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The Skeleton of the 120-cell is not 5-gonal

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# The skeleton of the 120-cell is not 5-gonal

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Abstract. The edge-graphs of  $m$ -polygons and of 5 Platonic solids admit (unique) isometric embedding into a half cube (of dimension  $m$  and 6, resp.). The skeletons of  $\alpha_n, \beta_n, \gamma_n$  are also  $\ell_1$ -graphs but it was proved in [1] that 24-cell and 600-cell are not (since not 5- and not 7-gonal, resp.). We show here that the last remaining regular polytope, 120-cell, is also not  $\ell_1$ -graph.

The 120-cell  $P_{120}$  is the largest one among the four-dimensional regular polytopes. It has 120 three-dimensional facets (cells) and 600 vertices. The skeleton  $G_{120}$  of this polytope is a regular graph of degree 4 on 600 vertices. It is not distance-regular.

The graph  $G_{120}$  is constructed from 480 pentagons such that each vertex belongs to 4 pentagons and each edge belongs to three pentagons. One can say that  $G_{120}$  is a 4-dimensional fullerene.

We use the following description of vertices  $P_{120}$  by four-dimensional vectors given in [2] (Ch.22.3, Exerc.5). There are two groups of vertices. Vertices of the first group are all permutations of coordinates of the vectors of the shapes 1.-4. below. Vertices of the second group are all even permutations of coordinates of the vectors of shapes 5.-7.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. $(\pm 2, \pm 2, 0, 0)$                                      | 5. $(\pm \tau^2, \pm \tau^{-2}, \pm 1, 0)$        |
| 2. $(\pm(2\tau - 1), \pm 1, \pm 1, \pm 1)$                     | 6. $(\pm(2\tau - 1), \pm \tau^{-1}, \pm \tau, 0)$ |
| 3. $(\pm \tau, \pm \tau, \pm \tau, \pm \tau^{-2})$             | 7. $(\pm 2, \pm 1, \pm \tau, \pm \tau^{-1})$      |
| 4. $(\pm \tau^2, \pm \tau^{-1}, \pm \tau^{-1}, \pm \tau^{-1})$ |   |

Here  $\tau = \frac{\sqrt{5}+1}{2}$  such that  $1.6 < \tau < 1.62$ . Besides

$$\tau^{-2} = 2 - \tau, \quad \tau^2 = \tau + 1, \quad \tau^{-1} = \tau - 1, \quad 2\tau - 1 = \sqrt{5}.$$

Two vertices given by vectors  $v$  and  $v'$  are adjacent in the skeleton  $G_{120}$ , i.e. are connected by an edge of  $P_{120}$ , if the inner product  $vv'$  is maximal, i.e. if  $vv' = 6\tau - 2$ . The norm (=squared length) of an edge of  $P_{120}$  is equal to  $(v - v')^2 = 20 - 12\tau$ , i.e.  $0,56 < (v - v')^2 < 0,8$ .

We shall identify vertices with the vectors describing them. We say that a vertex  $v$  belongs to the layer ( $x$ ) if the first coordinates of  $v$  is  $x$ . All the 600 vertices of  $P_{120}$  are partitioned into 15 layers. The vertices of the  $k$ -th and the  $(15 - k)$ -th layers have the same, up to sign, first coordinate. The first layer ( $\tau^2$ ) and the last layer ( $-\tau^2$ ) are facets of  $P_{120}$ .

We give in Table below adjacencies of vertices of these layers.

**Table.** Adjacencies of the layers.

$(x)$	$ (x) $	adjacencies	$G(x)$
$(\tau^2)$	20	$3(\tau^2) + 1(2\tau - 1)$	<i>Dod</i>
$(2\tau - 1)$	20	$1(\tau^2) + 3(2)$	empty
$(2)$	30	$2(2\tau - 1) + 2(\tau)$	empty
$(\tau)$	60	$1(2) + 2(\tau) + 1(1)$	$12C_5$
$(1)$	60	$1(\tau) + 1(1) + 2(\tau^{-1})$	$30K_2$
$(\tau^{-1})$	60	$2(1) + 1(\tau^{-2}) + 1(0)$	empty
$(\tau^{-2})$	20	$3(\tau^{-1}) + 1(-\tau^{-2})$	empty
$(0)$	60	$1(\tau^{-1}) + 2(0) + 1(-\tau^{-1})$	$12C_5$
$(-\tau^{-2})$	20	$3(-\tau^{-1}) + 1(\tau^{-2})$	empty
$(-\tau^{-1})$	60	$2(-1) + 1(-\tau^{-2}) + 1(0)$	empty
$(-1)$	60	$1(-\tau) + 1(-1) + 2(-\tau^{-1})$	$30K_2$
$(-\tau)$	60	$1(-2) + 2(-\tau) + 1(-1)$	$12C_5$
$(-2)$	30	$2(-2\tau + 1) + 2(-\tau)$	empty
$(-2\tau - 1)$	20	$1(-\tau^2) + 3(-2)$	empty
$(-\tau^2)$	20	$3(-\tau^2) + 1(-2\tau - 1)$	<i>Dod</i>

We use in Table the following notation. *Dod*,  $12C_5$  and  $30K_2$  are the skeleton of a dodecahedron, 12 disjoint 5-cycles (*pentagons*)  $C_5$  and 30 disjoint edges  $K_2$ , respectively. *Dod* is a strongly regular planar graph on 20 vertices of degree 3. It consists of 12 pentagons  $C_5$ .

The first, the second and the fourth columns of Table give layers  $(x)$ , their cardinality  $|(x)|$  and the graph  $G(x)$  induced in  $G_{120}$  by vertices of the layer  $(x)$ .

The third column of Table shows layers in which the four edges incident to a vertex of the layer  $(x)$  go. The number  $n(x, y)$  in the row  $(x)$  before the layer  $(y)$  denotes the number of edges going from a vertex of the layer  $(x)$  to the layer  $(y)$ . Note that  $\sum_y n(x, y) = 4$  is the degree of  $G_{120}$ .

The number  $n(x, x)$  is the degree of the graph  $G(x)$ . Since the graph  $G_{120} = \cup_x G(x)$  is connected and its degree is 4, we have that  $n(x, x) \leq 3$ . Table shows that  $n(x, x) = 3$  only for two layers  $(\pm\tau^2)$ , i.e. for the facets of  $P_{120}$ .

If  $n(x, x) = 2$ , then the graph  $G(x)$  consists of  $k$  disjoint pentagons  $C_5$ , where  $5k = |(x)|$ . This is the case for  $x = \pm\tau, 0$ , when  $|(x)| = 60$ , and hence  $k = 12$ .

If  $n(x, x) = 1$ , then the graph  $G(x)$  consists of  $m$  disjoint edges  $K_2$ , where  $2m = |(x)|$ . This is the case for  $x = \pm 1$ , when  $|(x)| = 60$ , and hence  $m = 30$ .

If  $n(x, x) = 0$ , then the graph  $G(x)$  has no edges, i.e. it is empty. This is so for  $x = \pm(2\tau - 1), \pm\tau^{-1}, \pm\tau^{-2}$ .

If  $n(x, y) = 1$  and  $x \neq y$ , then a unique vertex of the layer  $(y)$  corresponds to each vertex  $v \in (x)$ . Denote this vertex as  $q_y(v)$

Since  $n(\tau^2, 2\tau - 1) = n(2\tau - 1, \tau^2) = 1$ , we have a one- to-one correspondence between vertices of the layers  $(\tau^2)$  and  $(2\tau - 1)$ .

Using Table we can describe the graph  $G(2\tau - 1, 2)$  induced in  $G_{120}$  by the layers  $(2\tau - 1)$  and  $(2)$ . The vertices of this graph from the layer  $(2\tau - 1)$  have degree 3, and the vertices from the layer  $(2)$  have degree 2. Hence the graph  $G(2\tau - 1, \tau)$  is a dodecahedron with one vertex (of degree 2) on each edge of this dodecahedron. Each pentagon  $C_5$  of the dodecahedron is transformed into a 10-gon  $C_{10}$ .

Each vertex  $w \in (2\tau - 1)$  is adjacent in  $G_{120}$  to the unique vertex  $q_{\tau^2}(w) \in (\tau^2)$ , and each vertex  $v \in (2)$  is adjacent in  $G_{120}$  to two vertices of the layer  $(\tau)$ . Since  $n(\tau, 2) = 1$ , the vertex  $q_2(v) \in (2)$  is uniquely determined for each vertex  $v \in (\tau)$ , and, since  $n(2, \tau) = 2$ , there are two vertices  $v, v' \in (\tau)$  such that  $q_2(v) = q_2(v')$ .

The graph  $G'_1 := G(2\tau - 1, 2, \tau)$  induced in  $G_{120}$  by the three layers  $(2\tau - 1)$ ,  $(2)$  and  $(\tau)$  contains 110 vertices and it is as follows. Recall that  $G(2\tau - 1, 2)$  contains 12 10-gons  $C_{10}$ . The graph  $G'_1$  contains a pentagon  $C_5 \subset G(\tau)$  corresponding to a 10-gon  $C_{10}$  such that each vertex  $v \in C_5 \subset G(\tau)$  is adjacent to the unique vertex  $q_2(v) \in C_{10}$ . Recall that the vertices of  $C_{10}$  distinct from  $q_2(v)$  are adjacent to vertices of  $Dod = G(\tau^2)$ .

Denote by  $G_1$  the graph induced in  $G_{120}$  by vertices of the 4 layers  $(\tau^2)$ ,  $(2\tau - 1)$ ,  $(2)$  and  $(\tau)$ . The vertices of  $G_1$  have degrees 3 and 4. The degree 3 is the degree of vertices of the layer  $(\tau)$ . The forth edges incident to these vertices in  $G_{120}$  go to the layer  $(1)$ .

Table shows that there is a one-to-one correspondence between vertices of the layers  $(\tau)$  and  $(1)$ , since  $n(\tau, 1) = n(1, \tau) = 1$ . Hence, for  $v \in (\tau)$ , the vertex  $q_1(v)$  belongs to the layer  $(1)$ , and  $q_\tau(u) \in (\tau)$  for each  $u \in (1)$ .

Recall that  $q_2(v) \in (2)$  is the unique vertex of the layer  $(2)$  corresponding to  $v \in (\tau)$ , and there is once more vertex  $v' \in (\tau)$  such that  $q_2(v') = q_2(v)$ . The vertices  $q_1(v)$  and  $q_1(v')$  of the layer  $(1)$  are adjacent in  $G(1)$ . There are two edges going from the layer  $(1)$  into the layer  $(\tau^{-1})$ . Note that the 5 vertices  $v, v' \in (\tau)$ ,  $q_2(v) = q_2(v') \in (2)$ ,  $q_1(v), q_1(v') \in (1)$  induce an (isometric) pentagon.

Now, using Table, we describe the graph  $G_2$  induced in  $G_{120}$  by the 4 layers  $(1)$ ,  $(\tau^{-1})$ ,  $(\tau^{-2})$  and  $(0)$ . The subgraph  $G(1, \tau^{-1})$  of  $G_2$  induced by the layers  $(1)$  and  $(\tau^{-1})$  consists of 12 vertex disjoint 10-gons  $C_{10}$ . The vertices of  $(1)$  and  $(\tau^{-1})$  lie in each  $C_{10}$  in turn. The 5 vertices of  $C_{10}$  from the layer  $(1)$  have degree 3, and other 5 vertices of  $C_{10}$  from the layer  $(\tau^{-1})$  have degree 2. Since  $n(1, 1) = 1$ , there is a pairing  $q_1$  of vertices from the layer  $(1)$  in the graph  $G(1, \tau^{-1})$ . This pairing connects vertices of distinct  $C_{10}$ . Call two 10-gons *neighbouring* if they have a pair of adjacent vertices of  $G(1)$ .

Since  $n(\tau^{-1}, \tau^{-2}) = 1$ , there corresponds a unique vertex  $q_{\tau^{-2}}(u)$  to each vertex  $u \in (\tau^{-1})$ . Table shows that the vertex  $q_{\tau^{-2}}(u) \in (\tau^{-2})$  has degree

3 in the graph  $G_2$ . Let  $u_1, u_2, u_3$  be vertices of  $(\tau^{-1})$  such that  $q_{\tau^{-2}}(u_1) = q_{\tau^{-2}}(u_2) = q_{\tau^{-2}}(u_3) = w \in (\tau^{-2})$ . The 3 vertices  $u_i, 1 \leq i \leq 3$ , belong to 3 distinct pairwise neighbouring 10-gons  $C_{10}^i$ . Let  $v_{i1}$  and  $v_{i2}$  be two vertices of the layer (1) adjacent to the vertex  $u_i \in (\tau^{-1}), 1 \leq i \leq 3$ . All the six vertices  $v_{ij}$  are distinct. Moreover, we can denote the vertices  $v_{ij}$  such that  $v_{ij}$  and  $v_{i+1,j+1}$  are adjacent in  $G_2$ , where  $i+1$  and  $j+1$  are considered by modulo 3 and 2, respectively. Hence the 5 vertices  $w, u_i, u_{i+1}, v_{i,j}$  and  $v_{i+1,j+1}$  for the corresponding  $j$  induce a pentagon.

By Table, the subgraph  $G(0) \subseteq G_2$  consists of 12 disjoint pentagons  $C_5$ . Since  $n(0, \tau^{-1}) = 1$ , there corresponds a unique vertex  $q_{\tau^{-1}}(v)$  to each  $v \in (0)$ . Since  $n(\tau^{-1}, 0) = 1$ , there is a one-to-one correspondence between vertices of the layers  $(\tau^{-1})$  and  $(0)$  such that the 5 vertices of a pentagon of the graph  $G(0)$  correspond to 5 vertices of  $(\tau^{-1})$  of the same 10-gon.

The graph  $G_2$  is planar. It can be drawn as follows. There is a pentagon inside each of the 12 vertex disjoint 10-gons. The vertices of the layer  $(\tau^{-2})$  lie inside 9-gons formed by 3 pairs of adjacent edges of 3 pairwise neighbouring 10-gons and by 3 disjoint edges of  $G(1)$ .

Let  $G_{-1}$  and  $G_{-2}$  be graphs similar to  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  but induced by the corresponding layers with negative signs.

The graph  $G_{120}$  is the following union of the graphs  $G_1, G_2, G_{-2}$  and  $G_{-1}$ . The vertices of  $G_1$  ( $G_{-1}$ , respectively) from the layer  $(\tau)$  ( $(-\tau)$ , respectively) are adjacent the uniquely determined vertices of  $G_2$  ( $G_{-2}$ ) from the layer (1) (from the layer  $(-1)$ , respectively), since  $n(\tau, 1) = n(1, \tau) = 1$  (and  $n(-\tau, -1) = n(-1, -\tau) = 1$ ). The graphs  $G_2$  and  $G_{-2}$  are glued by pentagons of the common subgraph  $G(0)$ . Besides, since  $n(\tau^{-2}, -\tau^{-2}) = n(-\tau^{-2}, \tau^{-2}) = 1$ , there is a one-to-one pairing the vertices of the layers  $(\tau^{-2})$  and  $(-\tau^{-2})$  by edges.

Let  $G_{1,2}$  ( $G_{-1,-2}$ ) be a subgraph of  $G_{120}$  induced by vertices of  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  ( $G_{-1}$  and  $G_{-2}$ , respectively). Obviously  $G_{1,2}$  and  $G_{-1,-2}$  are isomorphic and  $G_{1,2} \cap G_{-1,-2} = G(0)$ . Since there is a one-to-one correspondence between paths in  $G_{1,2}$  and  $G_{-1,-2}$ , we have the following obvious fact.

**Proposition 1** *The graphs  $G_{1,2}$  and  $G_{-1,-2}$  are isometric subgraphs of  $G_{120}$ .*

Consider the vertices of the graphs  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  from the layers  $(\tau)$  and (1), respectively. Recall that since  $n(\tau, 1) = n(1, \tau) = 1$ , there is a one-to-one correspondence  $q_1$  between these sets of vertices. Moreover, this correspondence generates a one-to-one correspondence between the 12 disjoint pentagons of the graph  $G(\tau) \subset G_1$  and the 12 disjoint 10-gons of the graph  $G(1, \tau^{-1}) \subseteq G_2$ .

By an inspection of the graphs  $G_1$  and  $G_2$  one can prove the following

**Lemma 1** *For  $v_1, v_2 \in (\tau)$  let  $q_1(v_1), q_1(v_2)$  be the corresponding vertices of the layer (1). Let  $l_1(v_1, v_2), l_2(q_1(v_1), q_1(v_2))$  be the lengths of the shortest*

paths connected  $v_1$  and  $v_2$  in  $G_1$  and  $q_1(v_1)$  and  $q_1(v_2)$  in  $G_2$ . Then

$$l_2(q_1(v_1), q_1(v_2)) \geq l_1(v_1, v_2) \text{ if } l_1(v_1, v_2) > 2.$$

Note that  $l_2(q_1(v_1), q_1(v_2)) = 1$  if  $l_1(v_1, v_2) = 2$ .

Let  $p(v, v')$  be a path connecting in  $G_{120}$  vertices  $v, v' \in G_1$ . If  $p(v, v')$  contains vertices of the graph  $G_2$ , then there exist at least two vertices  $u, u' \in (\tau) \subset G_1$  such that the subpath  $p(u, u') \subset p(v, v')$  contains besides  $u, u'$  no other vertex of  $G_1$ . The vertices  $q_1(u)$  and  $q_1(u')$  are adjacent to  $u$  and  $u'$  in the path  $p(u, u')$ . Now the above Lemma 1 implies

**Proposition 2** *The graph  $G_1$  is an isometric subgraph of  $G_{120}$ .*

Consider a subgraph  $G'$  of  $G_1$  induced by a pentagon of  $G(\tau)$  and the corresponding 10-gon  $C_{10}$  of  $G(2\tau - 1, 2)$ . It is easy to verify that  $C_{10}$  is an isometric subgraph of  $G'$ . This implies

**Proposition 3** *The graph  $G_0$  induced by the 3 layers  $(\tau^2)$ ,  $(2\tau - 1)$  and  $(2)$  is an isometric subgraph of  $G_1$ .*

**Theorem 1** *The graph  $G_0$  is not 5-gonal.*

**Proof:** We give 5 vertices  $a, B, a, b, c$  of  $G_0$  that violate the following pentagonal inequality

$$\sum_{u, v \in S} d(u, v) + \sum_{u', v' \in S'} d(u', v') \leq \sum_{v \in S, v' \in S'} d(v, v'),$$

where  $S = \{A, B\}$ ,  $S' = \{a, b, c\}$ .

Two 10-gons of  $G_0$  either disjoint or have 3 common vertices (and two common adjacent edges). Call two 10-gons *adjacent* if they are not disjoint. Consider four 10-gons  $C_{10}^i$ ,  $1 \leq i \leq 4$ , such that  $C_{10}^1$  is adjacent to  $C_{10}^i$  for  $2 \leq i \leq 4$ ,  $C_{10}^3$  is adjacent to  $C_{10}^2$  and  $C_{10}^4$ , but  $C_{10}^2$  and  $C_{10}^4$  are disjoint.

The intersections  $(C_{10}^1 \cap C_{10}^3) \cap C_{10}^2$  and  $(C_{10}^1 \cap C_{10}^3) \cap C_{10}^4$  are nonempty, and each contains one vertex, say  $v^2$  and  $v^4$ , respectively. The intersection  $C_{10}^1 \cap C_{10}^3$  consists of 3 vertices  $v^2, v^4$  and a third vertex that we call  $c$ .

Let  $a \in C_{10}^2$  and  $b \in C_{10}^4$  be vertices at distance 5 in the corresponding 10-gons from the vertices  $v^2 \in C_{10}^2$  and  $v^4 \in C_{10}^4$ , respectively. Let  $A \in C_{10}^2$  be a vertex adjacent to  $a$ . We have two vertices in  $C_{10}^4$  adjacent to the vertex  $b \in C_{10}^4$ . Let  $B \in C_{10}^4$  be those of these vertices that is farther in  $G_0$  from the vertex  $A$ .

It is easy to verify that the distances in  $G_0$  between the 5 vertices  $A, B, a, b, c$  are as follows:

$$d(a, c) = d(b, c) = 6; \quad d(a, b) = 8; \quad d(A, B) = 7;$$



$$d(a, B) = d(b, A) = 7; \quad d(c, A) = d(c, B) = 5; \quad d(a, A) = d(b, B) = 1.$$

Hence  $\sum_{u,v \in S} d(u, v) + \sum_{u',v' \in S'} d(u', v') = 2 \times 6 + 8 + 7 = 27 > 26 = 2 \times (7 + 5 + 1) = \sum_{v \in S, v' \in S'} d(v, v')$ .  $\square$

Since  $G_0$  is an isometric subgraph of  $G_{120}$ , we have

**Corollary 1** *The skeleton  $G_{120}$  of the 120 cell is not 5-gonal and so not  $ell_1$ -graph (see [3] for the context of it).*

## References

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