# Combinatorial commutative algebra of conformal blocks



Christopher Manon www.math.gmu.edu/~cmanon cmanon@gmu.edu supported by NSF fellowship DMS-0902710 Talk 1: Review combinatorics and commutative algebra attached to conformal blocks, introduce flat degenerations of coordinate rings of moduli of principal bundles.

Talk 2: The  $SL_2(\mathbb{C})$  case; structure of conformal blocks polytopes; combinatorial commutative algebra of  $SL_2(\mathbb{C})$  conformal blocks.

Talk 3: The  $SL_3(\mathbb{C})$  case; combinatorics of tensors; relationship between conformal blocks and mathematical biology. - $\mathfrak{g}$ : a simple Lie algebra over  $\mathbb{C}$ .

-G: A simple algebraic group over  $\mathbb{C}$  with  $Lie(G) = \mathfrak{g}$ .

- $\Delta$ : A Weyl chamber of  $\mathfrak{g}$ .

 $-B \subset G$ : A Borel subgroup.

- $\Delta_L$ : The *L*-restricted Weyl chamber of  $\mathfrak{g}$ .

-  $(C, \vec{p}) \in \bar{\mathcal{M}}_{g,n}$ : a stable, *n*-marked curve of genus *g*.

-  $\vec{\lambda} = (\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_n)$ : an *n*-tuple of  $sl_3(\mathbb{C})$  dominant weights,  $\lambda_i \in \mathbb{Z}^2_{\geq 0}$ .

-  $V_{C,\vec{p}}(\vec{\lambda},L)$ : the space of  $sl_3(\mathbb{C})$  conformal blocks on  $(C,\vec{p})$  with weight data  $(\vec{\lambda},L)$ 

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$$\mathbb{V}_{g,n}(\vec{\lambda},L) = dim[V_{C,\vec{p}}(\vec{\lambda},L)]$$

 $-\mathcal{M}_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$ : the moduli of quasi-parabolic  $SL_3(\mathbb{C})$  principal bundles on  $(C,\vec{p})$ .

 $-\mathcal{L}(\vec{\lambda}, L)$ : The line bundle on  $\mathcal{M}_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$  with weight data  $(\vec{\lambda}, L)$ .

$$-V_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C})) = Cox(\mathcal{M}_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))).$$

$$H^0(\mathcal{M}_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C})),\mathcal{L}(\vec{\lambda},L)) = V_{C,\vec{p}}(\vec{\lambda},L)$$

$$V_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C})) = \bigoplus_{\vec{\lambda},L} V_{C,\vec{p}}(\vec{\lambda},L)$$

$$R_{C,\vec{p}}(\vec{r},L) = \bigoplus_{N \ge 0} V_{C,\vec{p}}(N\vec{\lambda},NL)$$

Questions:

- -What generates the conformal blocks?
- -What relations hold among these generators?
- -How do we count the conformal blocks?

Questions:

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-What generates V_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))?
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-What relations hold among these generators?

-What is the multigraded Hilbert function of  $V_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$ ?

For every trivalent graph with first Betti number g and n leaves, there is a flat degeneration

$$V_{C,\vec{p}}(G) \Rightarrow [\bigotimes_{v \in V(\Gamma)} V_{0,3}(G)]^{T_{\Gamma}}$$

What went right for  $SL_2(\mathbb{C})$ ?

Proposition [Quantum Clebsch-Gordon rule] :

The dimension of  $V_{0,3}(r_1, r_2, r_3, L)$  is either 1 or 0. It is dimension 1 if and only if  $r_1 + r_2 + r_3$  is even,  $\leq 2L$ , and  $r_1, r_2, r_3$  are the side-lengths of a triangle

#### What went right for $SL_2(\mathbb{C})$ ?



 $V_{0,3}(SL_2(\mathbb{C})) = \mathbb{C}[P_3(1)]$ 

What went right for  $SL_2(\mathbb{C})$ ?



Allows us to build a toric degeneration of  $V_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_2(\mathbb{C}))$  out of copies of  $V_{0,3}(SL_2(\mathbb{C}))$ .

In general it would suffice to have a toric degeneration of  $V_{0,3}(G)$ ,

### $V_{0,3}(G) \Rightarrow \mathbb{C}[P_3],$

which respects the multigrading by  $\mathcal{X}(B)^3 \times \mathbb{Z}$ .



$$V_{C,\vec{p}}(G) \Rightarrow [\bigotimes_{v \in V(\Gamma)} V_{0,3}(G)]^{T_{\Gamma}} \Rightarrow [\bigotimes_{v \in V(\Gamma)} \mathbb{C}[P_3]]^{T_{\Gamma}}$$

$$\left[\bigotimes_{v\in V(\Gamma)}\mathbb{C}[P_3]\right]^{T_{\Gamma}}=\mathbb{C}[P_{\Gamma}]$$

Where  $P_{\Gamma}$  is the fiber product of  $|V(\Gamma)|$  copies of  $P_3$  over copies of  $\Delta_L$ .

## The algebra $V_{0,3}(G)$



[Tsuchiya, Ueno, Yamada]: The space  $V_{0,3}(\lambda, \eta, \mu, L)$  can be identified with a subspace of  $[V(\lambda^*) \otimes V(\eta^*) \otimes V(\mu^*)]^{\mathfrak{g}}$ 

Let  $\theta(sl_2(\mathbb{C})) \subset \mathfrak{g}$  be the copy of  $sl_2(\mathbb{C})$  corresponding to the longest root. We branch each  $V(\lambda)$  along this sub-algebra.

$$V(\lambda^*) = \bigoplus_i W_{\lambda,i}$$

Let  $W_L(\lambda, \eta, \mu) = \bigoplus_{i+j+k \leq 2L} W_{\lambda,i} \otimes W_{\eta,j} \otimes W_{\mu,k}$ .

 $V_{0,3}(\lambda,\eta,\mu,L) = W_L(\lambda,\eta,\mu) \cap [V(\lambda^*) \otimes V(\eta^*) \otimes V(\mu^*)]^{\mathfrak{g}}$ 

Invariant tensors have many combinatorial descriptions, including polyhedral counting rules.

[Berenstein, Zelevinsky]: There is a polytope  $P_{\vec{i},3}(\lambda,\eta,\mu)$  with integral points in bijection with a basis of the space  $[V(\lambda) \otimes V(\eta) \otimes V(\mu)]^{\mathfrak{g}}$ 

[Howe, Lee]: There is a polytope  $L(\lambda, \eta, \mu)$  with integral points in bijection with a basis of the space  $[V(\lambda) \otimes V(\eta) \otimes V(\mu)]^{sl_m(\mathbb{C})}$ 

[Zhelobenko]: The space  $[V(\lambda) \otimes V(\eta) \otimes V(\mu)]^{\mathfrak{g}}$  can be identified with a subspace  $V_{\mu,\lambda-\mu}(\eta) \subset V(\eta)$ 

This subspace inherits the dual canonical/crystal basis of Kashiwara/Lusztig. For every reduced decomposition  $\vec{i}$  of the longest element  $w_0$  of the Weyl group of  $\mathfrak{g}$ , this basis is labelled by corresponding integer "string parameters." These parameters give the lattice points of  $P_{\vec{i},3}(\lambda, \eta, \mu)$ .

## $V_{0,3}(\lambda,\eta,\mu,L) \subset [V(\lambda^*) \otimes V(\eta^*) \otimes V(\mu^*)]^{\mathfrak{g}} \subset V_{\mu^*,\eta^*-\mu^*}(\lambda)$

The conformal blocks subspace can be described as those vectors in  $V_{\mu^*,\eta^*-\mu^*}(\lambda)$  which vanish under the action of  $e_{\theta}^{L-\mu^*(H_{\theta})+1}$ , where  $e_{\theta}$  is the raising operator corresponding to the longest root.

Define  $R_G = \bigoplus_{\lambda \in \Delta} V(\lambda)$ , with multiplication

$$V(\lambda) \otimes V(\eta) \to V(\lambda + \eta)$$

This is the Cox ring of the full flag variety G/B, and the coordinate ring of the affine variety G/U, where  $U \subset G$  is maximal unipotent.

#### Define $R_3(G) = [R_G \otimes R_G \otimes R_G]^G$ .

## $R_{3}(G) = [R_{G} \otimes R_{G} \otimes R_{G}]^{\mathfrak{g}} = \bigoplus_{\lambda,\eta,\mu\in\Delta} [V(\lambda) \otimes V(\eta) \otimes V(\mu)]^{\mathfrak{g}}$

[M]: For each  $\vec{i}$  there is toric degeneration of  $R_3(G)$  to an affine semigroup algebra  $\mathbb{C}[P_{\vec{i},3}]$  which respects the multigrading by  $\mathcal{X}(B)^3$ .

Here  $P_{\vec{i},3}$  is a polyhedral cone with a map  $\pi_3 : P_{\vec{i},3} \to \Delta^3$ . The fiber  $\pi^{-1}(\lambda, \eta, \mu)$  is the polytope  $P_{\vec{i},3}(\lambda, \eta, \mu)$ .

The subspaces  $V_{0,3}(\lambda, \eta, \mu, L) \subset [V(\lambda^*) \otimes V(\eta^*) \otimes V(\mu^*)]^{\mathfrak{g}}$  are compatible with the multiplication operation in  $R_3(G)$ .

## $V_{0,3}(G) \subset R_3(G) \otimes \mathbb{C}[t]$

## $V_{0,3}(\lambda,\eta,\mu,L) \subset [V(\lambda^*) \otimes V(\eta^*) \otimes V(\mu^*)]^{\mathfrak{g}}t^L$

The function which assigns an invariant tensor  $T \in [V(\lambda^*) \otimes V(\eta^*) \otimes V(\mu^*)]^{\mathfrak{g}}$  the minimum level L such that  $T \in V_{0,3}(\lambda, \eta, \mu, L)$  defines a valuation  $v_{\theta}$  on the algebras  $R_3(G)$  and  $V_{0,3}(G)$ .

Valuations:

$$\begin{aligned} -v(ab) &= v(a) + v(b) \\ -v(a+b) &\leq max\{v(a), v(b)\} \\ -v(0) &= -\infty \\ -v(C) &= 0, \ C \in \mathbb{C}. \end{aligned}$$

Idea: Port the combinatorial commutative algebra of  $R_3(G)$  over to  $V_{0,3}(G)$ .

Idea: Find a "nice" (good?) basis of  $[V(\lambda^*) \otimes V(\eta^*) \otimes V(\mu^*)]^{\mathfrak{g}}$ which restricts to a basis of each space  $V_{0,3}(\lambda, \eta, \mu, L)$ .

#### $BZ_3$ : A "string cone" for $SL_3(\mathbb{C})$ .

- $[V(\lambda) \otimes V(\eta) \otimes V(\mu)]^{sl_3(\mathbb{C})}$
- all  $\geq$  0 integer entries,
- $(a_1 + a_2, a_3 + a_3) = \lambda$ ,  $(b_1 + b_2, b_3 + b_4) = \eta$ ,  $(c_1 + c_2, c_3 + c_4) = \mu$ ,

 $-a_2 + a_3 = c_2 + b_3, \ b_2 + b_3 = a_2 + c_3, \ c_2 + c_3 = b_2 + a_3.$ 



The semigroup algebra  $\mathbb{C}[BZ_3]$  is generated by 8 elements.



 $X, Y, P_{12}, P_{23}, P_{31}, P_{21}, P_{32}, P_{13}$ 

Subject to one relation.



 $XY = P_{12}P_{23}P_{31}$ 

We can lift this information to a presentation of  $R_3(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$ .

 $R_3(SL_3(\mathbb{C})) =$ 

 $\mathbb{C}[X, Y, P_{12}, P_{23}, P_{31}, P_{21}, P_{32}, P_{13}] / \langle XY - P_{12}P_{23}P_{31} + P_{21}P_{32}P_{13} \rangle$ 

 $V(\omega_1) = \mathbb{C}^3$  $V(\omega_1^*) = \wedge^2(\mathbb{C}^3)$ 

Here  $P_{ij}$  is the invariant bilinear form in  $V(\omega_1) \otimes V(\omega_1^*)$ , where  $\omega_1$  is in the *i*-th place and  $\omega_1^*$  is in the *j*-th place.

X and Y are the determinant invariants in  $V(\omega_1)^{\otimes 3}$  and  $V(\omega_1^*)^{\otimes 3}$ , respectively.

Can we use these tensors to get a basis of  $V_{0,3}(\lambda, \eta, \mu, L)$ ?

Each generator  $X, Y, P_{12}, P_{23}, P_{31}, P_{21}, P_{32}, P_{13}$  has  $v_{\theta}$  value 1

Can we use these tensors to get a basis of  $V_{0,3}(\lambda, \eta, \mu, L)$ ?

There is a basis of  $[V(\lambda^*) \otimes V(\eta^*) \otimes V(\mu^*)]^{sl_3(\mathbb{C})}$  by monomials in the generators  $X, Y, P_{12}, P_{23}, P_{31}, P_{21}, P_{32}, P_{13}$  each member of which has a distinct  $v_{\theta}$  value.

This basis restricts to a basis of  $V_{0,3}(\lambda, \eta, \mu, L)$ .

This can be used to construct a presentation of  $V_{0,3}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$ .

 $V_{0,3}(SL_3(\mathbb{C})) =$ 

 $\mathbb{C}[Z, X, Y, P_{12}, P_{23}, P_{31}, P_{21}, P_{32}, P_{13}] / \langle ZXY - P_{12}P_{23}P_{31} + P_{21}P_{32}P_{13} \rangle$ 



## The algebra $V_{0,3}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$



Toric degenerations of  $V_{0,3}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$ 

#### $ZXY - P_{12}P_{23}P_{31}$

#### $ZXY + P_{21}P_{32}P_{13}$

#### $P_{21}P_{32}P_{13} - P_{12}P_{23}P_{31}$

## $\mathbb{V}_{0,3}(\lambda,\mu,\eta,L) = L - max\{\lambda_1 + \lambda_2, \mu_1 + \mu_2, \eta_1 + \eta_2, L_1, L_2\} + 1$

$$L_1 = \frac{1}{3}(2(\lambda_1 + \mu_1 + \eta_1) + \lambda_2 + \mu_2 + \eta_2) - \min\{\lambda_1, \mu_1, \eta_1\}$$

$$L_2 = \frac{1}{3}(2(\lambda_2 + \mu_2 + \eta_2) + \lambda_1 + \mu_1 + \eta_1) - \min\{\lambda_2, \mu_2, \eta_2\}.$$

## The multigraded Hilbert scheme for $\mathbb{V}_{0,3}$



For each trivalent graph  $\Gamma$ , there are  $3^{|V(\Gamma)|}$  toric degenerations of  $V_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$ .



For  $(\mathbb{P}^1, \vec{p})$  generic, the algebra  $V_{\mathbb{P}^1, \vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$  is generated by the  $3^{n-1}$  conformal blocks of level 1, and has relations generated by homogenous forms of degree 2, 3.



For  $(C, \vec{p})$  generic with g = 1, the algebra  $V_{C,\vec{p}}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))$  is generated by conformal blocks of level 1, 2, 3.



-The tensor product invariants of Howe, Lee; Berenstein, Zelevinsky.

-valuations suggest a role for tropical geometry

-Sturmfels, Sullivant, Toric ideals of phylogenetic invariants, Journal of Computational Biology 12 (2005) 204-228.

-Phylogenetic variety: algebraic variety cut out by binomial equations which vanish on marginal probabilities from a phylogenetic statistical model.

-these are tools for reconstructing ancestral relationships

-Given an oriented, rooted graph  $\Gamma$ , each vertex  $v \in V(\Gamma)$  receives a (possibly k > 0 ary) random variable.

-Put probability distribution at the root vertex.

-each edge  $e \in E(\Gamma)$  has a transition matrix A(e), used to recursively compute a distribution at each subsequent vertex.

-The resulting marginal probabilities at the leaves are forced to satisfy equations determined by the matrices A(e).

One source of matrices A(v) are finite Abelian groups G. For each G there is a phylogenetic "group based" model which determines a binomial ideal  $I_{G,\mathcal{T}}$  for every structure tree  $\mathcal{T}$ .

For  $G = \mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}$ ,  $I_{\mathcal{T},\mathbb{Z}/2\mathbb{Z}}$  is the ideal defining  $\mathbb{C}[P_{\mathcal{T}}(1)]$ 

Let  $A_{\mathcal{T},G}$  denote the corresponding affine semigroup algebra.

[Kubjas, M]:  $A_{\mathcal{T},\mathbb{Z}/3\mathbb{Z}}$  is a natural quotient of  $[\bigotimes_{v \in V(\mathcal{T})} V_{0,3}(SL_3(\mathbb{C}))]^{T_{\mathcal{T}}}$ 

 $A_{\mathcal{T},\mathbb{Z}/m\mathbb{Z}}$  is a natural sub-quotient of  $[\bigotimes_{v\in V(\mathcal{T})} V_{0,3}(SL_m(\mathbb{C}))]^{T_{\mathcal{T}}}$ 

## Thankyou!