

Accepted Manuscript

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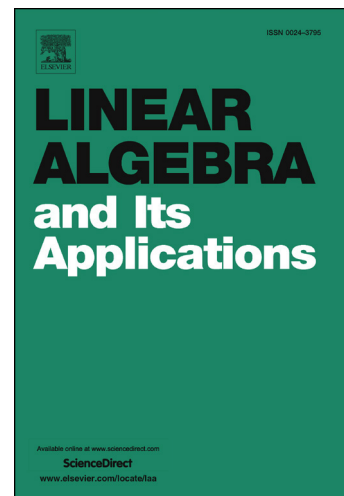
PII: S0024-3795(18)30433-6
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.laa.2018.09.006>
Reference: LAA 14721

To appear in: *Linear Algebra and its Applications*

Received date: 4 May 2018
Accepted date: 5 September 2018

Please cite this article in press as: M.S. Gowda, J. Jeong, On the connectedness of spectral sets and irreducibility of spectral cones in Euclidean Jordan algebras, *Linear Algebra Appl.* (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.laa.2018.09.006>

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On the connectedness of spectral sets and irreducibility of spectral cones in Euclidean Jordan algebras

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September 10, 2018

Abstract

Let \mathcal{V} be a Euclidean Jordan algebra of rank n . A set E in \mathcal{V} is said to be a *spectral set* if there exists a permutation invariant set Q in \mathcal{R}^n such that $E = \lambda^{-1}(Q)$, where $\lambda : \mathcal{V} \rightarrow \mathcal{R}^n$ is the *eigenvalue map* that takes $x \in \mathcal{V}$ to $\lambda(x)$ (the vector of eigenvalues of x written in the decreasing order). If the above Q is also a convex cone, we say that E is a *spectral cone*. This paper deals with connectedness and arcwise connectedness properties of spectral sets. By relying on the result that in a simple Euclidean Jordan algebra, every eigenvalue orbit $[x] := \{y : \lambda(y) = \lambda(x)\}$ is arcwise connected, we show that if a permutation invariant set Q is connected (arcwise connected), then $\lambda^{-1}(Q)$ is connected (respectively, arcwise connected). A related result is that in a simple Euclidean Jordan algebra, every pointed spectral cone is irreducible.

Key Words: Euclidean Jordan algebra, spectral set, connectedness, irreducible cone

AMS Subject Classification: 54D05, 17C20, 17C30, 22E99, 15B48.

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