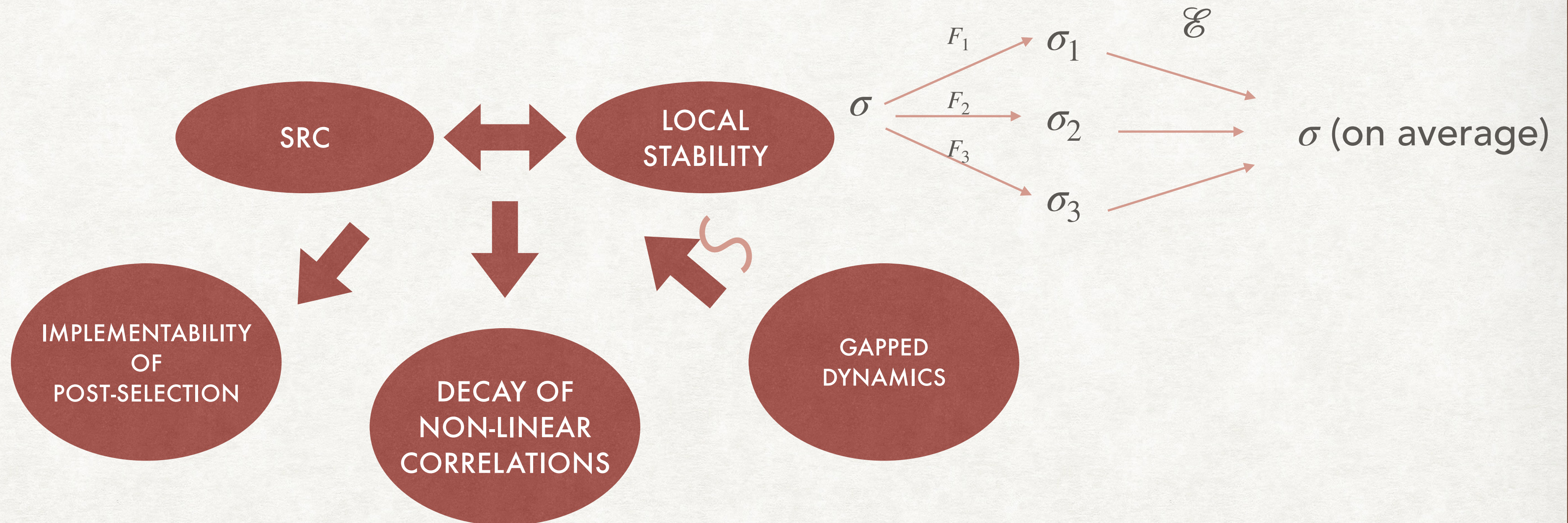
$$I(A : C | B)_{\rho_{\text{Ising}}} = 1$$

DEFINING A GAPPED MIXED STATE

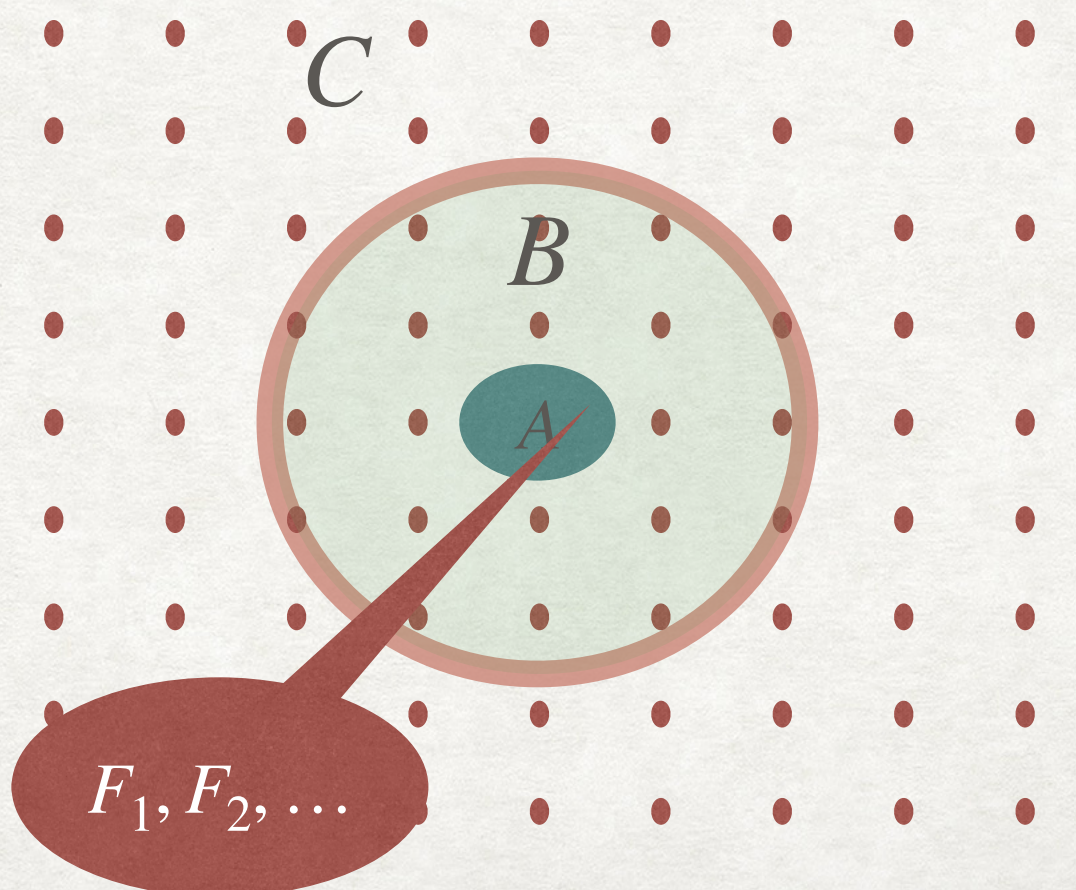
- Use both correlations & CMI.
- **Definition:** A state σ is short-range correlated (SRC) if
 - Correlation length: $|\langle O_A O_B \rangle - \langle O_A \rangle \langle O_B \rangle| \leq f(A) e^{-\frac{b}{\xi}}$,
 - Markov length: $I(A : C | B) \leq g(A) e^{-b/\eta}$.
 - $f, g = e^{O(A)}$.
- For pure states, $I(A : C | B) = I(A : C)$ (CMI=correlations)
- Both are invariant of a phase [Yi et al. 26]
- We would like an operational characterization! (locality/stability).



OUR RESULTS

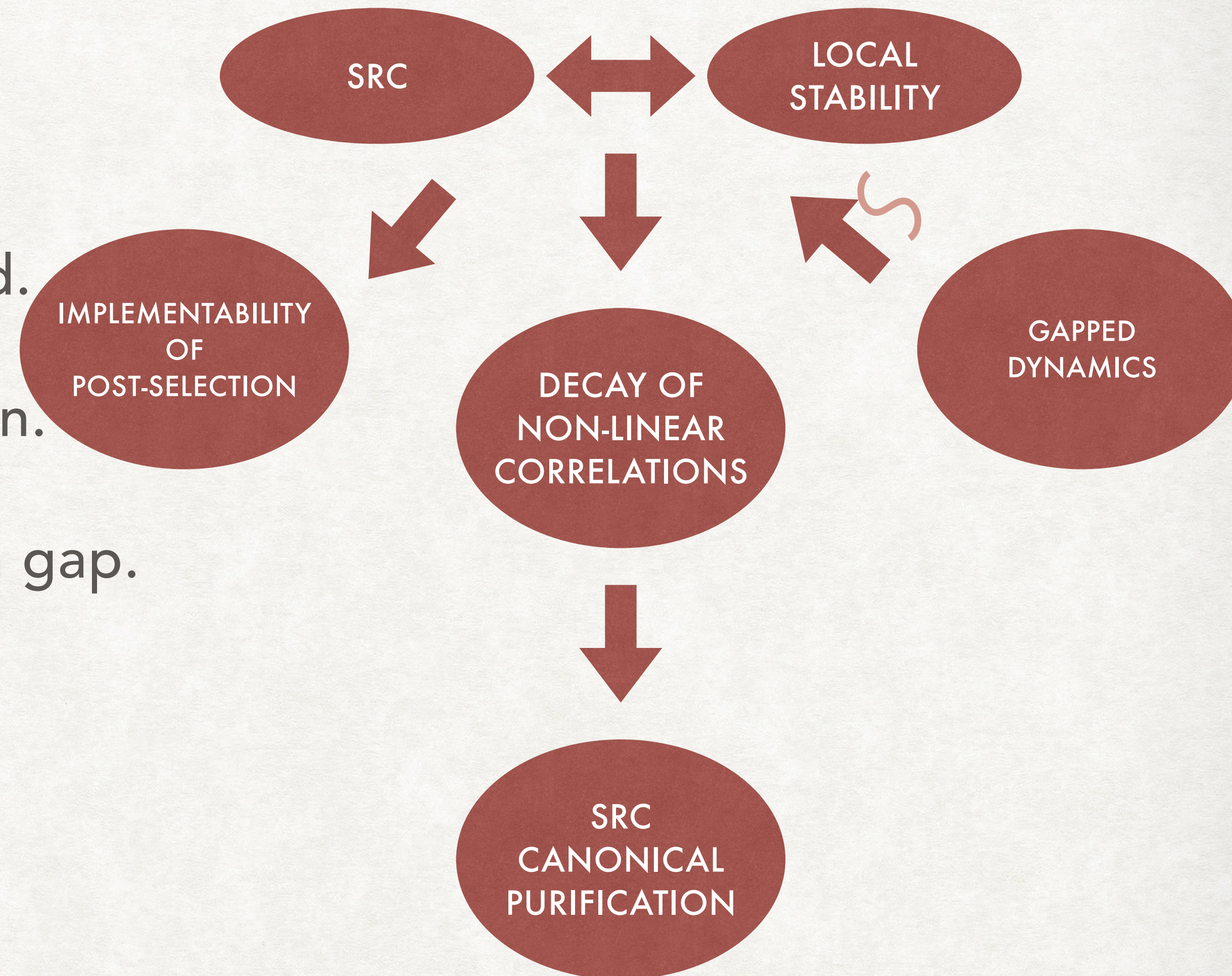


$$\exists \mathcal{E} : AB \longrightarrow AB$$



CONCLUSIONS

- Future Research:
 - Improve the canonical purification bound.
 - Establish nonlinear fluctuation-dissipation.
 - Refine the connection to the Lindbladian gap.
 - Understand the inverses of the diagram.



**TTTHANK YOU
STAY CORRELATED**

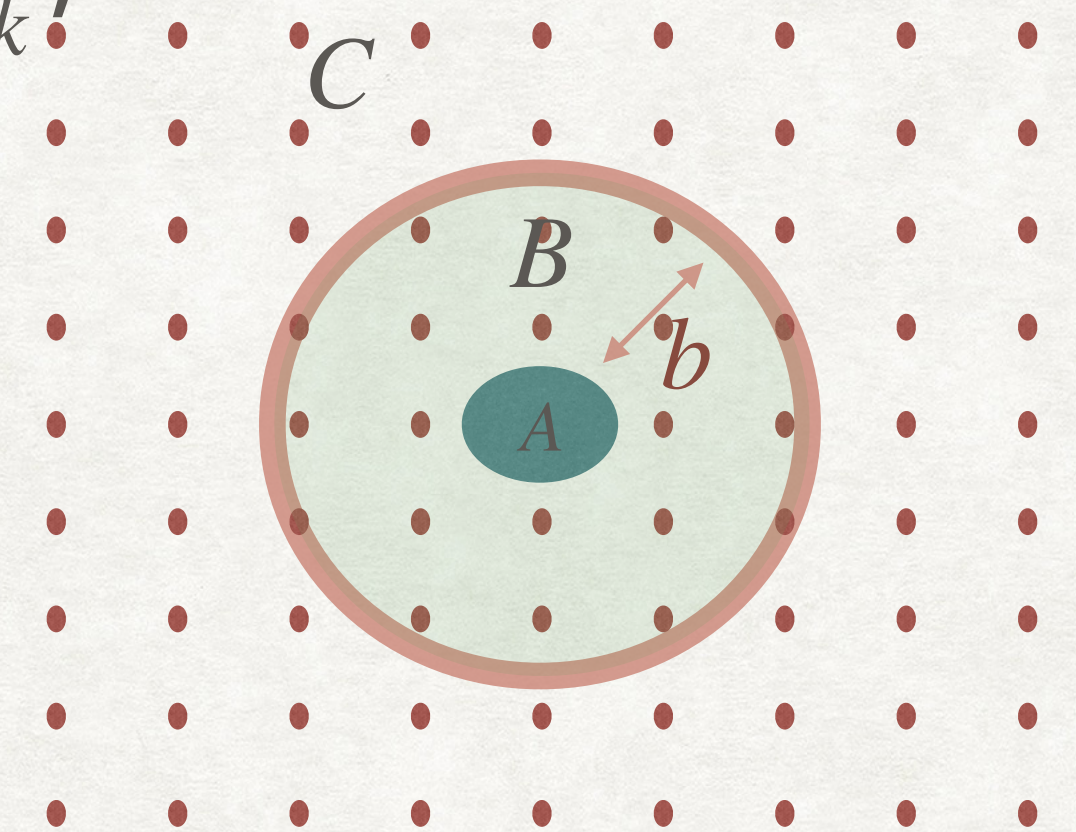
PROOFS AND DEFINITIONS

LOCAL STABILITY

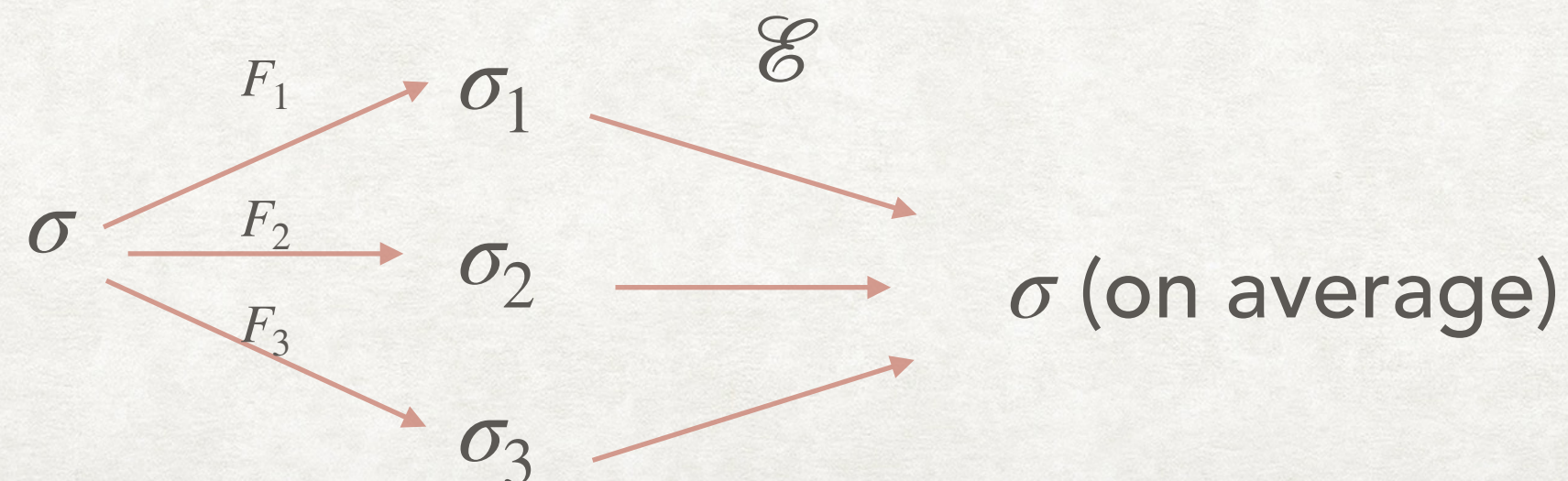
- We would like a definition that demonstrates locality/stability.
- Recall: low CMI implies Petz recovery $B \rightarrow AB$.
- **Definition:** σ has local stability if there is a channel $\mathcal{E} : AB \rightarrow AB$ such that for any measurement $\mathcal{F} : A \rightarrow A$, $\mathcal{F}(\cdot) = \sum_k F_k(\cdot)F_k^\dagger$

$$p_k = \text{Tr}[F_k \sigma F_k^\dagger]$$

$$\sum_k p_k \|\mathcal{E}(\sigma_k) - \sigma\|_1 \leq h(A) e^{-\frac{b}{\zeta}}$$



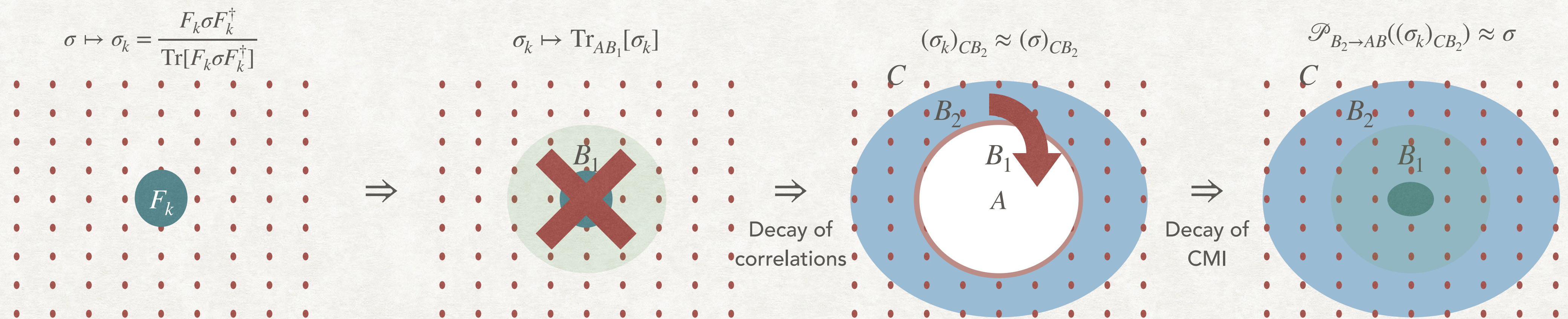
STRONGER THAN CHANNEL RECOVERY



LOCAL STABILITY

$$\sum_k \|\mathcal{E}(F_k \rho F_k^\dagger) - p_k \sigma\|_1 \leq h(A) e^{-\frac{b}{\zeta}}$$

- **Theorem:** σ is locally stable $\Leftrightarrow \sigma$ is short-range correlated.
- Proof Idea (\Leftarrow): Trace out and recover



LOCAL STABILITY

$$\sum_k \|\mathcal{E}(F_k \rho F_k^\dagger) - p_k \sigma\|_1 \leq h(A) e^{-\frac{b}{\zeta}}$$

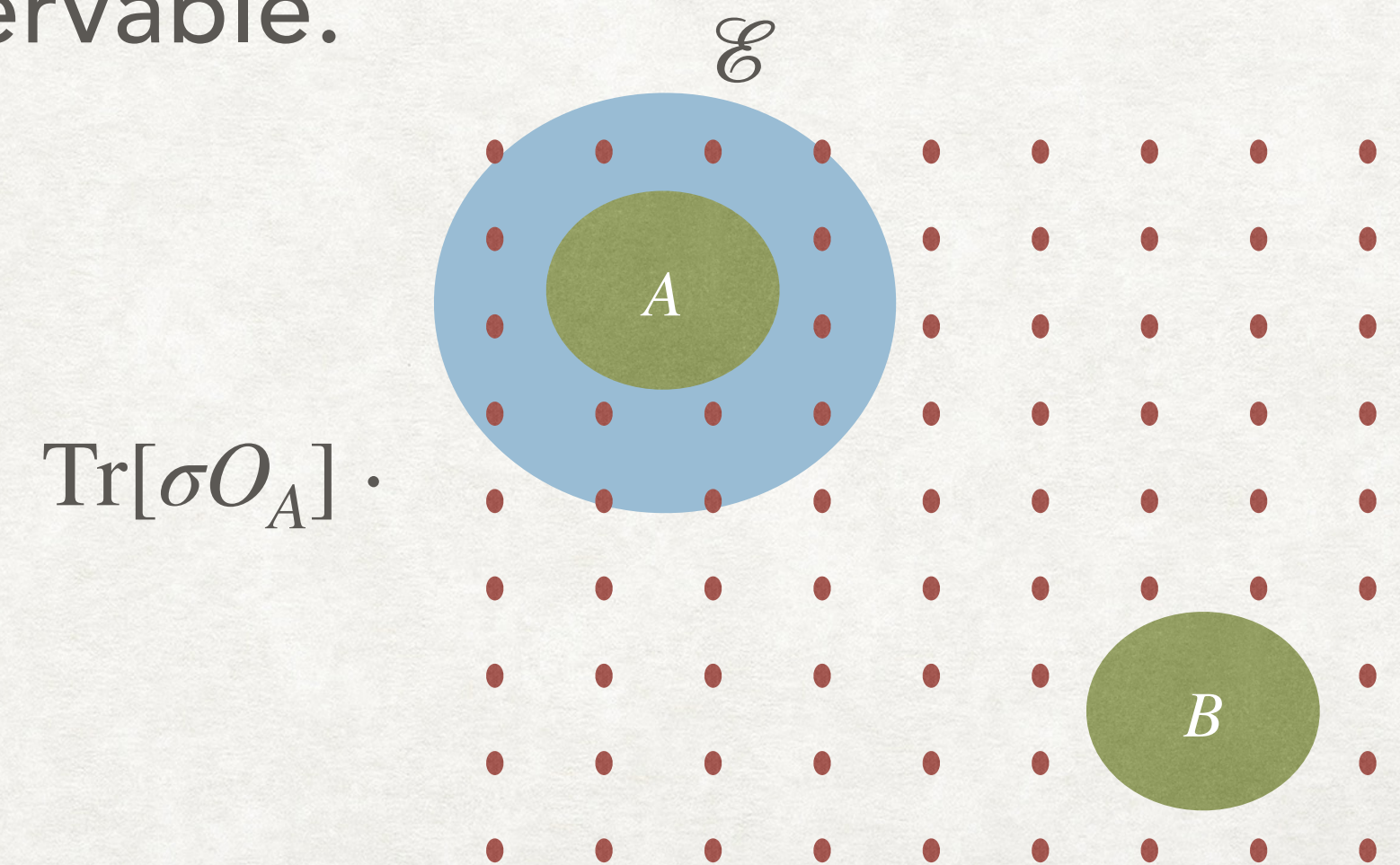
• **Theorem:** σ is locally stable $\Leftrightarrow \sigma$ is short-range correlated.

• Proof Idea (\Rightarrow):

• CMI decay - by using \mathcal{E} as a Petz recovery

• Correlations decay - recover the effect of one observable.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Tr}[\sigma O_A O_B] &= \text{Tr}[(\sqrt{O_A} \sigma \sqrt{O_A}) O_B] \\ &= \text{Tr}[(\sqrt{O_A} \sigma \sqrt{O_A}) \mathcal{E}^*(O_B)] \\ &= \text{Tr}[\underbrace{\mathcal{E}(\sqrt{O_A} \sigma \sqrt{O_A})}_{\approx \text{Tr}[\sigma O_A] \sigma} O_B] \approx \text{Tr}[\sigma O_A] \text{Tr}[\sigma O_B] \end{aligned}$$



NON-LINEAR CORRELATIONS

- Introduce a family of correlators for $p, q \in (0, 1]$:

$$C_{p,q}(O) = \left\| \rho^{p/2} O \rho^{q/2} \right\|_{\frac{2}{p+q}}$$

- Includes most known nonlinear correlators.

	p	q	Form
Fidelity	1	1	$F(O\rho O^\dagger, \rho)$
Wightman	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\text{Tr}[\sqrt{\rho} O \sqrt{\rho} O^\dagger]$
α - Rényi	α	α	$D_\alpha(O\rho O^\dagger \ \rho)$
α sandwiched Rényi	α	1	$\tilde{D}_\alpha(O\rho O^\dagger \ \rho)$

DIAGNOSTIC OF STRONG-WEAK SSB

[Lessa et al. 25,
Weinstein 25,
Liu et al. 25,
Zhang et al. 26,
...]

- For Ising symmetry, $O = X_A X_B$
 ρ strongly symmetric



$$C_{p,q} = \langle X_A X_B \rangle \geq \text{const}$$

$$\langle X_A X_B \rangle \rightarrow 0$$

NON-LINEAR CORRELATOR

- Criticality is extended to the non-symmetric regime via the connected correlator

$$\hat{C}_{p,q}(O_A, O_B) = \left| C_{p,q}(O_A \cdot O_B) - C_{p,q}(O_A)C_{p,q}(O_B) \right|$$

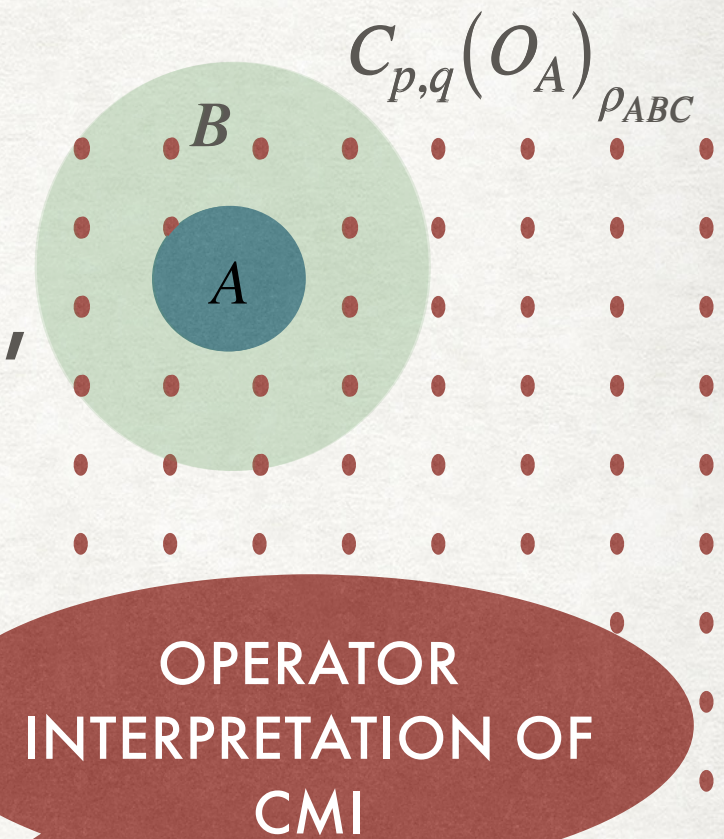
- Presents richer correlations than $\langle O_A O_B \rangle - \langle O_A \rangle \langle O_B \rangle$.
 - e.g., $\text{Tr}[\rho O_A] = \text{Tr}[\rho_A O_A]$, but $C_{p,q}(O_A)_\rho \neq C_{p,q}(O_A)_{\rho_A}$.
- What happens in the non-symmetric case? How to control $\hat{C}_{p,q}$?

NON-LINEAR CORRELATOR

$$C_{p,q}(O)_\rho = \left\| \rho^{p/2} O \rho^{q/2} \right\|_{\frac{2}{p+q}}$$

- Theorem:** For a short-range correlated state σ (correlations ≈ 0 , CMI ≈ 0),

$$\hat{C}_{p,q}(O_{A_1}, O_{A_2}) \approx 0$$

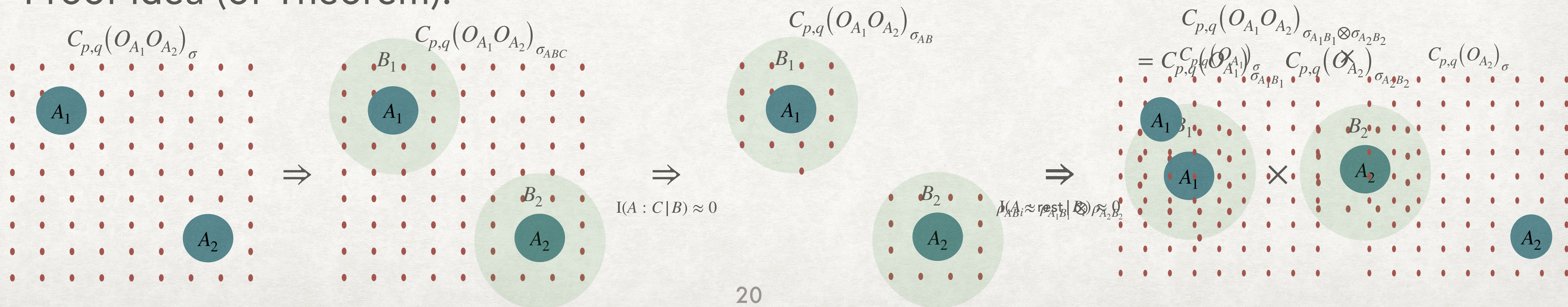


- Supporting claim:**

$$I(A : C | B) = 0 \quad * \Leftrightarrow \quad C_{p,q}(O_A)_{\rho_{ABC}} = C_{p,q}(O_A)_{\rho_{AB}}$$

$$I(A : C | B) \approx 0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad |C_{p,q}(O_A)_{\rho_{ABC}} - C_{p,q}(O_A)_{\rho_{AB}}| \approx 0$$

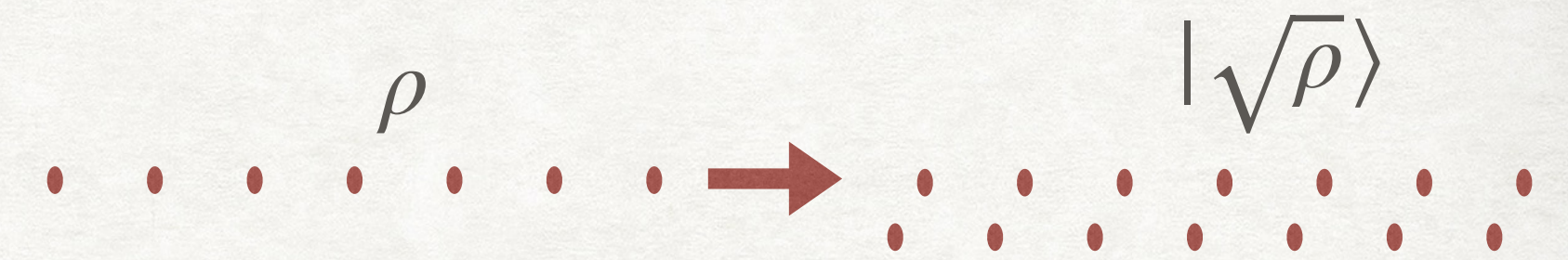
- Proof idea (of Theorem):**



CANONICAL PURIFICATION

- The canonical purification of ρ is defined by

$$|\sqrt{\rho}\rangle \triangleq \sum_{i,j} (\sqrt{\rho})_{ij} |i,j\rangle$$

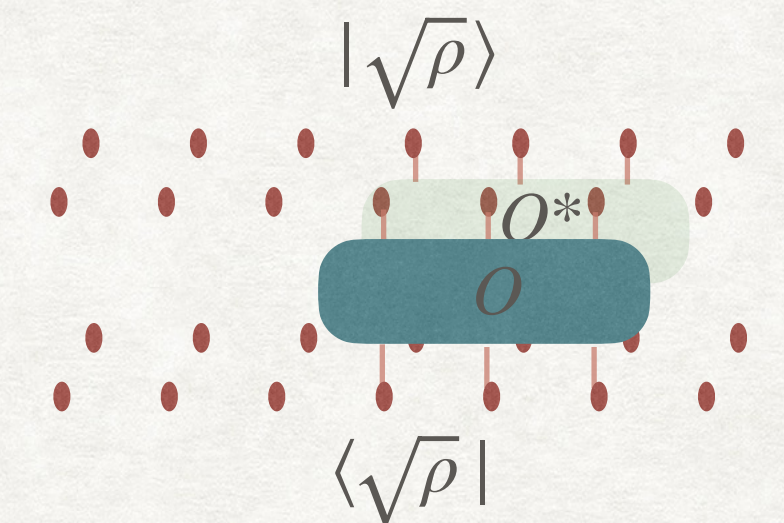


- Generally, ρ weakly correlated $\not\Rightarrow$ $|\sqrt{\rho}\rangle$ weakly correlated.

- We show that σ is SRC \Rightarrow $|\sqrt{\sigma}\rangle$ has decaying 2-point correlations.

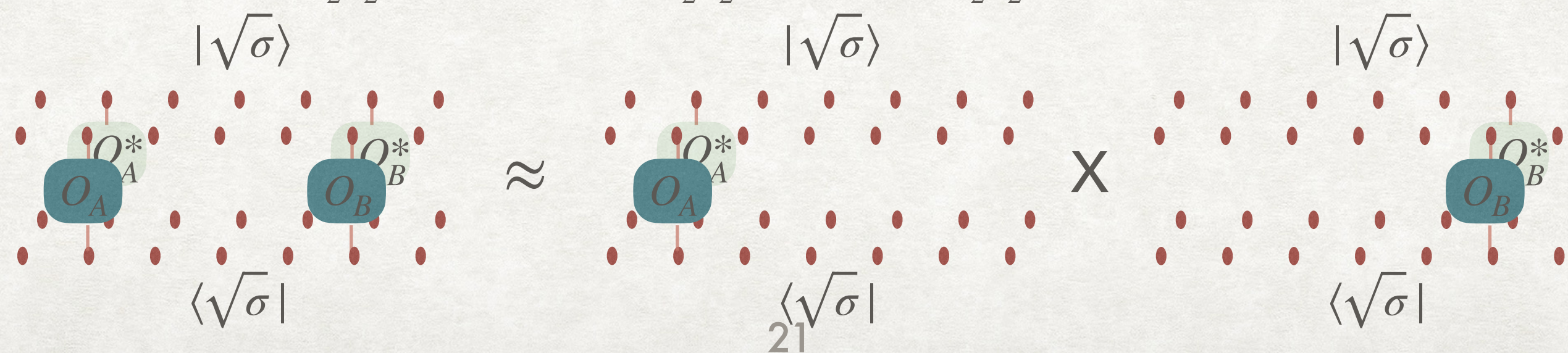
- Setting $p = q = 1/2$,

$$C_{p,q}(O)_\rho = \text{Tr}[\rho^{1/2} O \rho^{1/2} O^\dagger]^{1/2} = \langle \sqrt{\rho} | O \otimes O^* | \sqrt{\rho} \rangle$$

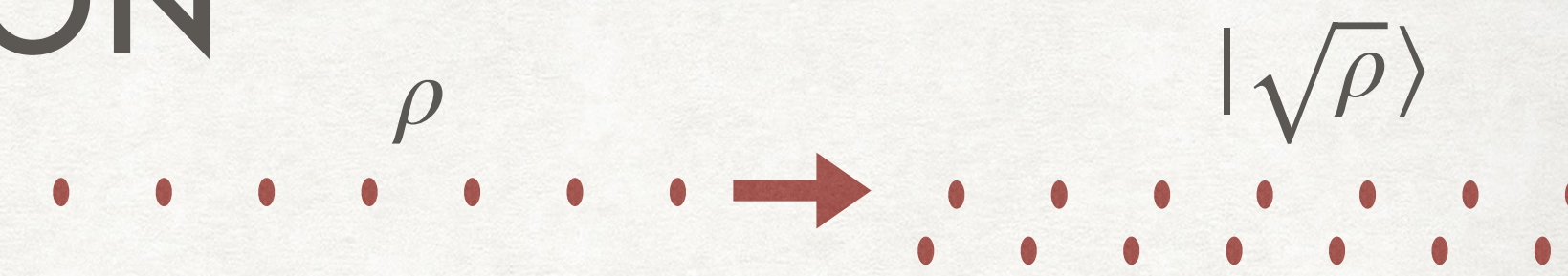


- For SRC state:

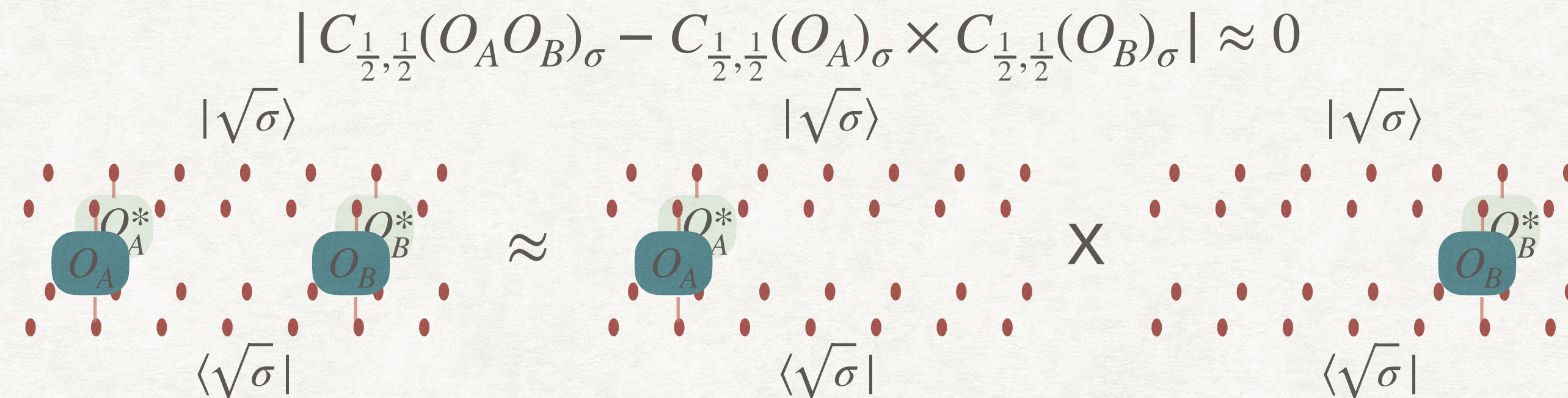
$$|C_{\frac{1}{2},\frac{1}{2}}(O_A O_B)_\sigma - C_{\frac{1}{2},\frac{1}{2}}(O_A)_\sigma \times C_{\frac{1}{2},\frac{1}{2}}(O_B)_\sigma| \approx 0$$



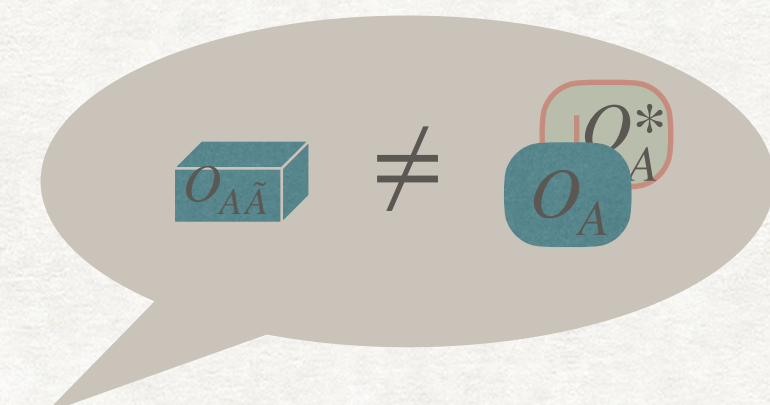
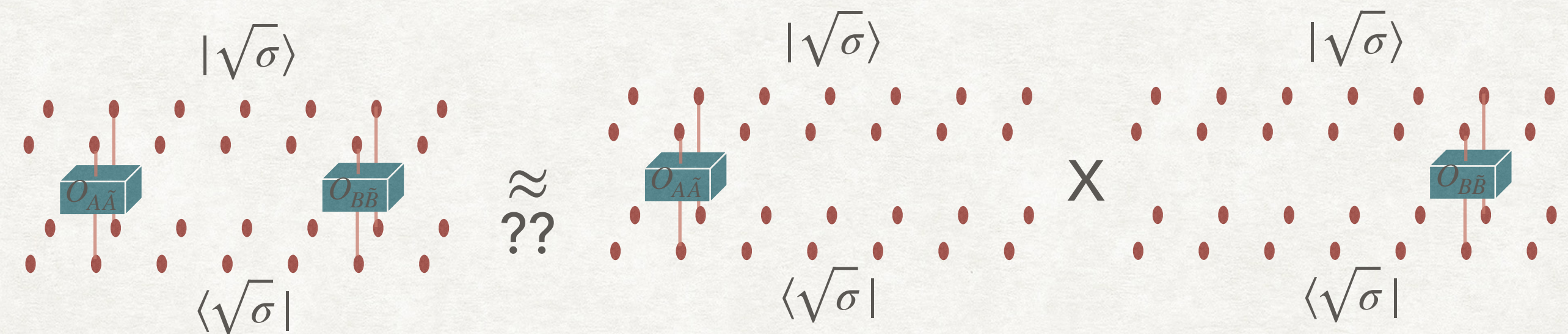
CANONICAL PURIFICATION



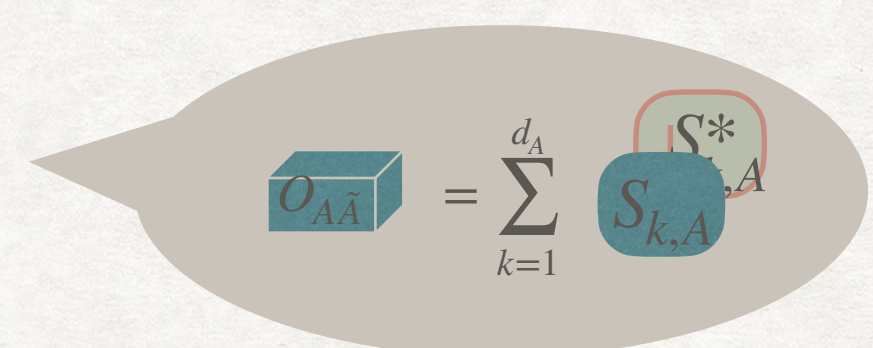
- For SRC state:



- Decay of correlations refers to general operators



- Writing $O_{A\tilde{A}} = \sum_{a,b} C_{ab} P_a \otimes P_b^* = \sum_k S_{k,A} \otimes S_{k,\tilde{A}}^*$



If C is hermitian $\Rightarrow C = U \begin{pmatrix} \lambda_1 & & & \\ & \lambda_2 & & \\ & & \lambda_3 & \\ & & & \ddots \end{pmatrix} U^\dagger$

$$\|S_{k,A}\| \lesssim d_A \sqrt{\|O_{A\tilde{A}}\|}$$