

# 5d SCFTs: Geometry, Graphs and Gauge Theories

Sakura Schäfer-Nameki



Simons Collaboration Annual Meeting, Simons Foundation,  
NYC, September 13, 2019

## Special Holonomy and SCFTs

M/String theory on manifolds with special holonomy  $M \times \mathbb{R}^d$  preserves supersymmetry in  $d$  dimensions.

*M compact*, then the theory in  $\mathbb{R}^d$  is generically a supersymmetric gauge theory coupled to supergravity.

*M non-compact*,  $M_{\text{Planck}} \rightarrow \infty$  decouples gravity.

Compact case is well-motivated as a theory of quantum gravity (see talk by Cumrun Vafa), albeit supersymmetry remaining experimentally elusive

$\Rightarrow$  main challenge: construct compact singular  $G_2$  holonomy manifolds.

Alternative motivation: application to **formal quantum field theory (QFT)**, i.e. the study of QFT properties, dynamics, moduli spaces, symmetries, etc. without an immediate real world application.

## Special Holonomy and SCFTs

In this framework there is a natural, very central question in string theory:

**Question: can we embed and even classify superconformal field theories (SCFTs)?**

Nahm classified the superconformal algebras:  $d \leq 6$ .

- 6d (2, 0): Type IIB on non-compact K3,  $\mathbb{C}^2/\Gamma_{ADE}$
- 6d (1, 0): Putative classification in the last few years as F-theory on singular

$$\mathbb{E}_\tau \hookrightarrow \text{CY}_3 \rightarrow B_2$$

- 5d  $\mathcal{N} = 1$ : M-theory on CY<sub>3</sub> with canonical singularity  
⇒ how to systematically proceed?

## 5d $\mathcal{N} = 1$ Gauge Theories and SCFTs

5d  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  gauge theories are IR-free. Many can be thought of as deformations of 5d  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  SCFTs in the UV, which are intrinsically non-perturbative.

Weakly-coupled description:

Consider  $G_{\text{gauge}}$  and classical flavor symmetry  $G_{F, \text{cl}}$  and

Vector multiplet:  $\mathcal{A} = (A_\mu, \phi^i, \lambda)$

Hyper-multiplet in  $\mathbf{R}_F$  of  $G_{F, \text{cl}}$ :  $\mathbf{h} = (h \oplus h^c, \psi)$ .

Coulomb branch (CB) is parametrized by  $\langle \phi^i \rangle \neq 0$ .

Effective dynamics on CB is governed by the pre-potential:

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{F} &= \mathcal{F}_{\text{classical}} + \mathcal{F}_{\text{1-loop}} \\ &= \left( \frac{1}{2g_{YM}^2} C_{ij}^{\text{gauge}} \phi^i \phi^j + \frac{k}{6} d_{ij\ell} \phi^i \phi^j \phi^\ell \right) + \frac{1}{12} \left( \sum_{\alpha \text{ roots}} |\phi \cdot \alpha|^3 - \sum_{\lambda_F \in \mathbf{R}_F} |\lambda_F \cdot \phi + m_F|^3 \right)\end{aligned}$$

which determines the effective Lagrangian

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{eff}} = G_{ij} d\phi^i \wedge \star d\phi^j + G_{ij} F^i \wedge \star F^j + \frac{c_{ij\ell}}{24\pi^2} A^i \wedge F^j \wedge F^\ell$$

where  $G_{ij}$  and CS-levels  $c_{ij\ell}$  are derivatives of  $\mathcal{F}$ .

Example: Rank 1 Theories [Seiberg]

- $G_{\text{gauge}} = SU(2)$  with  $N_F$  fundamental flavors,  $N_F = 1, \dots, 8$
- 1d Coulomb branch, weakly coupled flavor symmetry  
 $G_{F,cl} = SO(2N_F)$
- In the UV:  $G_{F,cl} \hookrightarrow G_F = E_{N_F+1}$  ‘super-conformal flavor symmetry’.

In general: difficult to come by properties of the UV fixed points from CB.  
 $\Rightarrow$  Framework which encodes UV and IR descriptions?

## Strategy

- Classification of 6d  $(1,0)$  SCFTs: F-theory on elliptically fibered non-compact Calabi-Yau threefold [Heckman, Morrison, (Rudelius), Vafa][Bhardwaj]
- 6d to 5d:
  - ⇒ Compactification on  $S^1$ : 5d **marginal theory** (UV completes in 6d).
  - ⇒ Add masses to hypermultiplets: flows to a 5d UV fixed point.
  - ⇒ M-theory on same CY3 provides setting to interpolate between UV and IR description.
- Can we identify and characterize all such 5d SCFTs?
  - ⇒ Yes, we propose a combinatorial way, based on graphs, to do so.

# Proposal

[Apruzzi, Lawrie, Lin, SSN, Wang]

Given a 5d marginal theory:

# We propose a graph-based approach, using (“Combined Fiber Diagrams” (CFDs)) which describe all descendant 5d SCFTs including

- ★ strongly coupled (usually enhanced) flavor symmetry
- ★ Mass deformations, i.e. descendant SCFTs
- ★ BPS states

# Extended Coulomb branch phases ( $\langle\phi\rangle +$  masses  $m_F$ , i.e. Coulomb branch parameters to weakly gauge the classical flavor symmetry) are matched with geometric moduli space (partial resolutions of singular CY3)

# Computationally, useful tool: 5d SCFTs from M-theory on elliptic CY3 with non-flat resolutions.

## M theory on Calabi-Yau threefold — 5d Dictionary

1.  $S_i$  compact divisors  $i = 1, \dots, r$ , give rise to  $C_3 = A_i \wedge \omega_i$   
 $\Rightarrow U(1)^r$  gauge bosons, gauge coupling  $1/\text{vol}(S_i)$   
★  $S_i \rightarrow C_i$  (collapse to curve)  $\Rightarrow U(1)^r$  enhances to  $G_{\text{gauge}}$   
★  $S_i \rightarrow$  point (collapse to point)  $\Rightarrow$  strong coupling

2. Prepotential:

$$\mathcal{F}(\phi, m_F) \leftrightarrow \mathcal{F}_{\text{geo}} = (S_i \cdot S_j \cdot S_k) \phi^i \phi^j \phi^k$$

Extended Coulomb branch  $(\phi, m_F)$  (weakly gauging flavor sym)  
identified with extended Kähler cone of the CY3 singularity.

3. Flavor symmetry in UV  $G_F$ : fibers of ADE singularities over non-compact curves, that are contained in  $S_i$
4. Mass deformations: flop transitions of curves out of  $S_i$ .
5. M2-wrapping modes on curves: BPS states (M5s: strings)

## Elliptic Calabi-Yau three-folds

Starting point: **Marginal 5d theory**, which is based on 6d SCFT on  $S^1$ . 6d theory is F-theory on a non-compact elliptic CY3:

- Elliptic CY3  $\mathbb{E}_\tau \hookrightarrow Y_3 \rightarrow B$ , with a section has Weierstrass form

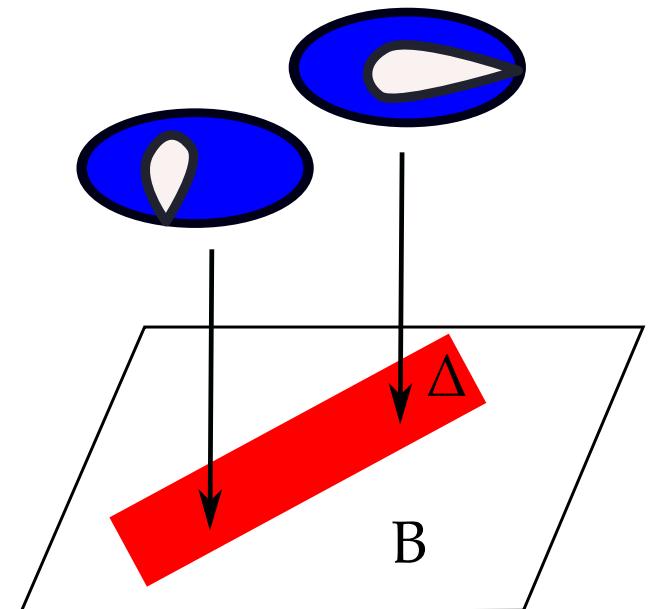
$$y^2 = x^3 + fx + g$$

Noncompact base  $B$ : locally  $\mathbb{C}^2$ , with coordinates  $u, v$

- Discriminant: Singular fiber above  $u = 0$ :

$$\Delta = 4f^3 + 27g^2 = O(u^n)$$

- Kodaira fiber above  $u = 0$ , i.e. in codim 1.



# Classification of Singular Fibers

Codim 1 in base: **Kodaira** classified singular fibers

$$\boxed{\text{Singular fibers}} \longleftrightarrow \boxed{\text{ADE affine Dynkin diagram}}$$

ON ANALYTIC SURFACES: II

565

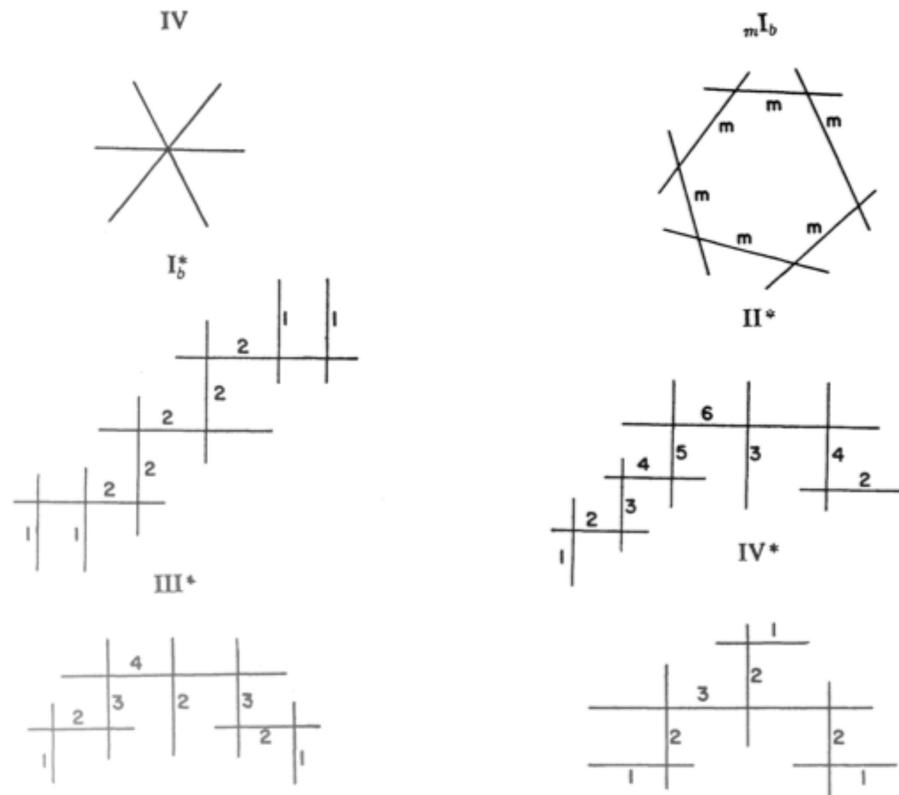


FIGURE 1. Each line represents  $\Theta_{ps}$ ; the integer attached to the line gives  $n_{ps}$ .

	$\text{ord}_S(f)$	$\text{ord}_S(g)$	$\text{ord}_S(\Delta)$	singularity	local gauge group factor
$I_0$	$\geq 0$	$\geq 0$	0	none	–
$I_1$	0	0	1	none	–
$I_2$	0	0	2	$A_1$	$SU(2)$
$I_m, m \geq 1$	0	0	$m$	$A_{m-1}$	$Sp([\frac{m}{2}])$ or $SU(m)$
$II$	$\geq 1$	1	2	none	–
$III$	1	$\geq 2$	3	$A_1$	$SU(2)$
$IV$	$\geq 2$	2	4	$A_2$	$Sp(1)$ or $SU(3)$
$I_0^*$	$\geq 2$	$\geq 3$	6	$D_4$	$G_2$ or $SO(7)$ or $SO(8)$
$I_m^*, m \geq 1$	2	3	$m+6$	$D_{m+4}$	$SO(2m+7)$ or $SO(2m+8)$
$IV^*$	$\geq 3$	4	8	$E_6$	$F_4$ or $E_6$
$III^*$	3	$\geq 5$	9	$E_7$	$E_7$
$II^*$	$\geq 4$	5	10	$E_8$	$E_8$
non-minimal	$\geq 4$	$\geq 6$	$\geq 12$	non-canonical	–

Kodaira's classification of singular fibers and gauge groups

## Minimal versus non-minimal: codimension 2

In codimension 2:  $u = v = 0$  in the base:

1. Minimal: ordinary bifundamental matter, and codimension two fiber are (monodromy-reduced) Kodaira fibers (collection of rational curves).
2. Non-minimal: Weierstrass model

$$y^2 = x^3 + fx + g, \quad \text{ord}_{u=v=0}(f, g, \Delta) \geq (4, 6, 12)$$

Does not have a Calabi-Yau resolution of the fiber that keeps it complex 1d. Two options:

- (1) Blowup the base (6d approach)
- (2) **Fiberal resolution, with non-flat fibers**

## Example: The 6d E-string and 5d rank 1 SCFTs

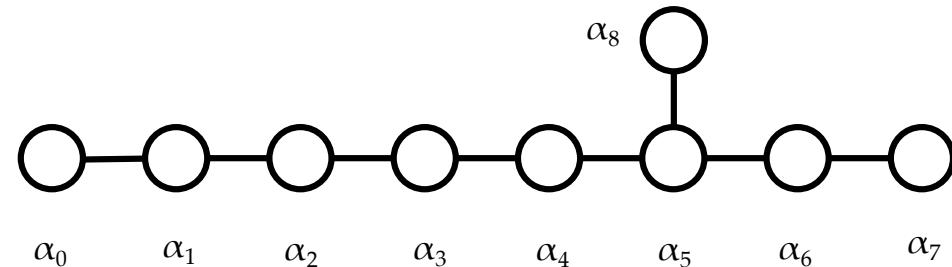
1. Starting point 6d:  $II^* - I_1$  collision: Tate model:

$\text{ord}_u(b_i) = (1, 2, 3, 4, 5)$  and  $\text{ord}_v(b_i) = (0, 0, 0, 0, 1)$

$$y^2 + b_1 uxy + b_3 u^3 = x^3 + b_2 u^2 x^2 + b_4 u^4 x + b_6 u^5 v$$

2. Geometry after blowup:

1.  $\widehat{E}_8$  worth of non-compact surfaces, fibered by  $\mathbb{P}^1 = S^2$

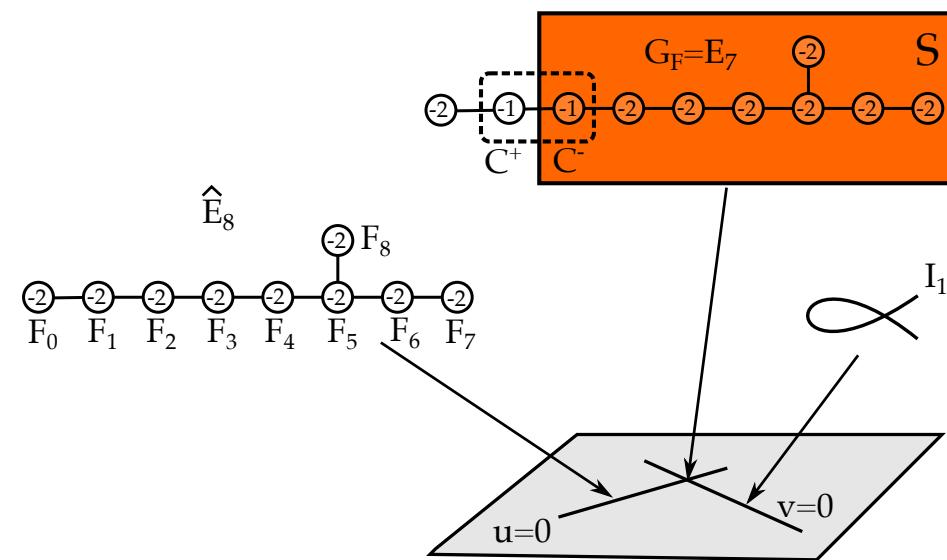


2.  $S \longleftrightarrow$  Compact surface component

$\Rightarrow$  Rank 1 gauge group

# E-string: Non-Flat Resolution

Non-flat fiber resolution



Physics:

Non-flat fiber surface is compact  $S \leftrightarrow U(1)$  gauge field.

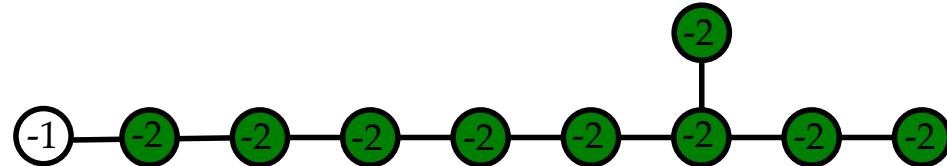
Flavor  $\mathbb{P}^1$ s contained in  $S_i$  remain flavor symmetries as  $\text{vol}(S_i) \rightarrow 0$  limit.

Geometry:

- Different resolution sequences of the  $E_8$  and codim 2 non-flat locus, yield different 5d theories.
- They are related by flops: shrinking  $-1$  curves and transforming them out of the surface  $S$ .
- Strategy: start with “marginal” theory, i.e.  $\mathbb{P}_i^1 \subset S_1$  for all  $i = 0, \dots, 8$ , and descend to other models by flops.

Marginal model for rank one theories:  $S_1 = gdP_9$  showing curves

$$\mathbb{P}_i^1 = S_1 \cdot D_i$$



## Non-flat Resolutions from Graph-Transitions

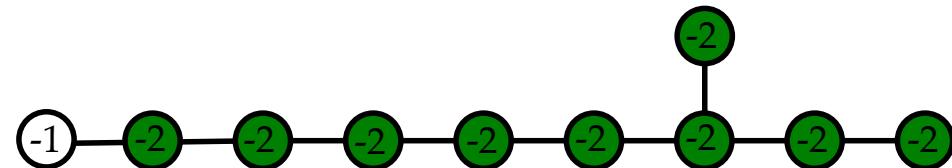
Start with diagram of curves that are contained in the compact surface  $S$ .  
*For higher rank: Consider Mori cone generators of reducible surface  $\cup_k S_k$ .*

Combined Fiber Diagram (CFD):

CFDs are graphs with:

- # Vertices: Curves  $C_i$ , labeled by  $C_i^2 = n_i$
- # Edges:  $C_i \cdot C_j = m_{i,j}$  edges connecting vertices
- # Marked vertices:  $n_i = -2$  colored  
⇒ subgraph = Dynkin of superconformal flavor symmetry

Marginal rank 1 CFD:



## CFD Transitions

Given a CFD, the descendant CFDs are obtained by removing  $n_i = (-1)$  vertex and updating

$$n'_j = n_j + m_{i,j}^2$$

$$m'_{j,k} = m_{j,k} + m_{i,j}m_{i,k}$$

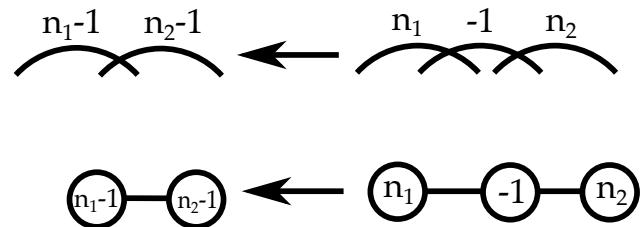
Any  $(-2)$ -vertex whose  $n_j$  changes becomes unmarked.

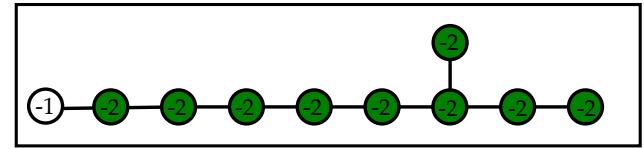
$\Rightarrow$  Network of CFDs/SCFTs

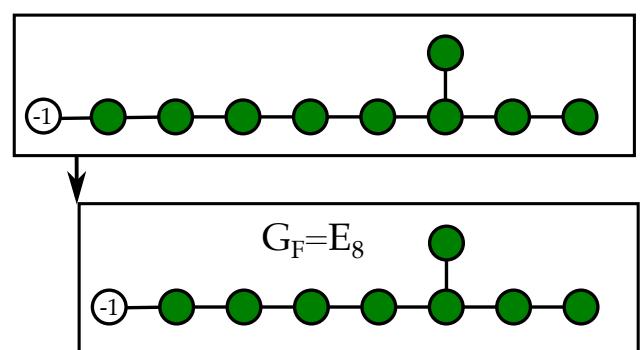
What are these?

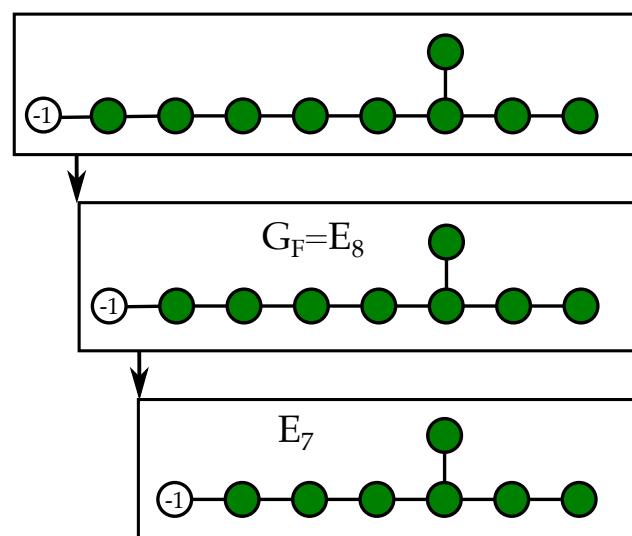
# 5d SCFT: gives mass to flavors, decoupling them and leads to weakly coupled theory for another SCFT

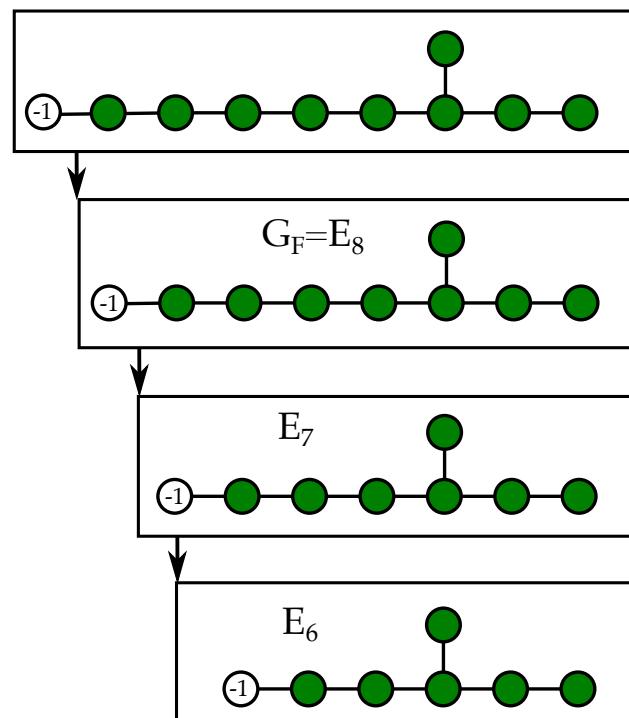
# Geometry:  $(-1)$  curves can be contracted and flopped out of  $S_i$ :

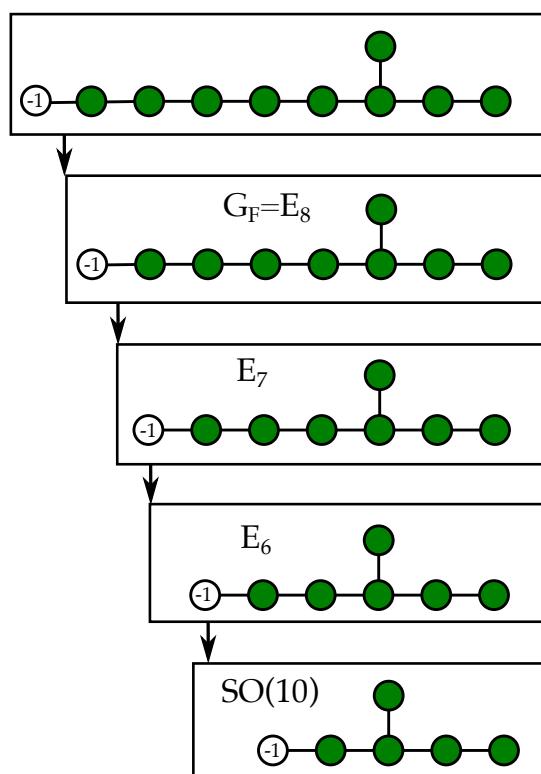


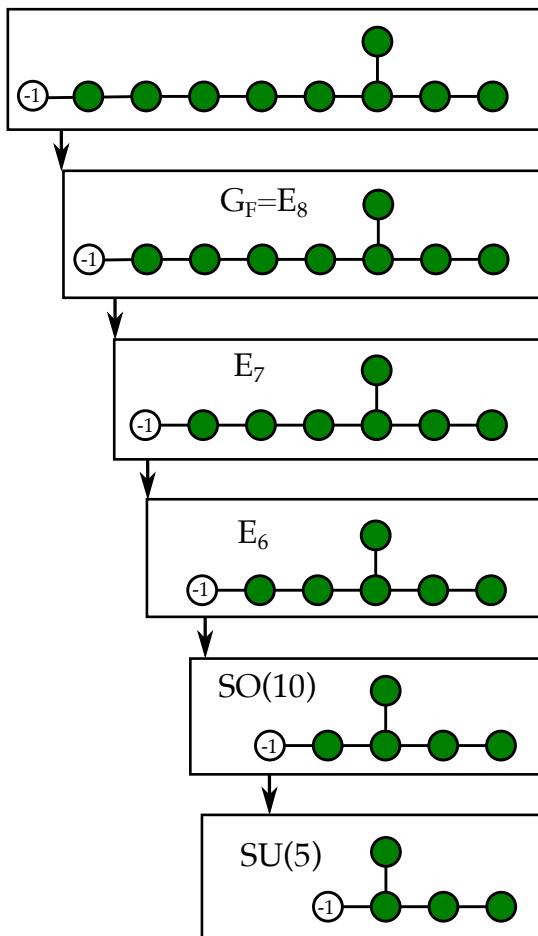


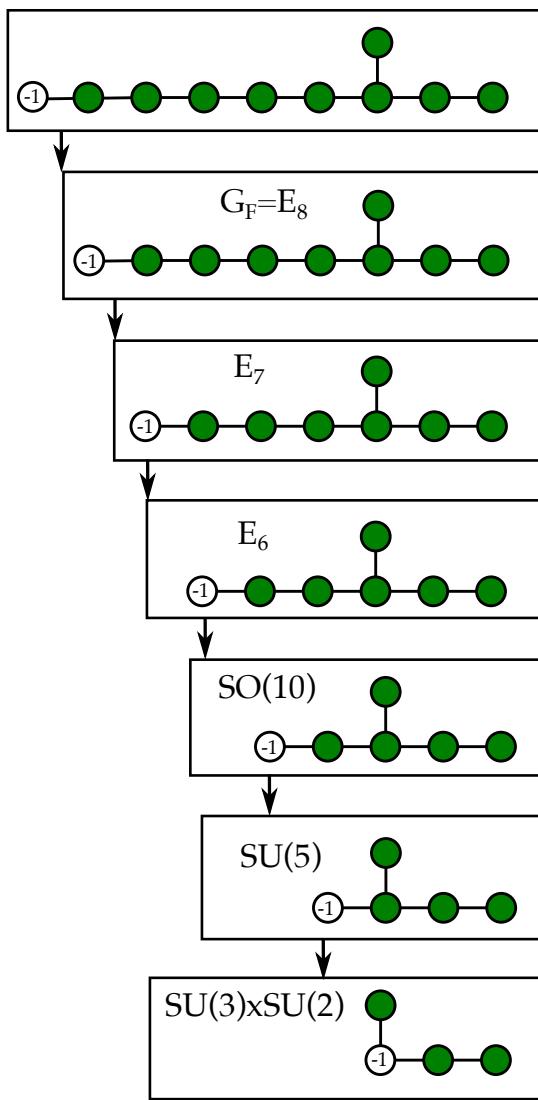


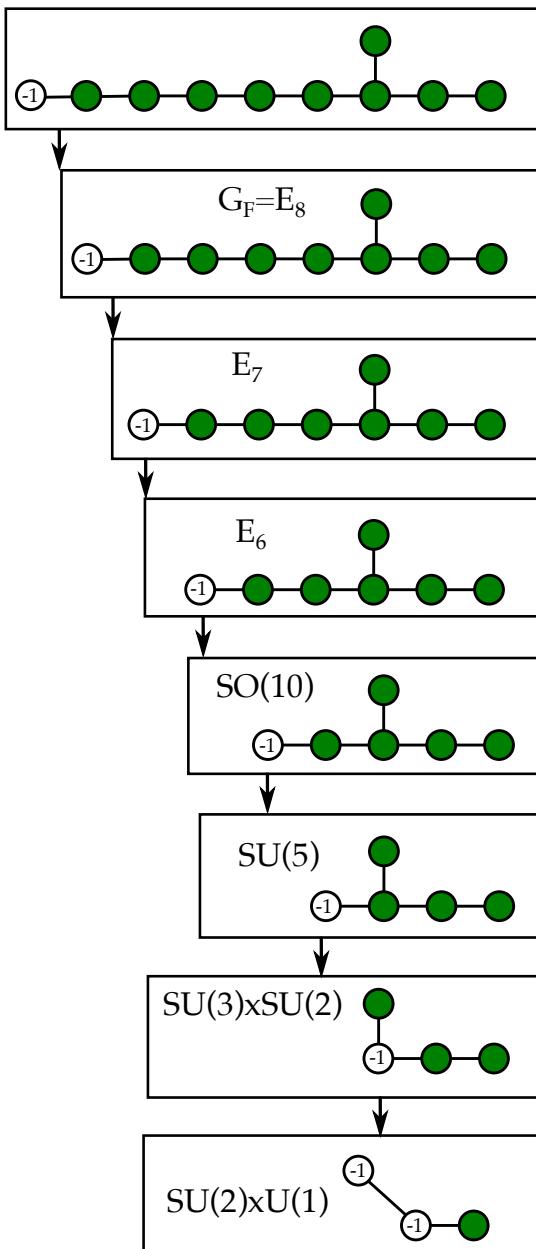


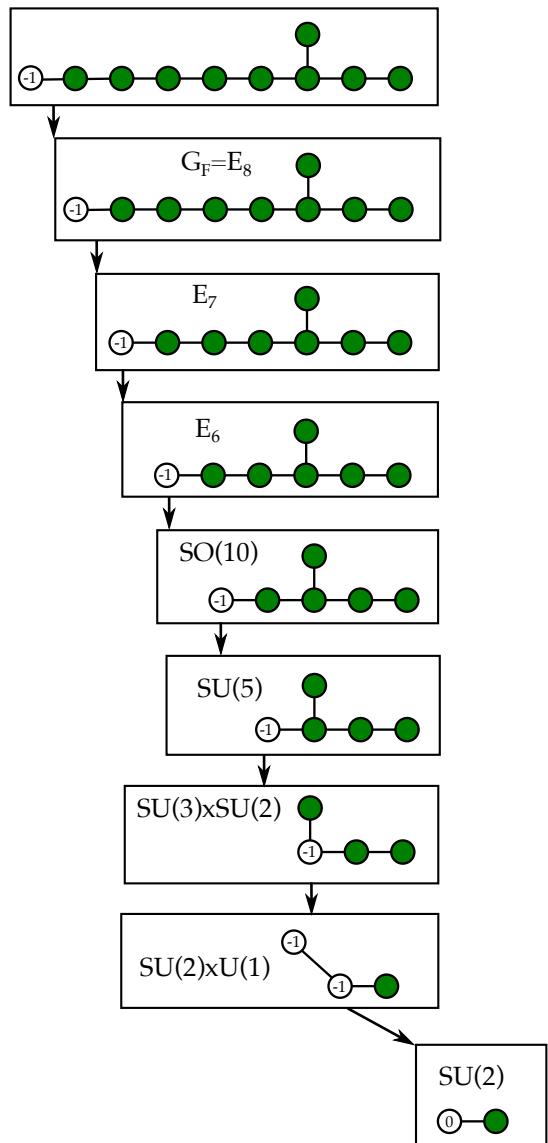


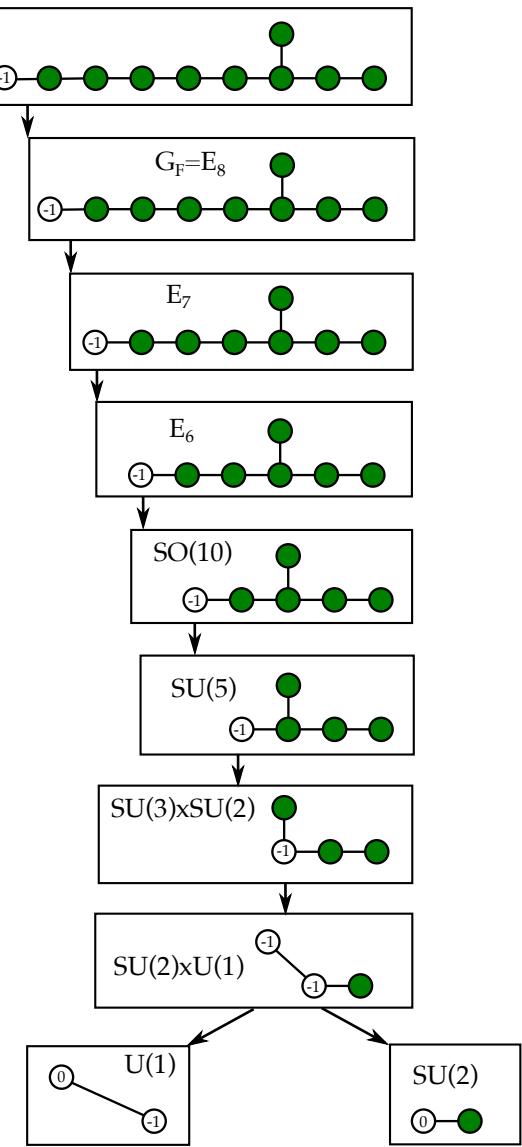


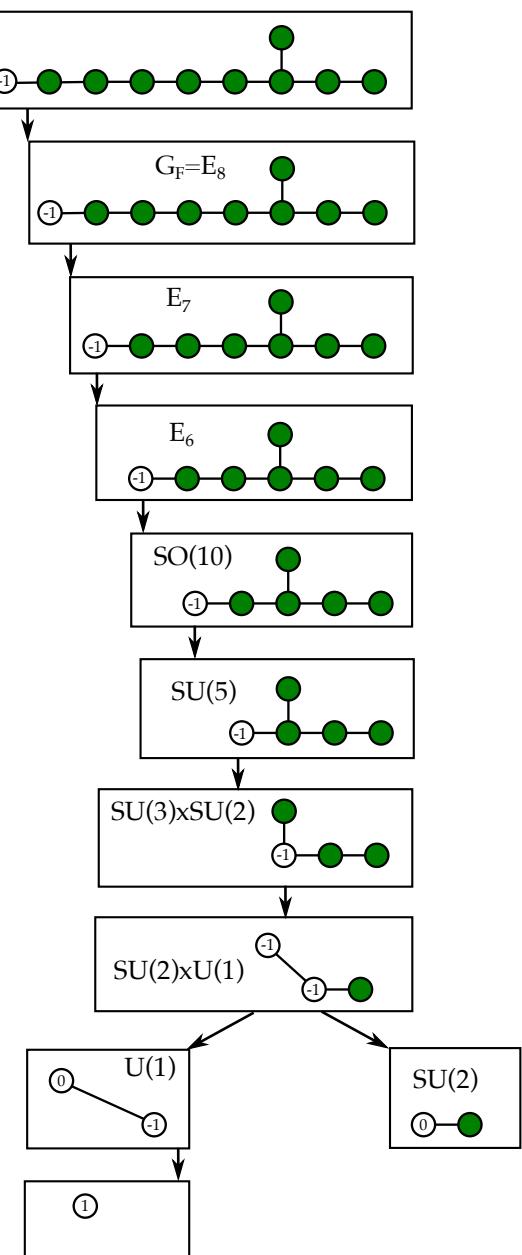


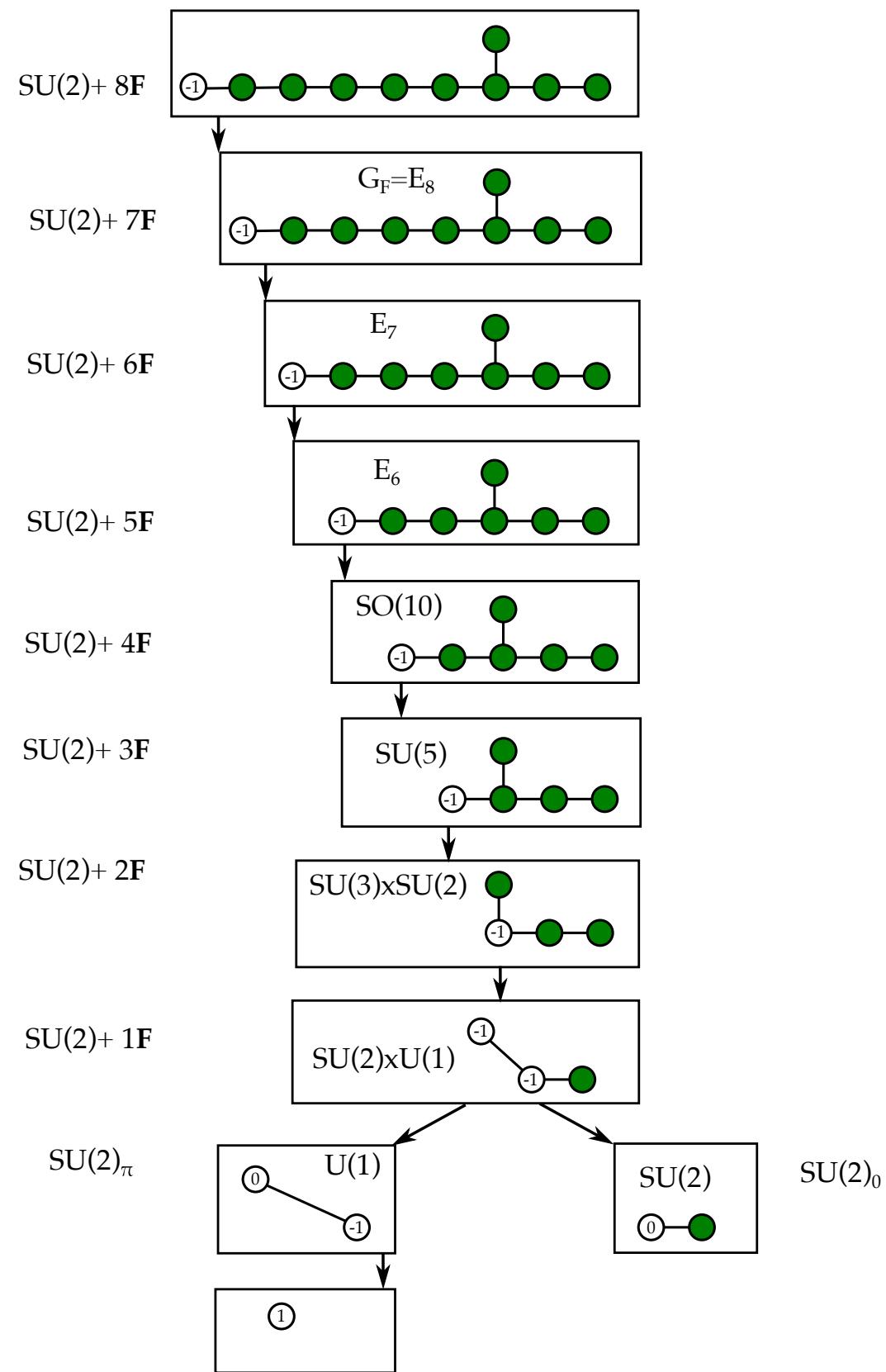












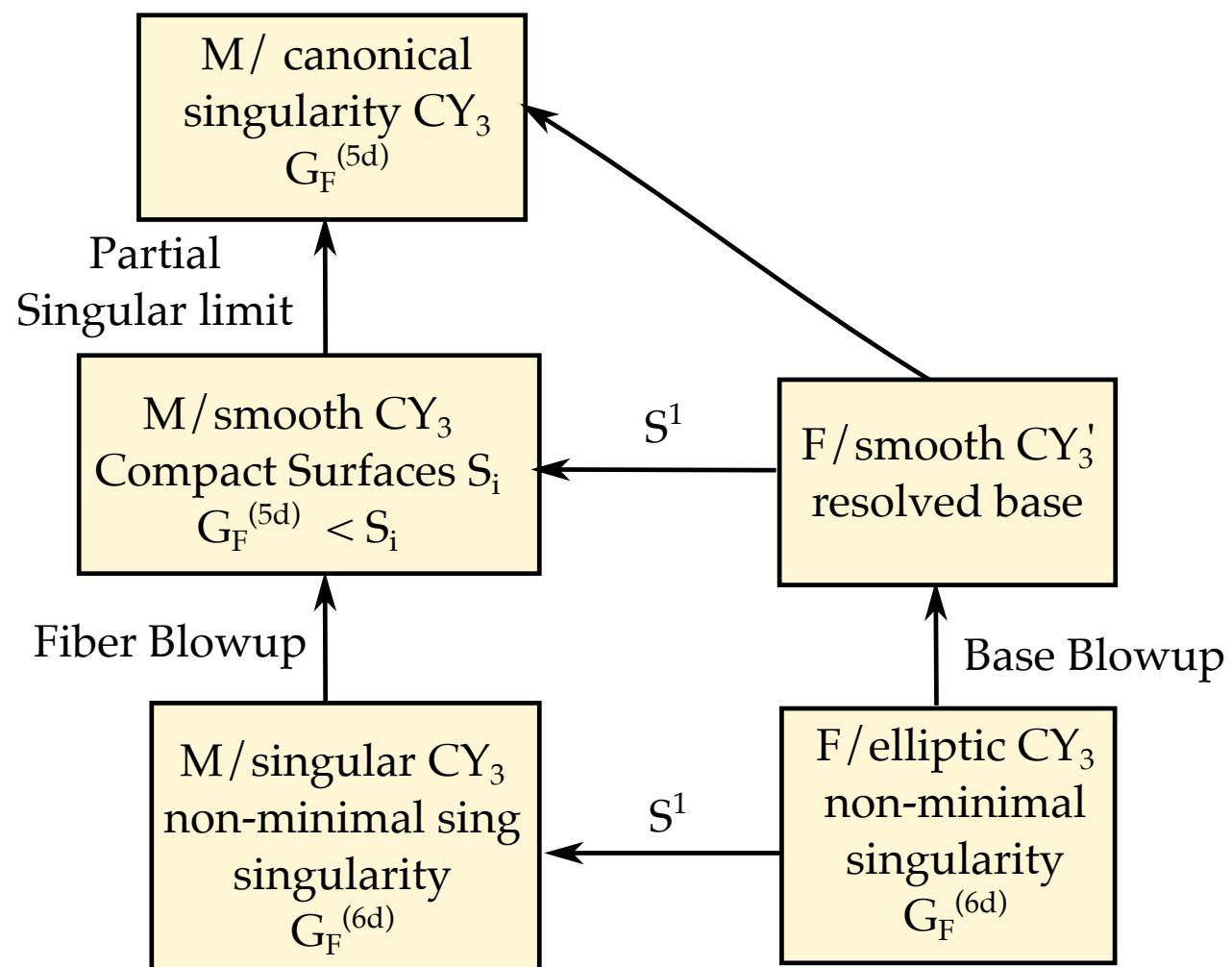
## Rank 1 CFDs

This constructs precisely the known theories:

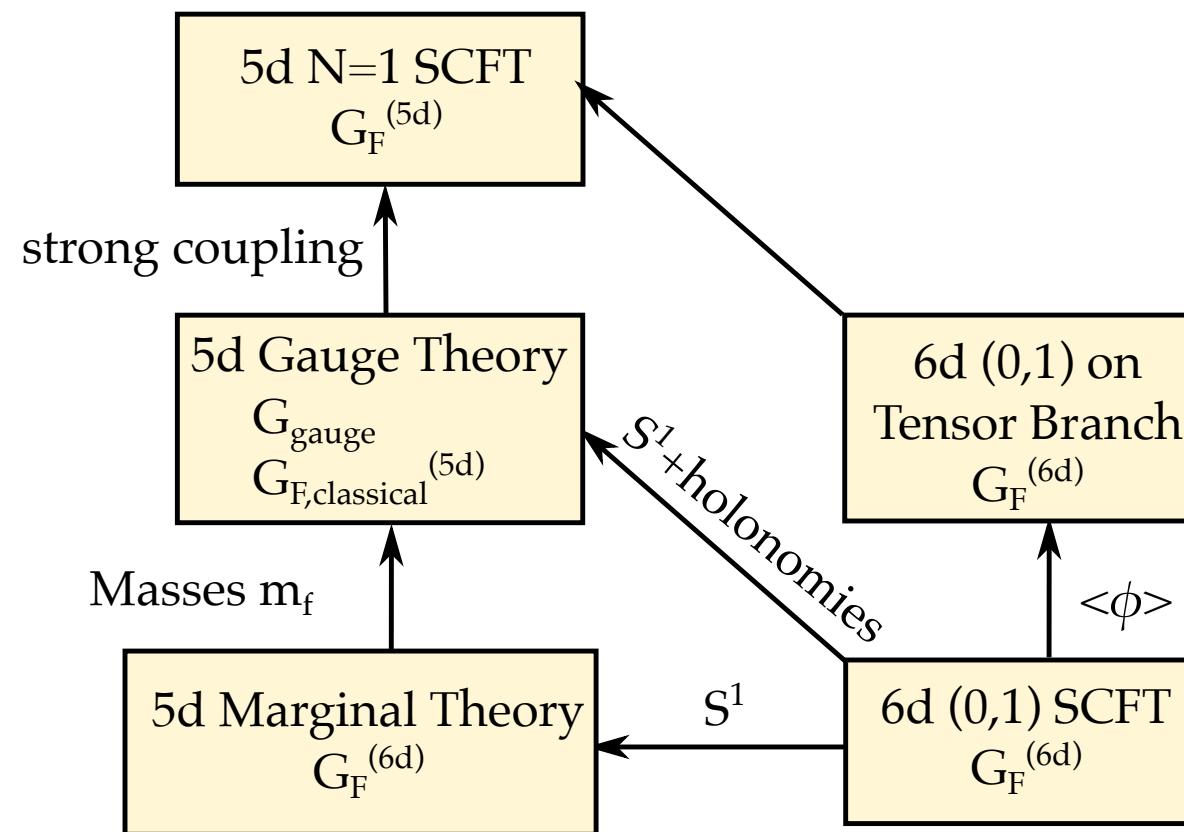
- ★  $SU(2)$  gauge theory with  $N_F$  flavors, which **enhances to  $E_{N_F+1}$  flavor symmetry at SCFT point**  
⇒ this reproduces classic results for rank 1 [Seiberg]
- ★ From non-flat fiber:  $\mathbb{P}^1$ s that are contained in  $S$  (green) encode superconformal flavor symmetry  $G_F$
- ★ Includes 5d SCFT without weakly coupled gauge theory description, geometry of  $S = \mathbb{P}^2$  (no ruling)

# General Strategy: Geometry

[Apruzzi, Lawrie, Lin, SSN, Wang]



## General Strategy: 6d to 5d



## What about higher rank? Rank 2

Rank 2 theories:

In 2018, a purely geometric classification using geometry of surfaces [Jefferson, Katz, Kim, Vafa], and from pq-5-brane webs by [Hayashi, Kim, Lee, Yagi]. However these approaches do not *manifestly* encode  $G_F$ , BPS states, etc.

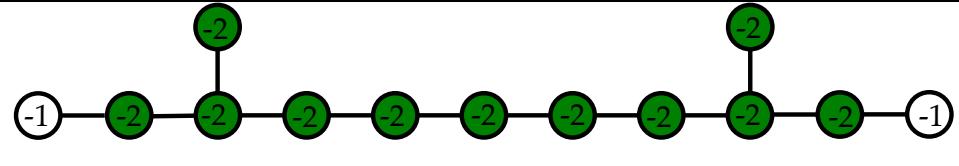
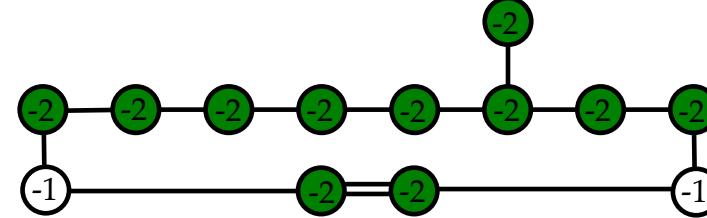
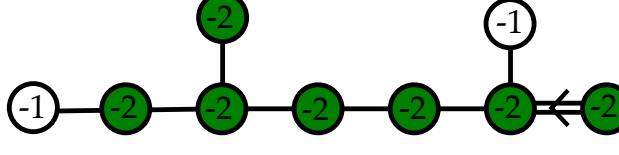
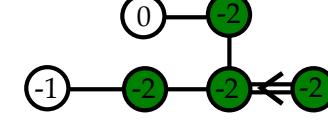
Using CFDs we obtained an independent derivation, which in addition keeps track of the full superconformal flavor symmetry and BPS states. [Apruzzi, Lawrie, Lin, SSN, Wang]

Strategy: determine the marginal theories and apply CFD-transitions.

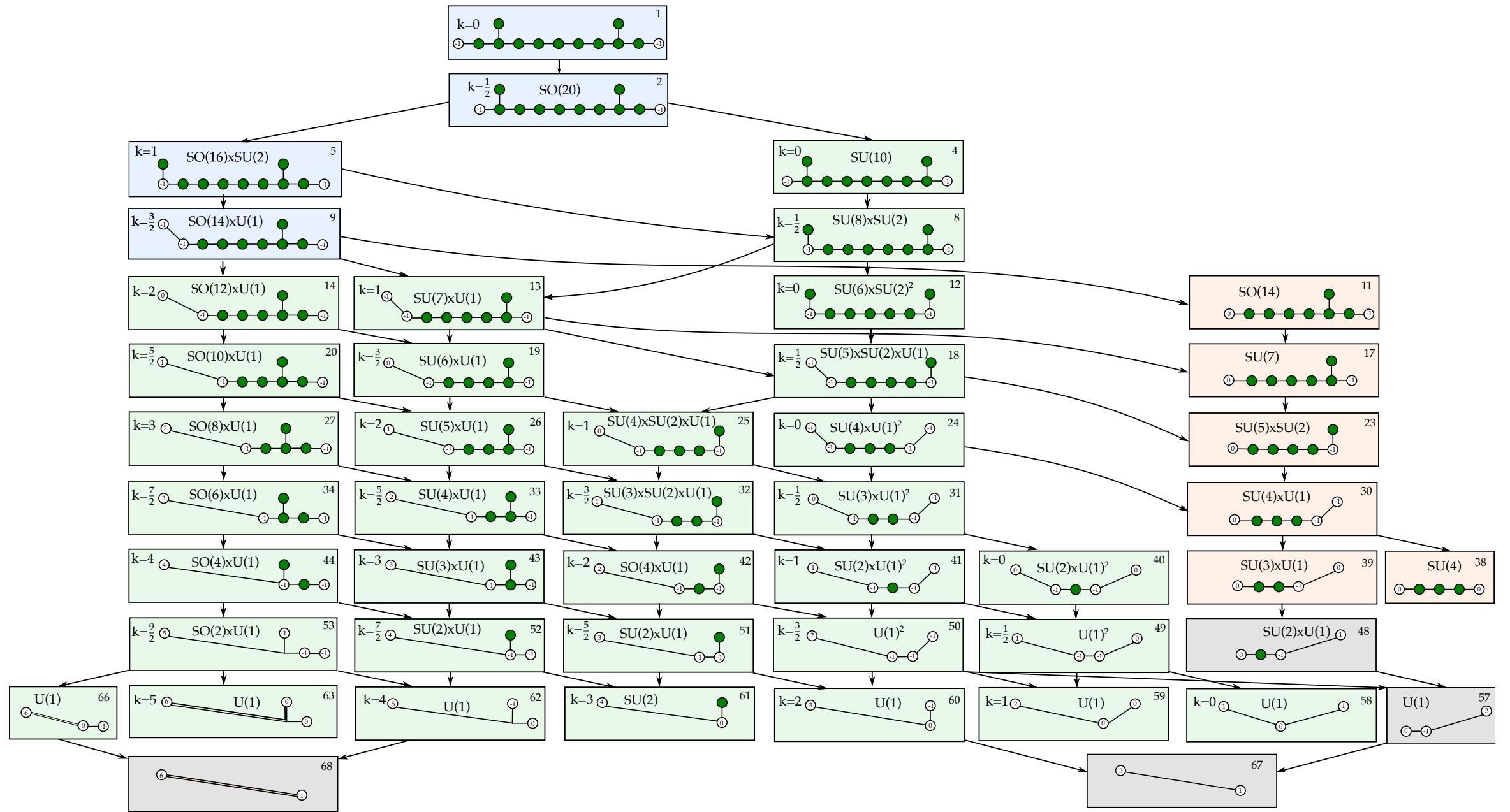
CFDs for the marginal theories have to be computed by doing a geometric resolution.

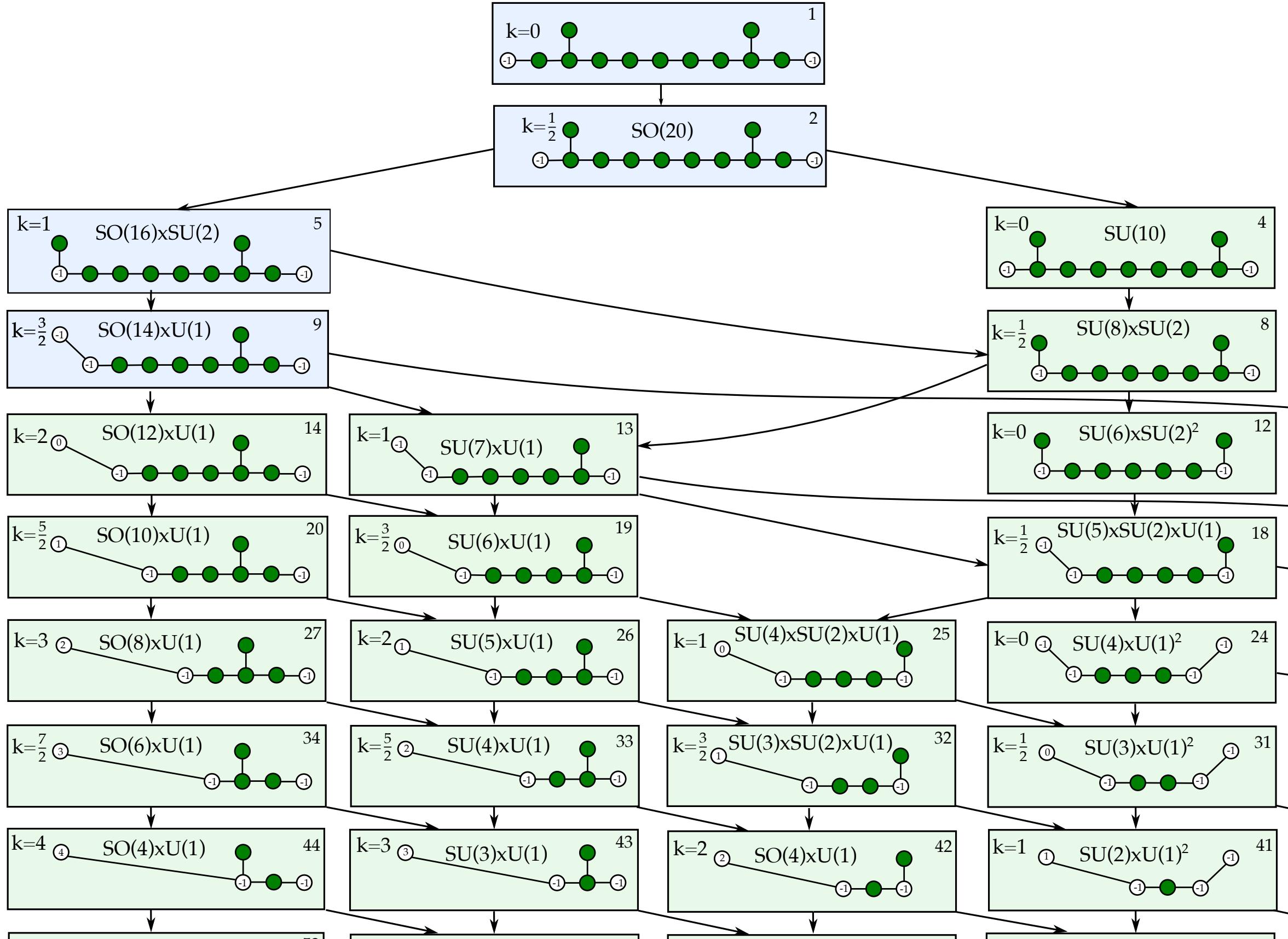
## CFDs for Rank 2 Theories

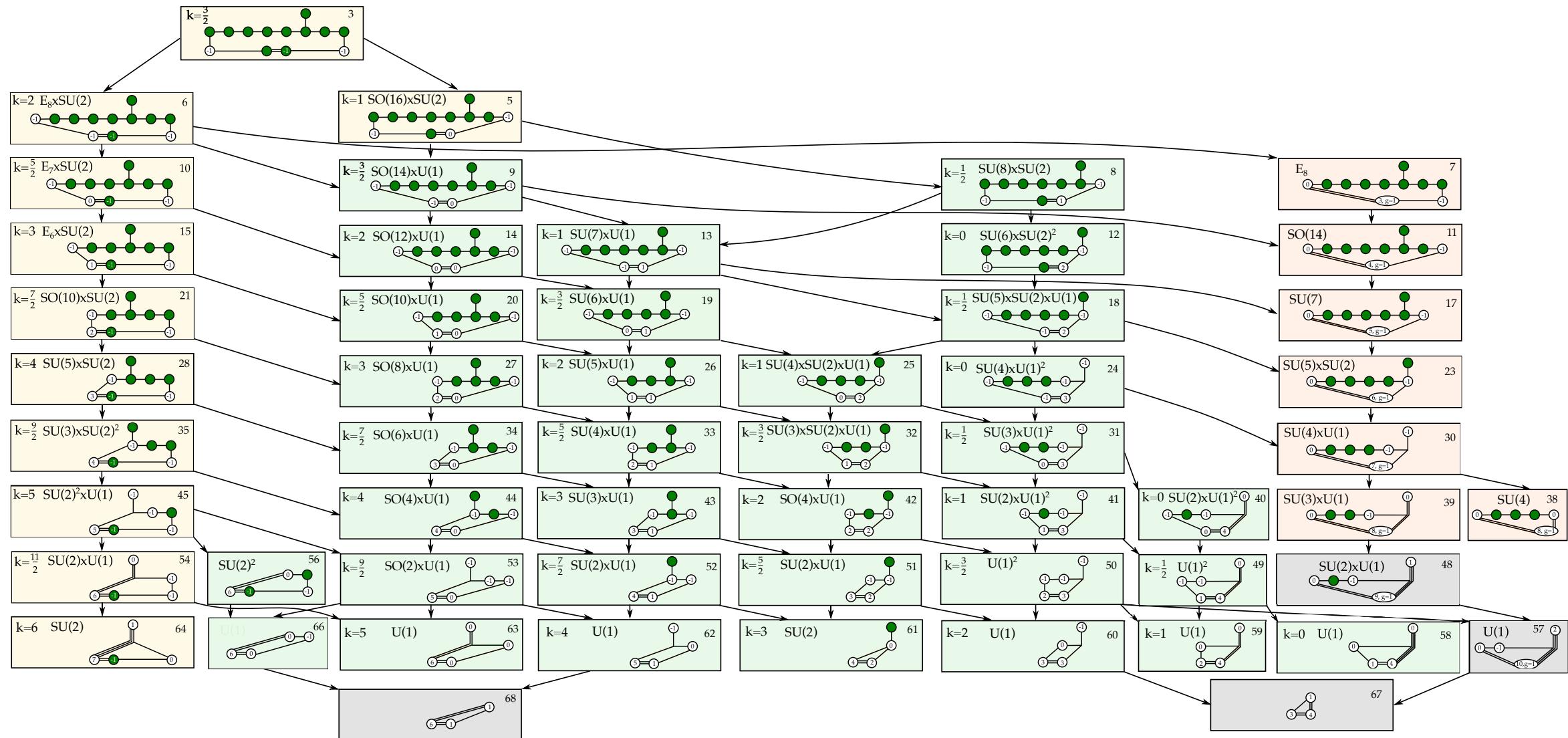
CFDs for marginal theories computed geometrically:

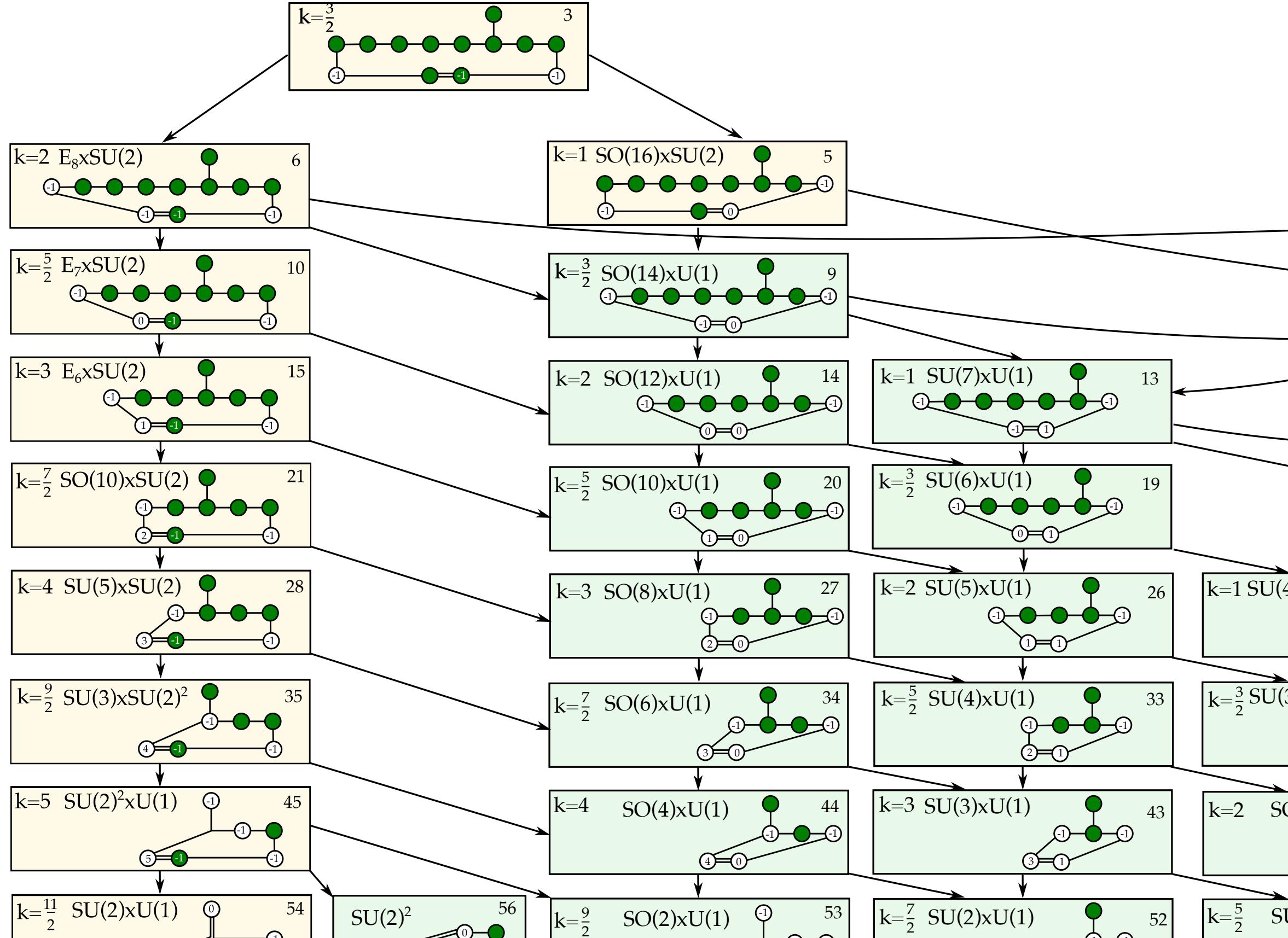
6d SCFT	CFD of the 5d Marginal Theory
$(D_5, D_5)$ Conformal Matter	
Rank 2 E-string: $II^* - I_2$	
$SU(3)$ on a $(-1)$ -curve + 12 hypers	
$SU(3)$ on a $(-2)$ -curve + 6 hypers	

Next figures: blue: only  $D_{10}$  realization; green: also rank 2 E-string realization; levels:  
 $SU(3)$ ; pink:  $SU(2)^2$ ; grey: no weakly-coupled gauge theory realization.

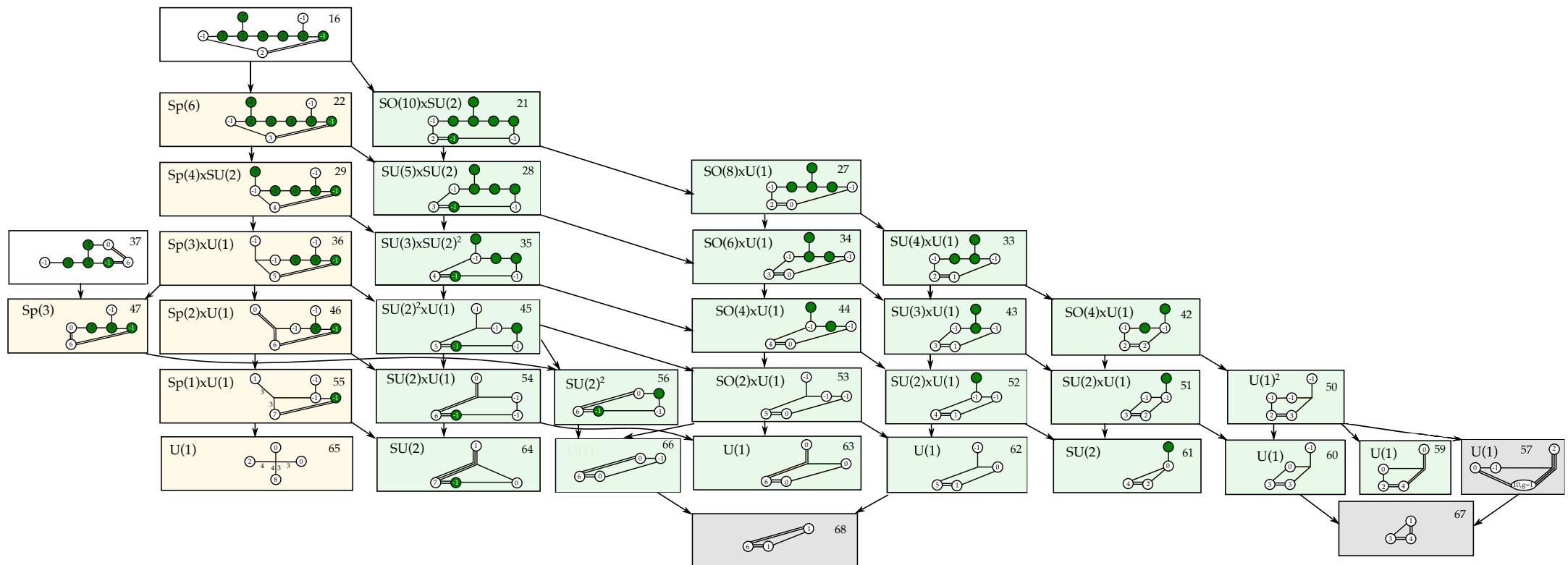








$SU(3)$  on a  $(-1)$ -curve + 12 hypers and  
 $SU(3)$  on  $(-2)$ -curve + 6 hypers



Summary:

- Rank 1 and 2: complete agreement with expected network and subset of known enhanced flavor symmetries.
- In addition to the classification, the CFD-approach predicts new flavor symmetry enhancements, and encodes  $G_F$  manifestly, and deformations  $(-1)$ -vertices. Also: BPS states.
- Requires one geometric resolution computation for CFD of the marginal theory.

Cross-checks:

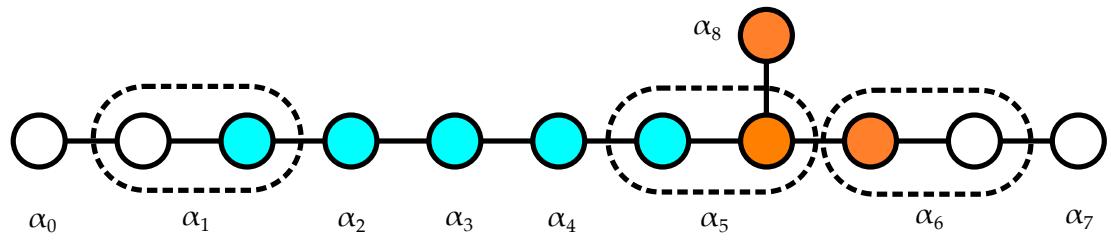
1. Geometry
2. Coulomb branch of weakly-coupled gauge theory.

## Cross-Check 1: Geometric Resolutions

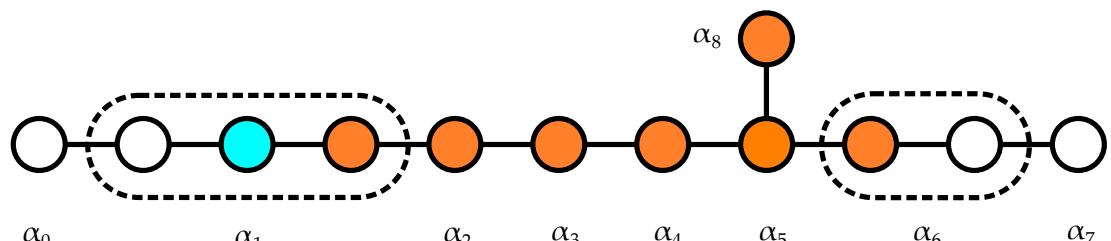
Fiber geometry of non-flat resolutions reproduces the descendant CFDs (using methods from [Lawrie, SSN][Tian, Wang]).

Rank 2 E-string codim 2 fibers and wrappings by  $S_1$  and  $S_2$

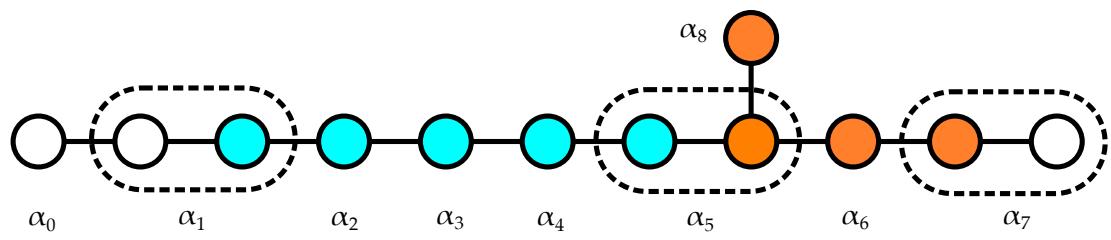
$$G_F = SU(6) \times U(1)$$



$$G_F = SU(6) \times U(1)$$



$$G_F = SO(12) \times U(1)$$



CFDs are an efficient way to package the codim 2 fiber data that is relevant for the SCFT (first two models have same CFD).

## Cross-Check 2: Gauge Theory

[Apruzzi, Lawrie, Lin, SSN, Wang, to appear Part II]

Whenever an SCFT has a weakly-coupled description:  
study extended Coulomb branch using ‘box graphs’ in [Hayashi, Lawrie,  
Morrison SSN].

- ★ Rank 1: Coulomb branch phases of  $SU(2) \times SO(16)_{\text{cl}, F}$  with **(2, 16)**
- ★ Rank 2:  $G_{\text{gauge}} = SU(3), Sp(2), SU(2) \times SU(2), G_2$ .  
E.g. for rank 2 E-string:

$$SU(3) \times U(9)_{\text{cl}, F} \quad \text{with} \quad (3, 9)$$

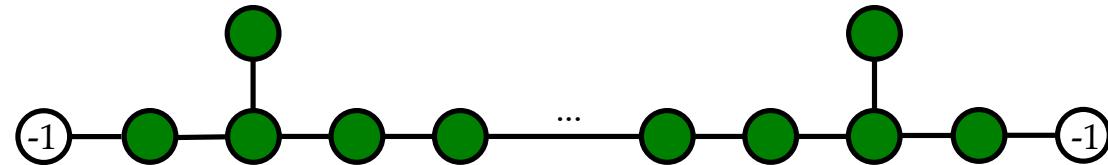
Matches all CFD-tree and consistent with  $G_F$  [...] that admit an  $SU(3)$  gauge theory description at weak coupling.

However, there are theories with **no weakly-coupled description** (geometrically: surfaces do not admit a ruling), then geometric realization is only evidence.

## Higher Rank

For any 6d SCFT, we only need to determine the marginal CFD. The rest is algorithmic.

Infinite class:  $(D_k, D_k)$  minimal Conformal Matter. Marginal CFD is:

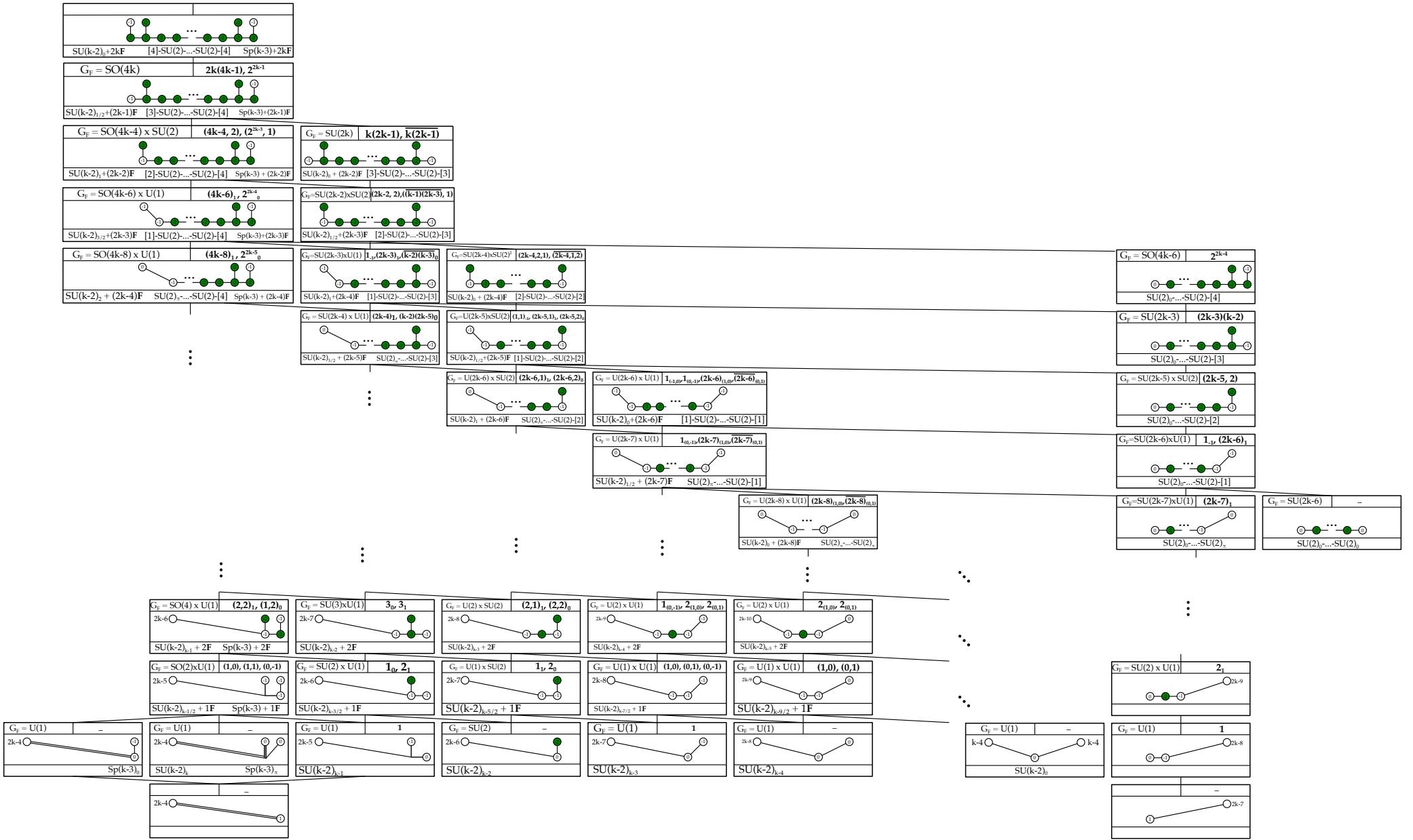


Weakly coupled gauge theory descriptions of marginal theory:

- $SU(k - 2)_0$  with  $2kF$
- $4F - SU(2) - \dots - SU(2) - 4F$ , with  $k - 5$   $SU(2)$ s nodes and theta angle 0
- $Sp(k - 3)$  with  $2kF$ .

To determine the daughter CFDs, run algorithm:

[Full CFDs at: <https://people.maths.ox.ac.uk/schafernamek/CFD/>]



$(D_k, D_k)$  cont'd.

- #  $(k-2)^2 - 3$  descendant SCFTs,  $2k-6$  w/o weakly coupled description
- # Flavor enhancement at UV fixed point, e.g.  $SU(k-2)_\kappa + mF$

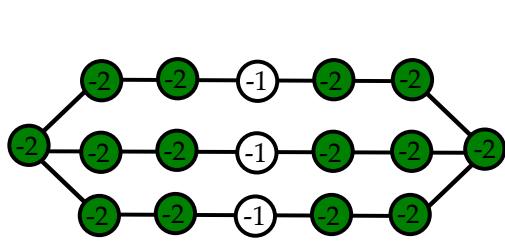
$$\begin{array}{ll} \kappa & \text{SCFT Flavor Symmetry } G_F \\ \\ k - \frac{m}{2} : & \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} SO(4k) & m = 2k-1 \\ SO(4k-4) \times SU(2) & m = 2k-2 \\ SO(2m) \times U(1) & m = 0, \dots, 2k-3 \end{array} \right. \\ \\ k - 1 - \frac{m}{2} : & \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} SU(2k) & m = 2k-2 \\ SU(2k-2) \times SU(2) & m = 2k-3 \\ SU(m+1) \times U(1) & m = 0, \dots, 2k-4 \end{array} \right. \\ \\ k - 2 - \frac{m}{2} : & \left\{ \begin{array}{ll} SU(2k-4) \times SU(2)^2 & m = 2k-4 \\ U(m) \times SU(2) & m = 0, \dots, 2k-5 \end{array} \right. \end{array}$$

Agrees with 10/2018 results from 'magnetic quivers' [Cabrera, Hanany, Zajac]  
 → Ami Hanany's talk

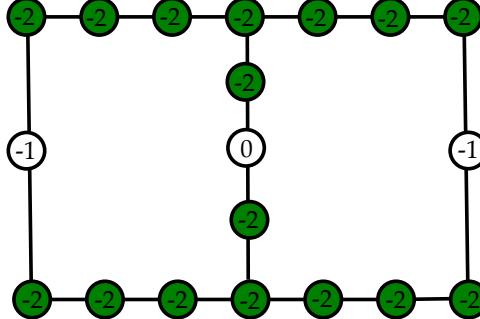
## Higher Rank: $(E_n, E_n)$ Conformal Matter

$(E_n, E_n)$  minimal Conformal Matter are 6d SCFTs with  $E_n^2$  flavor symmetry.

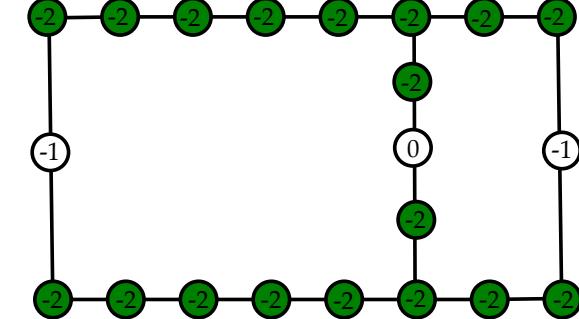
We computed the CFDs for these 5d marginal theories to be:



$(E_6, E_6)$



$(E_7, E_7)$



$(E_8, E_8)$

Applying our algorithm, we construct all descendant 5d SCFTs, including flavor symmetry etc:

$(E_6, E_6)$  : 93 descendant SCFTs

$(E_7, E_7)$  : 56 descendant SCFTs

$(E_8, E_8)$  : 127 descendant SCFTs .

Checks? The only weakly coupled quiver descriptions:

$(E_6, E_6)$ :

$$\begin{array}{c} [2] \\ | \\ SU(2) \\ | \\ [2] - SU(2) - SU(3)_0 - SU(2) - [2]. \end{array}$$

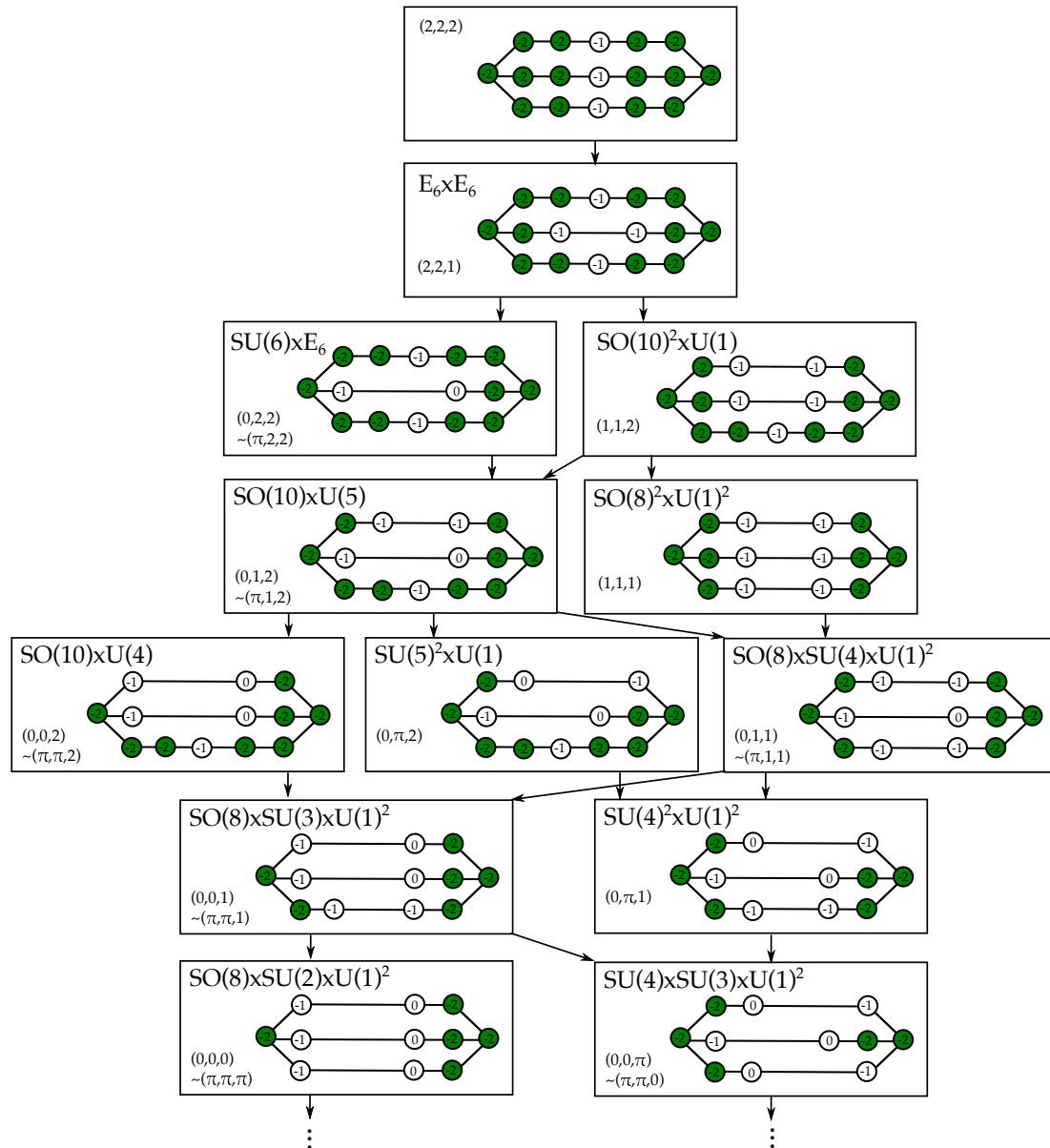
$(E_7, E_7)$ :

$$\begin{array}{c} SU(2)_{\theta=0} \\ | \\ [2] - SU(2) - SU(3)_{k=0} - SU(4)_{k=0} - SU(3)_{k=0} - SU(2) - [2]. \end{array}$$

$(E_8, E_8)$ :

$$\begin{array}{c} SU(3)_{k=0} \\ | \\ [2] - SU(2) - SU(3)_{k=0} - SU(4)_{k=0} - SU(5)_{k=0} - SU(6)_{k=0} - SU(4)_{k=0} - SU(2)_{\theta=0} \end{array}$$

5d SCFTs from weakly coupled quiver description of the marginal theory:  
 $(E_6, E_6)$ :

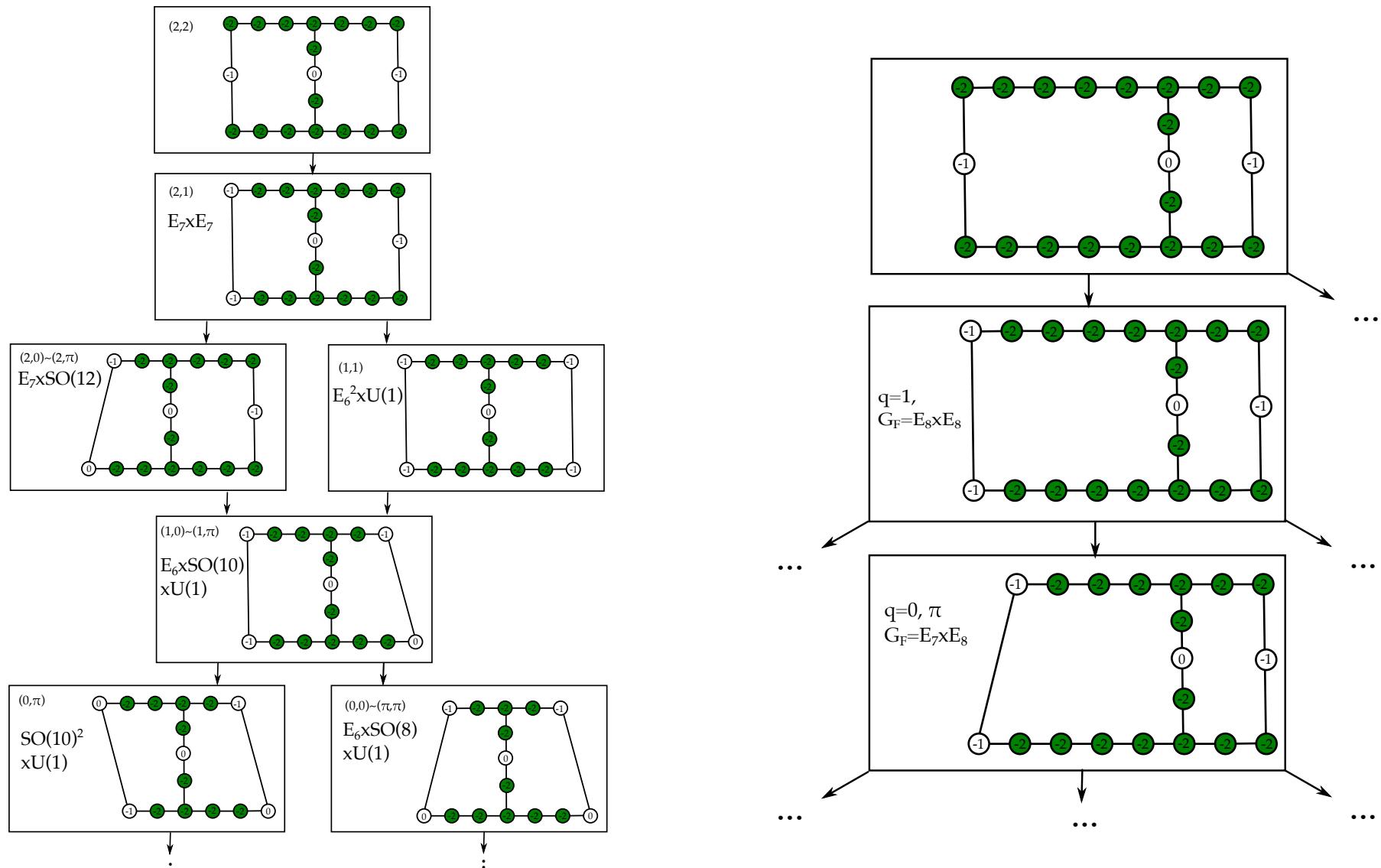


Descendants from quiver description: 12 SCFTs. **From CFDs we find 81 additional ones.**

Geometric realization possible.  
We are developing alternative quiver descriptions for these theories, but expectation is that large subset will not have a weakly couple description at all.

Full CFDs at: <https://people.maths.ox.ac.uk/schafernamek/CFD/>

5d SCFTs from weakly coupled quiver description of the marginal theory:  
 $(E_7, E_7)$  and  $(E_8, E_8)$ :



From CFDs: we find in total 56 and 127 5d SCFTs arising from these!

## Summary

Classification of all 5d SCFTs that descend from 6d:

1. Compute the marginal CFD from the 6d geometry
2. Determine the descendant using CFD-transitions
3. Read off enhanced flavor symmetry of the SCFT (green vertices)
4. Weakly coupled description: ruling of surfaces in marginal model [or embed "gauge theory CFDs"].

Dualities and weakly coupled gauge theory descriptions:

Different rulings of reducible surfaces give rise to dual weakly coupled descriptions.

⇒ Given a 6d SCFT, we provide a systematic exploration of all descendant 5d SCFTs.

## Outlook: 4d $\mathcal{N} = 1$ SCFTs and $G_2$

4d  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  SCFTs can in principle be obtained by further dimensional reduction. However, there are non-perturbative corrections that can spoil this analysis. Alternatives:

- F-theory on elliptic CY<sub>4</sub>: requires inclusion of fluxes, D3-instanton corrections.
- M-theory on non-compact singular  $G_2$ :  
Construction of TCS  $G_2$  manifolds is reminiscent of the  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  class S construction of [Bah, et al], i.e. two  $\mathcal{N} = 2$  building blocks are connected by  $\mathcal{N} = 1$  gauging. Are there quiver-like constructions of non-compact  $G_2$ , engineering 4d SCFTs?