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A COUNTEREXAMPLE TO A QUESTION OF BAPAT AND SUNDER

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Abstract. A counterexample to a question of Bapat and Sunder is presented.

Key words. Permanent, Hadamard product, Oppenheim’s inequality.

AMS subject classifications. 15A15.

1. Introduction. In [1], Bapat and Sunder raise the question of whether the inequality

$$\text{per}(A \circ B) \leq \text{per}(A) \prod_{j=1}^{n} b_{ij}$$

(1.1)

holds for positive semidefinite $n \times n$ matrices $A$ and $B$. The quantity $\text{per}(A)$ denotes the permanent of $A$ and the notation $A \circ B$ is for the Hadamard (entrywise) product of $A$ and $B$. This is the permanental version of Oppenheim’s inequality. It is the objective of this article to provide a counterexample. The question is related to two other questions:

- The permanent on top conjecture, recently disproved by Shchesnovich [4] which would have implied [1,1] had it been true.
- The inequality $\text{per}(A \circ B) \leq \text{per}(A) \text{per}(B)$ introduced by Chollet [2] and established in the case $n = 3$ by Gregorac and Hentzel [3]. This inequality would be a consequence of [1,1] had it been true. Chollet’s conjecture remains open. For a relatively recent discussion of Chollet’s conjecture, the reader may consult Zhang [5].

2. The counterexample. With $n = 7$, we take

$$A = \begin{pmatrix}
1 & 0 & \frac{1}{2} & e^\frac{i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{2i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{3i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{4i\pi}{5} \\
0 & 1 & \frac{1}{2} & e^\frac{i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{2i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{3i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{4i\pi}{5} \\
\frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{2} & 1 & \frac{1}{2} & e^\frac{5i\pi}{11} & e^\frac{10i\pi}{11} & e^\frac{15i\pi}{11} \\
e^\frac{i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{2i\pi}{5} & \frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{2} & 1 & \frac{1}{2} & e^\frac{5i\pi}{11} \\
e^\frac{2i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{4i\pi}{5} & \frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{2} & 1 & \frac{1}{2} & e^\frac{10i\pi}{11} \\
e^\frac{3i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{6i\pi}{5} & \frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{2} & 1 & \frac{1}{2} & e^\frac{15i\pi}{11} \\
e^\frac{4i\pi}{5} & e^\frac{8i\pi}{5} & \frac{1}{2} & \frac{1}{2} & 1 & \frac{1}{2} & e^\frac{20i\pi}{11} \\
\end{pmatrix}$$

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and \( B = A^T \). Then it is easy to check that \( A \) and \( B \) are hermitian positive semidefinite matrices of rank two (with eigenvalue \( \frac{7}{2} \) of multiplicity two) and that

\[
\text{per}(A \circ B) = \frac{6185}{128},
\]

that \( \prod_{j=1}^{7} b_{jj} = 1 \) and that \( \text{per}(A) = 45 \). We find that

\[
\frac{\text{per}(A \circ B)}{\text{per}(A) \prod_{j=1}^{7} b_{jj}} = \frac{1237}{1152} > 1.
\]

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