

# Locality and Unitarity from Positivity

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Work with Nima Arkani-Hamed, to appear

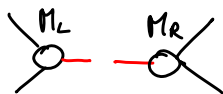
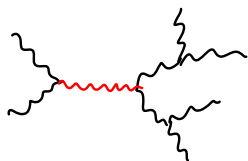
# Introduction

# Traditional Formulation of QFT

Lagrangian + path Integral

Central object of interest: Scattering amplitude

Two basic principles: Locality and Unitarity



Feynman diagrams are universal but they obscure some crucial properties:

- Final results are simple!
- More symmetries.

# Towards new formulation of QFT

Goal of the program:

- Alternative formulation where locality and unitarity are emergent concepts from some other underlying principle.
- All symmetries are completely manifest.

Toy model for 4d QFT:  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  SYM in planar limit

- Incredible discoveries in past decade.
- Simple results for amplitudes invisible in Feynman diagrams.
- Hidden symmetries: dual conformal symmetry  $\rightarrow$  Yangian.

Important step towards: BCFW recursion relations

- Consistent way how to calculate tree-level amplitudes and the integrand of the loop amplitudes.
- Locality is not manifest but Yangian is.

## Towards new formulation of QFT

The amplitude can be defined using Locality and Unitarity

- It is a unique function that has local poles and factorization properties

The diagram shows a mathematical equation involving Feynman diagrams. On the left, a partial derivative symbol  $\partial$  is followed by a tree-level diagram consisting of a central circle with four external lines. This is set equal to the sum of two terms. The first term is a tree-level diagram with a central circle and four external lines, where one line is connected to a smaller circle, which is then connected to another smaller circle, and finally to a fourth external line. The second term is a tree-level diagram with a central circle and four external lines, where two lines are connected to a smaller circle, which is then connected to another smaller circle, and finally to two external lines.

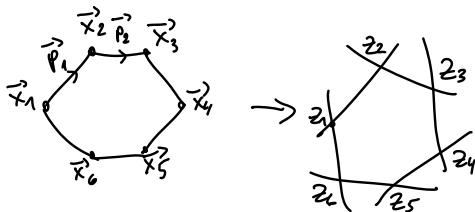
- Feynman diagrams is a way how to make these properties manifest.
- BCFW is another way to satisfy the same equation.

Questions:

- 1 Is there a unique (geometric) object the amplitude represents?
- 2 Another principle that defines the amplitude with no reference to locality and unitarity and makes all symmetries manifest?
- 3 If yes, can we use it to calculate amplitudes?

## Momentum twistors

New variables for planar theories: momentum twistors  $Z_i$



Especially useful for planar  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  SYM because of manifest dual conformal symmetry.

External particles described by four-dimensional  $Z_i$ , Grassmann variables  $\eta_i$ , loop momenta  $Z_A Z_B$ .

## Momentum twistors

Translation between  $p$  and  $Z$ :

$$(x_i - x_j)^2 = \frac{\langle i i+1 j j+1 \rangle}{\langle i i+1 \rangle \langle j j+1 \rangle}, \quad (x - x_1)^2 = \frac{\langle AB12 \rangle}{\langle AB \rangle \langle 12 \rangle}$$

Amplitudes in planar  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  SYM

$$A_{n,k} = \frac{\delta^4(P)\delta^8(Q)}{\langle 12 \rangle \langle 23 \rangle \dots \langle n1 \rangle} \cdot R_{n,k-2}(Z, \eta)$$

$R_{n,k}$  is a function of  $\langle Z_a Z_b Z_c Z_d \rangle$  and  $\eta$ 's. E.g. 5pt NMHV amplitude:

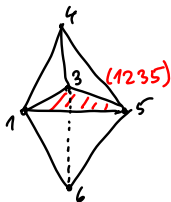
$$R_{5,1} = \frac{(\langle 2345 \rangle \eta_1 + \langle 3451 \rangle \eta_2 + \langle 4512 \rangle \eta_3 + \langle 5123 \rangle \eta_4 + \langle 1234 \rangle \eta_5)^4}{\langle 1234 \rangle \langle 2345 \rangle \langle 3451 \rangle \langle 4512 \rangle \langle 5123 \rangle}$$

## NMHV polytopes

Hodges: the 6pt NMHV split helicity amplitude  $1^-2^-3^-4^+5^+6^+$ :

$$A_6 = \frac{\langle 1345 \rangle^3}{\langle 1234 \rangle \langle 1245 \rangle \langle 2345 \rangle \langle 2351 \rangle} + \frac{\langle 1356 \rangle^3}{\langle 1235 \rangle \langle 1256 \rangle \langle 2356 \rangle \langle 2361 \rangle}$$

can be interpreted as a volume of polytope in  $\mathbb{P}^3$ .



Further developed for all NMHV amplitudes: polytopes in  $\mathbb{P}^4$ .



## NMHV polytopes

Idea:

*Amplitudes are "some volumes" of "some polytopes" in "some space".*

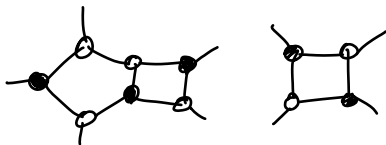
We now know how to do this.

## Positive Grassmannian

Remarkable relation between two different objects.

**On-shell diagrams:** physical quantities obtained by gluing together three-point amplitudes.

- They are cuts of higher loop amplitudes



- Any amplitude can be written as a sum of these objects via BCFW

The equation shows a circular amplitude with external lines labeled  $m, k, l$  equal to a sum over  $L, R$  of two square diagrams plus a diagram with a circle and external lines.

## Positive Grassmannian

Positive Grassmannian  $G_+(k, n)$ : basic object in algebraic geometry

- Grassmannian  $G(k, n)$  describes a  $k$ -plane in  $n$  dimensional space,

$$C = \begin{pmatrix} * & * & * & \dots & * & * \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ * & * & * & \dots & * & * \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{with GL}(k) \text{ redundancy}$$

- Positive Grassmannian = all minors are positive,  $G_+(2, 3)$ ,

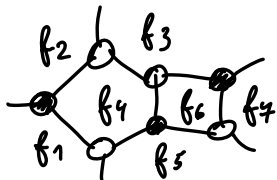
$$C = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & a & 0 & -c \\ 0 & b & 1 & d \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{where } a, b, c, d > 0$$

- There is an incredible mathematical structure related to the Positive Grassmannian ranging from algebraic geometry to combinatorics: permutations, stratification, configuration of vectors.

## Positive Grassmannian

Connection between these two objects: an on-shell diagram determines a point in the positive Grassmannian  $G_+(k, n)$

The function that represents the on-shell diagram can be calculated using the integral over the Grassmannian



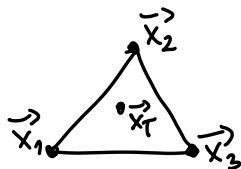
$$\rightarrow \int \frac{df_1}{f_1} \cdots \frac{df_d}{f_d} \delta^{4|4}(C \cdot Z).$$

where  $C$  is the positive Grassmannian parametrized by face variables  $f_i$ . There are simple rules how to obtain  $C$  from the on-shell diagram.

# The New Positive Region

## Inside of the simplex

Problem from classical mechanics: center-of-mass of three points



Imagine masses  $c_1, c_2, c_3$  in the corners.

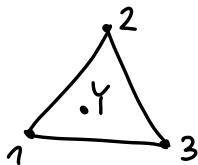
$$\vec{x}_T = \frac{c_1 \vec{x}_1 + c_2 \vec{x}_2 + c_3 \vec{x}_3}{c_1 + c_2 + c_3}$$

Interior of the triangle: ranging over all positive  $c_1, c_2, c_3$ .

Triangle in projective space  $\mathbb{P}^2$

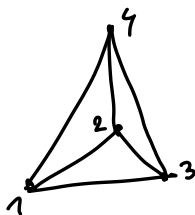
- Projective variables  $Z_i = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ \vec{x}_i \end{pmatrix}$
- Point  $Y$  inside the triangle (mod  $GL(1)$ )

$$Y = c_1 Z_1 + c_2 Z_2 + c_3 Z_3$$



## Inside of the simplex

Generalization to higher dimensions is straightforward.



Point  $Y$  inside tetrahedon in  $\mathbb{P}^3$ :

$$Y = c_1 Z_1 + c_2 Z_2 + c_3 Z_3 + c_4 Z_4$$

Ranging over all positive  $c_i$  spans the interior of the simplex.

In general point  $Y$  inside a simplex in  $\mathbb{P}^{m-1}$ :

$$Y^I = C_{1a} Z_a^I \quad \text{where } I = 1, 2, \dots, m$$

and  $C$  is  $(1 \times m)$  matrix of positive numbers,

$$C = (c_1 \ c_2 \ \dots \ c_m) / GL(1) \quad \text{which is } G_+(1, m)$$

## Into the Grassmannian

Generalization of this notion to Grassmannian

Let us imagine the same triangle and a line  $Y$ ,

$$Y_1 = c_1^{(1)} Z_1 + c_2^{(1)} Z_2 + c_3^{(1)} Z_3$$

$$Y_2 = c_1^{(2)} Z_1 + c_2^{(2)} Z_2 + c_3^{(2)} Z_3$$

writing in the compact form

$$Y_\alpha^I = C_{\alpha a} Z_a^I \quad \text{where } \alpha = 1, 2$$

The matrix  $C$  is a  $(2 \times 3)$  matrix mod  $GL(2)$  - Grassmannian  $G(2, 3)$ .

Positivity of coefficients? No, minors are positive!

$$C = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & -a \\ 0 & 1 & b \end{pmatrix}$$



## Into the Grassmannian

In the general case we define a "generalized triangle"

$$Y_{\alpha}^I = C_{\alpha a} Z_a^I$$

where  $\alpha = 1, 2, \dots, k$ , ie. it is a  $k$ -plane in  $(k+m)$  dimensions,  $a, I = 1, 2, \dots, k+m$ . Simplex has  $\alpha = 1$ , for triangle also  $m = 2$ .

The matrix  $C$  is a 'top cell' (no constraint imposed) of the positive Grassmannian  $G_+(k, k+m)$ , it is  $k \cdot m$  dimensional.

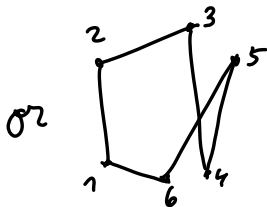
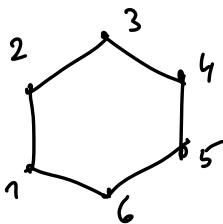
We know exactly what these matrices are!

## Beyond triangles

External points  $Z_i$  did not play role, we could always choose the coordinate system such that  $Z$  is identity matrix, then  $Y \sim C$ .

For more vertices than the dimensionality of the space external  $Z$ 's are crucial.

Let us consider the interior of the polygon in  $\mathbb{P}^2$ .



We need a convex polygon!

## Beyond triangles

Convexity = positivity of external  $Z$ 's. They form a  $(3 \times n)$  matrix with all ordered minors being positive,

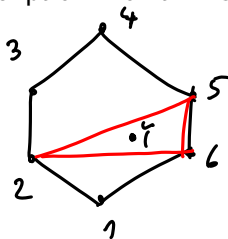
$$\langle Z_i Z_j Z_k \rangle > 0 \quad \text{for all } i < j < k$$

The point  $Y$  inside this polygon is

$$Y = c_1 Z_1 + \cdots + c_n Z_n = C_{1a} Z_a$$

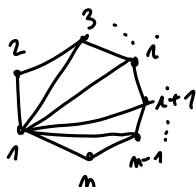
where  $C \in G_+(1, n)$  and  $Z \in G_+(3, n)$ .

Correct but redundant description: Point  $Y$  is also inside some triangle



## Beyond triangles

Triangulation: set of non-intersecting triangles that cover the region.



$$P_n = \sum_{i=2}^n [1 \ i \ i+1]$$

The generic point  $Y$  is inside one of the triangles. The matrix  $C$  is

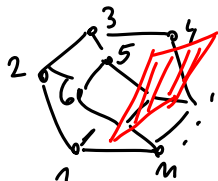
$$C = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & \dots & 0 & c_i & c_{i+1} & 0 & \dots & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

Two descriptions:

- "Top cell"  $(n-1)$ -dimensional of  $G_+(1, n)$  - redundant.
- Collection of 2-dimensional cells of  $G_+(1, n)$  - triangulation.

## Into the Grassmannian

In general case:



- A  $k$ -plane  $Y$  moving in the  $(k+m)$  space.
- Positive region given by  $n$  external points  $Z_i$ .
- The definition of the space:

$$Y_{\alpha}^I = C_{\alpha a} Z_a^I$$

It is a map that defines a positive region  $P_{n,k,m}$ ,

$$G_+(k, n) \times G_+(k+m, n) \rightarrow G(k, k+m)$$

The physical case is  $m = 4$ .

**Conjecture:** The positive region  $P_{n,k,4}$  represents the  $n$ -pt  $N^k$ MHV tree-level amplitude.

## Emergent Locality and Unitarity

How the locality and unitarity do emerge from positivity?

**Locality:** We show it for NMHV tree-level amplitudes

- Space is  $\mathbb{P}^4$ , vertices of the region are  $Z_i$ , boundaries are 3-planes  $(Z_i Z_j Z_k Z_\ell)$ . For what indices  $i, j, k, \ell$  we get a boundary?
- Look at  $\langle Y i j k \ell \rangle$ : zero on the boundary and positive inside.

$$\langle Y i j k \ell \rangle = \sum_{a=1}^n c_a \langle a i j k \ell \rangle$$

- Always positive:  $\langle Y i i+1 j j+1 \rangle > 0$  for  $Y$  inside the positive region.
- Reminder:  $(x_i - x_j)^2 \sim \langle i i+1 j j+1 \rangle$ , boundaries of the positive region correspond to local poles!
- Same proof holds for higher  $k$ .

## Emergent Locality and Unitarity

**Unitarity:** Show on the example of  $N^2$ MHV amplitudes.

- The space is defined by the equation ( $Y$  is a line,  $Y = Y_1 Y_2$ )

$$Y_\alpha^I = C_{\alpha a} Z_a^I$$

where  $C$  is a top-cell of  $G_+(2, n)$ , all  $(2 \times 2)$  minors are positive.

- On the factorization channel

$$\langle Y_1 Y_2 \ 1 \ 2 \ j \ j+1 \rangle = 0 \quad \rightarrow \quad Y_1 = a_1 Z_1 + a_2 Z_2 + a_j Z_j + a_{j+1} Z_{j+1}.$$

Therefore,

$$C = \begin{pmatrix} a_1 & a_2 & 0 & \dots & 0 & a_j & a_{j+1} & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ b_1 & b_2 & b_3 & \dots & b_{j-1} & b_j & b_{j+1} & b_{j+2} & \dots & b_n \end{pmatrix}$$

- Positivity:  $b_3 = \dots = b_{j-1} = 0$  or  $b_{j+2} = \dots = b_n = 0$ .

## Emergent Locality and Unitarity

- There are two options how to satisfy the positivity conditions:

$$\begin{pmatrix} * & * & 0 & \dots & 0 & * & * & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ * & * & 0 & \dots & 0 & * & * & * & \dots & * \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} * & * & 0 & \dots & 0 & * & * & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ * & * & * & \dots & * & * & * & 0 & \dots & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

- Factorization of  $N^2$ MHV amplitude to MHV and NMHV,

$$A_{M,2} \xrightarrow{\langle 12j\bar{j}+1 \rangle = 0} \{12j\bar{j}+1\} \times \left[ \begin{array}{c} \text{MHV diagram} \\ \text{NMHV diagram} \end{array} \right]$$

The diagram shows two Feynman diagrams in square brackets, separated by a plus sign. The first diagram is a MHV diagram with external legs labeled 1, 2,  $\bar{j}$ , and  $j+1$ . It has two internal vertices, each with a loop. The left vertex has legs 1 and 2, and the right vertex has legs  $\bar{j}$  and  $j+1$ . The two vertices are connected by two lines, forming a loop. The second diagram is a NMHV diagram with external legs labeled 1, 2,  $\bar{j}$ , and  $j$ . It has two internal vertices, each with a loop. The left vertex has legs 1 and 2, and the right vertex has legs  $\bar{j}$  and  $j$ . The two vertices are connected by two lines, forming a loop.

- Same argument for all trees. Positivity forces  $C$  to split to  $C_L, C_R$ .
- Positivity of external data  $Z$  forces also positivity of  $Z_L, Z_R$ .
- We are not moving with external data to probe the factorization channel,  $Y$  is localized to more special position!



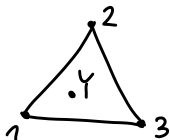
# Canonical forms and amplitudes

## Canonical form

How to get the actual formula from the positive region?

We define a canonical form  $\Omega_P$  which has **logarithmic** singularities on the boundaries of  $P$ .

Example of triangle in  $\mathbb{P}^2$ :



$$\Omega_P = \frac{\langle Y dY dY \rangle \langle 123 \rangle^2}{\langle Y12 \rangle \langle Y23 \rangle \langle Y31 \rangle}$$

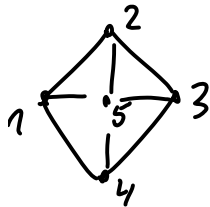
We parametrize  $Y = Z_1 + c_2 Z_2 + c_3 Z_3$  and get

$$\Omega_P = \frac{dc_2}{c_2} \frac{dc_3}{c_3} = d \log c_2 \, d \log c_3$$

Logarithmic singularities when moving with  $Y$  on a line (12) for  $c_3 = 0$  or a line (13) for  $c_2 = 0$ .

## Canonical form

Simplex in  $\mathbb{P}^4$  - this is relevant for physics.



$$\Omega_P = \frac{\langle Y dY dY dY dY \rangle \langle 12345 \rangle^2}{\langle Y1234 \rangle \langle Y2345 \rangle \langle Y3451 \rangle \langle Y4512 \rangle \langle Y5123 \rangle}$$

For  $Y = Z_1 + c_2 Z_2 + c_3 Z_3 + c_4 Z_4 + c_5 Z_5$  we get

$$\Omega_P = d \log c_2 \, d \log c_3 \, d \log c_4 \, d \log c_5$$

"Generalized triangle" given by  $Y_\alpha^I = C_{\alpha a} Z_a^I$  with  $C_{\alpha a} \in G_+(k, k+m)$ .

- $C$  is parametrized by  $k \cdot m$  parameters - it is a  $k \cdot m$  dimensional "top" cell of  $G_+(k, k+m)$ .
- We know all the matrices  $C$  as functions of  $km$  positive variables  $c_j$ .
- The form associated with this region is

$$\Omega_P = d \log c_1 \, d \log c_2 \, \dots \, d \log c_{km}$$

## Canonical form

For general positive region  $P$  we have the same definition of  $\Omega_P$ : canonical form with logarithmic singularities on the boundaries of  $P$ .

$$\Omega_P = \frac{\text{Measure of } Y \times \text{Numerator}(Y, Z_i)}{\prod \langle Y \text{ boundary} \rangle}$$

such that the form has logarithmic singularities on the boundaries.

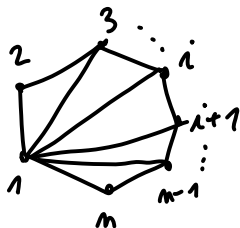
There is a natural strategy how to find the form:

- Triangulate the space, ie. find the set of non-overlapping "generalized triangles" that cover the space.
- Write the form for each triangle: dlogs of all variables  $c_1, \dots, c_{km}$ .
- Solve for variables  $c_j$  in terms of  $Y, Z_i$  for each "triangle", plug into the form and sum all "triangles".

The non-trivial operation: Triangulation of the positive region!

## Canonical form

Example: Polygon



$$\Omega_P = \sum_{i=2}^n \frac{\langle Y dY dY \rangle \langle 1 i i+1 \rangle^2}{\langle Y 1 i \rangle \langle Y 1 i+1 \rangle \langle Y i i+1 \rangle}$$

Spurious poles  $\langle Y 1 i \rangle$  cancel in the sum.

We know how to do the triangulation for some cases, e.g. for all  $m = 2$  but not in general. The positive region is not known to mathematicians (only the "triangles" which are positive Grassmannians  $G_+(k, n)$ ).

## Canonical form

The case of physical relevance is  $m = 4$ .

BCFW provides for us a triangulation of the space, different representations are different triangulations.

Spurious poles are internal boundaries that are absent once we put all pieces together.

Using BCFW we did many checks that the the picture is indeed correct!

We have also examples of triangulations that are not BCFW or anything else coming from physics.

## From canonical forms to amplitudes

How to extract the amplitude from  $\Omega_P$ ?

Look at the example of simplex in  $\mathbb{P}^4$ .

$$\Omega_P = \frac{\langle Y dY dY dY dY \rangle \langle 12345 \rangle^4}{\langle Y1234 \rangle \langle Y2345 \rangle \langle Y3451 \rangle \langle Y4512 \rangle \langle Y5123 \rangle}$$

Note that the data are five-dimensional, it is purely bosonic and it is a form rather than function.

Let us rewrite  $Z_i$  as four-dimensional part and its complement

$$Z_i = \begin{pmatrix} z_i \\ \delta z_i \end{pmatrix} \quad \text{where} \quad \delta z_i = (\eta_i \cdot \phi)$$

We define a reference point  $Y^*$  which is in the complement of 4d data  $z_i$ ,

$$Y^* = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

## From canonical forms to amplitudes

We integrate the form, using  $\langle Y^*1234 \rangle = \langle 1234 \rangle$ , etc. we get

$$\int d^4\phi \int \delta(Y - Y^*) \Omega_P = \frac{(\langle 1234 \rangle \eta_5 + \langle 2345 \rangle \eta_1 + \dots + \langle 5123 \rangle \eta_4)^4}{\langle 1234 \rangle \langle 2345 \rangle \langle 3451 \rangle \langle 4512 \rangle \langle 5123 \rangle}$$

For higher  $k$  we have  $(k+4)$  dimensional external  $Z_i$ ,

$$Z_i = \begin{pmatrix} z_i \\ (\eta_i \cdot \phi_1) \\ \vdots \\ (\eta_i \cdot \phi_k) \end{pmatrix} \quad Y^* = \begin{pmatrix} \vec{0} & \vec{0} & \dots & \vec{0} \\ 1 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ \vdots & \vdots & \vdots & \vdots \\ 0 & 0 & \dots & 1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Reference  $k$ -plane  $Y^*$  orthogonal to external  $z_i$ . We consider integral

$$A_{n,k} = \int d^4\phi_1 \dots d^4\phi_k \int \delta(Y - Y^*) \Omega_{P_{n,k}}$$



# Loop amplitudes

## MHV amplitudes

Let us start with MHV amplitudes where there is no dependence on  $\eta$ . External data are just original  $Z_i = z_i$ .

The loop variable is represented by a line  $Z_A Z_B$ , at one-loop we have just one line parametrized as

$$A_\alpha^I = C_{\alpha a} Z_a^I, \quad \text{where } \alpha = 1, 2$$

where  $A_\alpha = (A, B)$ . We demand the matrix of coefficients to be positive, ie.  $C \in G_+(2, n)$  and  $Z \in G_+(4, n)$ .

Boundaries of this region are  $\langle ABij \rangle$ :

$$\langle ABij \rangle = \sum_{a < b} (ab) \langle abij \rangle$$

Only  $\langle ABii+1 \rangle$  are always positive - boundaries of the space.

## MHV amplitudes

"Triangles" are just 4-dimensional cells of  $G_+(2, n)$ : "kermits"

Natural triangulation

$$P_n = \sum_{i < j} [1, i, i+1; 1, j, j+1]$$

where

$$C_{1, i, i+1; 1, j, j+1} = \begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & \dots & 0 & c_i & c_{i+1} & 0 & \dots & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 \\ -1 & 0 & \dots & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & \dots & 0 & c_j & c_{j+1} & 0 & \dots & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

Each kermite has a simple form  $\Omega_P = \text{dlog } c_i \text{ dlog } c_{i+1} \text{ dlog } c_j \text{ dlog } c_{j+1}$ , the full MHV one-loop amplitude is then

$$\Omega_P = \sum_{i < j} \frac{\langle AB d^2 A \rangle \langle AB d^2 B \rangle \langle AB (i-1 \ i \ i+1) \cap (j-1 \ j \ j+1) \rangle^2}{\langle AB \ 1 \ i \rangle \langle AB \ 1 \ i+1 \rangle \langle AB \ i \ i+1 \rangle \langle AB \ 1 \ j \rangle \langle AB \ 1 \ j+1 \rangle \langle AB \ j \ j+1 \rangle}$$

## MHV amplitudes

At two-loop we have two lines  $Z_A Z_B, Z_C Z_D$ ,

$$\begin{aligned} A_{\alpha}^{(1) I} &= C_{\alpha a}^{(1)} Z_a^I \\ A_{\alpha}^{(2) I} &= C_{\alpha a}^{(2)} Z_a^I \end{aligned}$$

We combine matrices into

$$C = \begin{pmatrix} C^{(1)} \\ C^{(2)} \end{pmatrix}$$

We demand  $C^{(1)}, C^{(2)}$  to be both  $G_+(2, n)$ . Just this is a "square" of one-loop problem:  $(A_n^{1-loop})^2$ .

Additional constraint: All  $(4 \times 4)$  minors of  $C$  are positive! This gives MHV two-loop amplitude.

We did many numerical checks that this picture is correct.

## MHV amplitudes

New feature: "triangles" are not known to mathematicians, it is a generalization of the positive Grassmannian, the form for each "triangle" is again the dlog of all positive variables.

One way to triangulate: BCFW loop recursion - we checked it triangulates the space. But geometrically it is not very natural

New geometric triangulation for 4pt 2-loop: new formula not derivable from any physical approach.

Local expansion using pentagons: not positive term by term, some external triangulation?

## MHV amplitudes

At  $L$ -loop we have  $L$  lines  $A_\alpha^I$ .

$$\begin{aligned} A_\alpha^{(1)I} &= C_{\alpha a}^{(1)} Z_a^I \\ &\vdots \\ A_\alpha^{(L)I} &= C_{\alpha a}^{(L)} Z_a^I \end{aligned} \quad C = \begin{pmatrix} C^{(1)} \\ \vdots \\ C^{(L)} \end{pmatrix}$$

Positivity constraints:

- External data  $Z$  are positive.
- All minors of  $C^{(1)}$  are positive.
- All  $(4 \times 4)$  minors made of  $C^{(i)}$ ,  $C^{(j)}$  are positive, all  $(6 \times 6)$  minors of  $C^{(i)}$ ,  $C^{(j)}$ ,  $C^{(k)}$ , etc. are also positive.

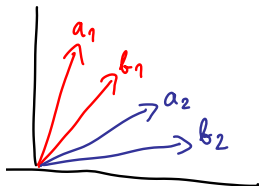
This conjecture passes many checks: locality, unitarity but also planarity are consequences of positivity.

## MHV amplitudes

The geometry problem for 4pt is incredible simple and it should be tractable to triangulate this space to all loop orders.

We have  $2d$  vectors  $a_i, b_i$  for  $i = 1, \dots, L$  and we demand

- They all live in the first quadrant.
- For any pair  $(a_i - b_i) \cdot (a_j - b_j) < 0$ .
- Triangulation: Find all possible configurations of vectors!



We did it manually up to 3-loops, but there is remarkable structure for sure!

## General case

In the general case of  $n$ -pt  $L$ -loop  $N^k$ MHV amplitude we have

- $k$ -plane  $Y$  in  $k+4$  dimensions
- $L$  lines in 4-dimensional complement to  $Y$  plane

$$Y_\sigma^I = C_{\sigma a} Z_a^I$$

$$A_\alpha^{(1)I} = C_{\alpha a}^{(1)} Z_a^I$$

$$\vdots$$

$$A_\alpha^{(L)I} = C_{\alpha a}^{(L)} Z_a^I$$

$$C = \begin{pmatrix} C \\ C^{(1)} \\ \vdots \\ C^{(L)} \end{pmatrix}$$



Positivity constraints:

- $C$  is positive.
- $C +$  any combination of  $C^{(i)}$ 's is positive.



## General case

It is remarkable that this mathematical structure, generalizing positivity beyond the usual positive grassmannian, gives a complete definition of scattering amplitudes in planar  $N=4$  SYM

- no reference to usual field theory notions whatsoever: no feynman diagrams, not even on-shell diagrams or recursion relations.
- Locality and Unitarity emerge from positivity.
- This rich structure is also completely new to the mathematicians.

## Beyond positive region

The forms are positive for positive external data and  $Y, A_\alpha$  in the positive region.

- Checked for all results available in the literature: many tree amplitudes, MHV up to 3-loop, and up to 7-loop for 4pt, NMHV up to 2-loop and  $N^k$ MHV for 1-loop.

Even more surprising: the integrated finite expressions are positive for positive external data [work with Nima and Simon]

- Checked for NMHV and  $N^2$ MHV one-loop ratio functions.
- Checked for 6pt two-loop remainder function.

## Conclusion

Positivity plays a crucial role in the planar  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  SYM!

THANK YOU!