

# **Polar Codes for Classical, Private, and Quantum Communication**

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**arXiv:1109.2591, arXiv:1109.5346**

*Quantum Information Processing 2012,  
Montreal, Quebec, December 13, 2011*

# The Quantum Coding Problem

We have some idea of good rates for classical, private, and quantum communication over quantum channels  
*(and in some cases, we know capacity)*

**Quantum turbo codes** and **quantum LDPC codes** are attempts at explicit constructions, but it seems difficult to prove that they are capacity-achieving.

*Very little work* on codes for classical or private communication

**Polar codes** are a promising code construction in the classical world, so why not explore their quantum generalization in these different contexts?

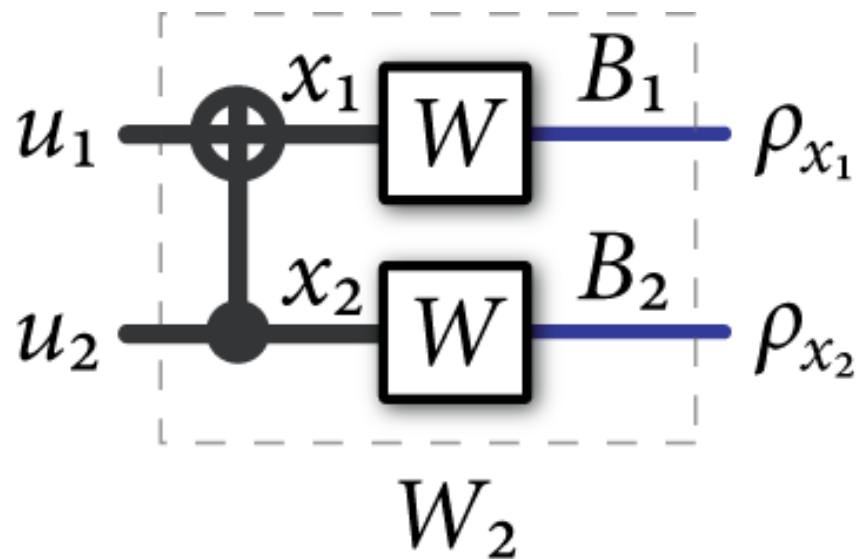
Result is a **near-explicit, capacity-achieving scheme**  
for these different contexts

# Channel Polarization

Begin with a binary-input, classical-quantum channel:

$$W : x \rightarrow \rho_x$$

Take two copies of this channel and perform encoding:



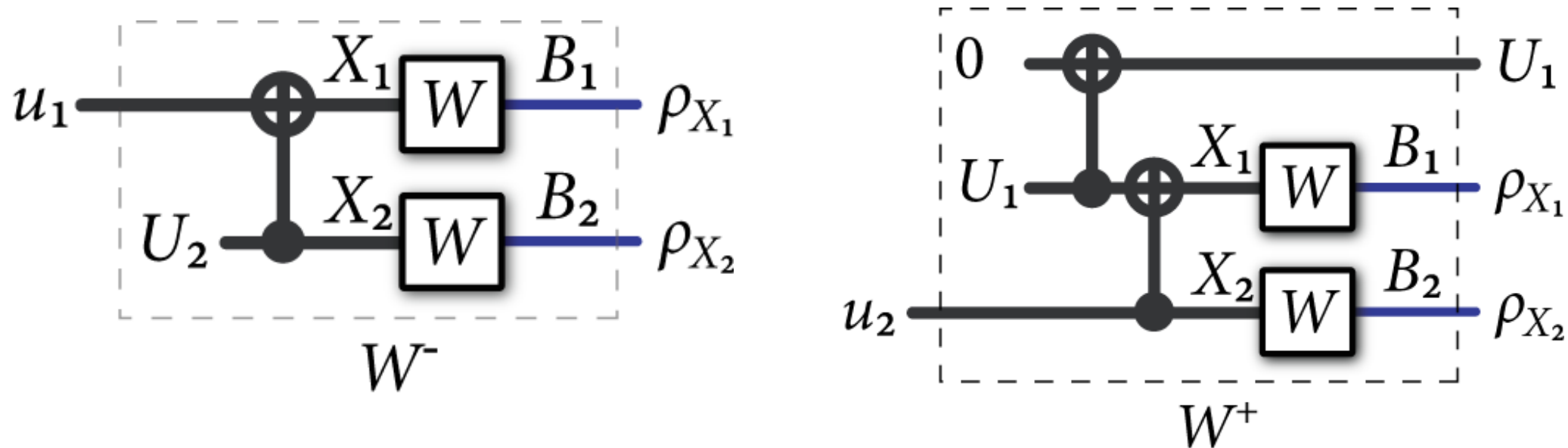
Observe that

$$\begin{aligned} 2I(W) &= I(X_1 X_2; B_1 B_2) \\ &= I(U_1 U_2; B_1 B_2) \\ &= I(U_1; B_1 B_2) + I(U_2; B_1 B_2 U_1) \end{aligned}$$

# Channel Polarization (ctd.)

$$I(U_1; B_1 B_2) + I(U_2; B_1 B_2 U_1)$$

The chain rule suggests that we think about two different channels:



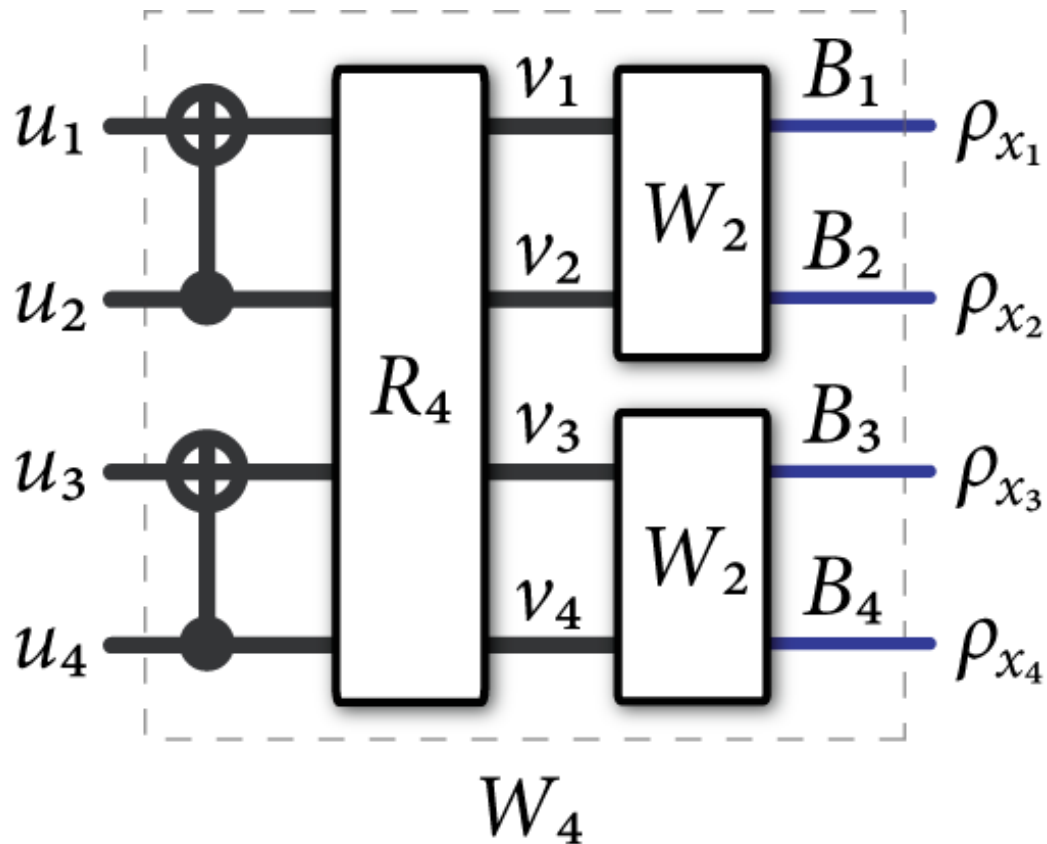
This is already hinting at how a decoder could operate!

## Quantum Successive Cancellation:

Decode  $U_1$  first with a quantum hypothesis test,  
then use it as side information in a  
quantum hypothesis test for decoding  $U_2$

# Channel Polarization (ctd.)

Continue this construction recursively:



$R_4$  is an operation which places all of the odd indices first and even indices next

Continue with chain rule:

$$4I(W) = I(U_1; B_1^4) + I(U_2; B_1^4 U_1) + I(U_3; B_1^4 U_1^2) + I(U_4; B_1^4 U_1^3)$$

# Channel Polarization (ctd.)

Can continue this recursive construction **many times**

**Chain rule** is now

$$N \cdot I(W) = \sum_{i=1}^N I(U_i; B_1^N U_1^{i-1})$$

**Channel polarization** occurs in the sense that

$$\frac{1}{N} \#\{i : I(U_i; B_1^N U_1^{i-1}) \approx 1\} \rightarrow I(W)$$

$$\frac{1}{N} \#\{i : I(U_i; B_1^N U_1^{i-1}) \approx 0\} \rightarrow 1 - I(W)$$

Can prove this result using martingale theory *à la* Arikan and quantum generalizations of Arikan's inequalities

# Polar Coding Scheme

Send information bits through the good channels

Send frozen (ancilla) bits through the bad channels

## Quantum Successive Cancellation Decoder

performs quantum hypothesis tests  
to make decisions on the information bits

**Key tool** in the proof that this scheme works  
is Pranab Sen's “**non-commutative union bound**”:

$$1 - \text{Tr}\{\Pi_N \cdots \Pi_1 \rho \Pi_1 \cdots \Pi_N\} \leq 2 \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^N \text{Tr}\{(I - \Pi_i)\rho\}}$$

This leads to a near-explicit capacity-achieving scheme

# Polar Codes for Private Comm.

A simple model for a quantum wiretap channel:

$$x \longrightarrow \rho_x^{BE}$$

Channel to Bob:

Channel to Eve:

$$W : x \longrightarrow \rho_x^B$$

$$W^* : x \longrightarrow \rho_x^E$$

Private capacity of a degradable quantum wiretap channel is

$$I(W) - I(W^*)$$



# Polar Codes for Private Comm. (Ctd.)

Channels polarize in four different ways:  
*(and this leads to a coding scheme)*

Good for Bob, good for Eve: send random bits into these

Good for Bob, bad for Eve: send information bits into these

Bad for Bob, good for Eve: send halves of secret key bits into these

Bad for Bob, bad for Eve: send ancilla bits into these

If channel is **degradable with classical environment**,  
then this scheme provably achieves  
the **wiretap capacity** of the channel  
*(using the same quantum successive cancellation decoder)*

Rate of secret key required goes to zero in the asymptotic limit

# Quantum Polar Codes

Idea is to “**run the wiretap code in superposition,**”  
*à la* Devetak's proof of the achievability of coherent information

Use a coherent version of the same encoder,  
where CNOT gates are with respect to some orthonormal basis

This induces a wiretap channel,  
when considering the isometric extension  
of the original quantum channel

**Good for Bob, good for Eve:** send  $|+\rangle$  states into these

**Good for Bob, bad for Eve:** send information qubits into these

**Bad for Bob, good for Eve:** send halves of ebits into these

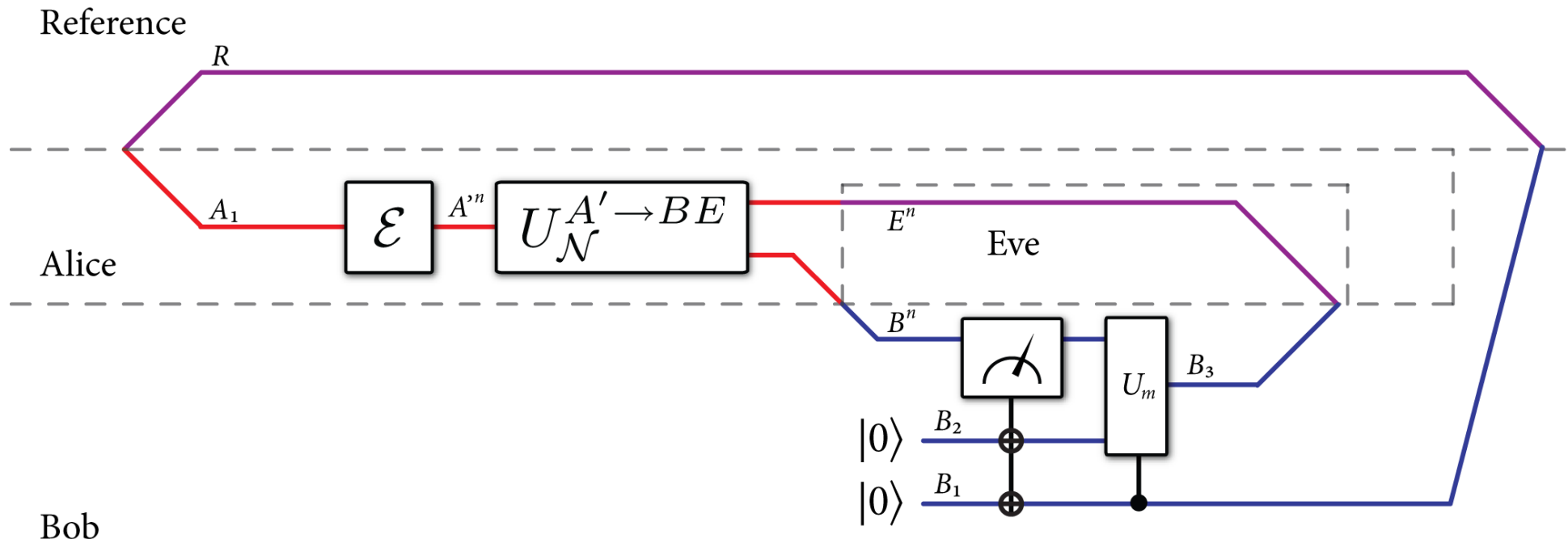
**Bad for Bob, bad for Eve:** send ancilla qubits  $|0\rangle$  into these

# Quantum Polar Codes (ctd.)

Decoder consists of two steps (similar to Devetak):

- 1) A coherent version of the quantum successive cancellation decoder
- 2) Controlled decoupling unitary

The **reliability** and the **security** of the quantum wiretap code guarantee that this decoder recovers the transmitted quantum information reliably



# Conclusion

**Polar coding** gives a near-explicit, capacity-achieving scheme for classical, private, and quantum communication

*Most important open problem:*

Show how to make the decoder **efficient**  
(progress in Renes *et al.* arXiv:1109.3195 for Pauli channels)

*Other important problems:*

- 1) Which channels are the good ones?
- 2) Extend to other scenarios