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Twistors, light transforms, and the celestial Grassmannian

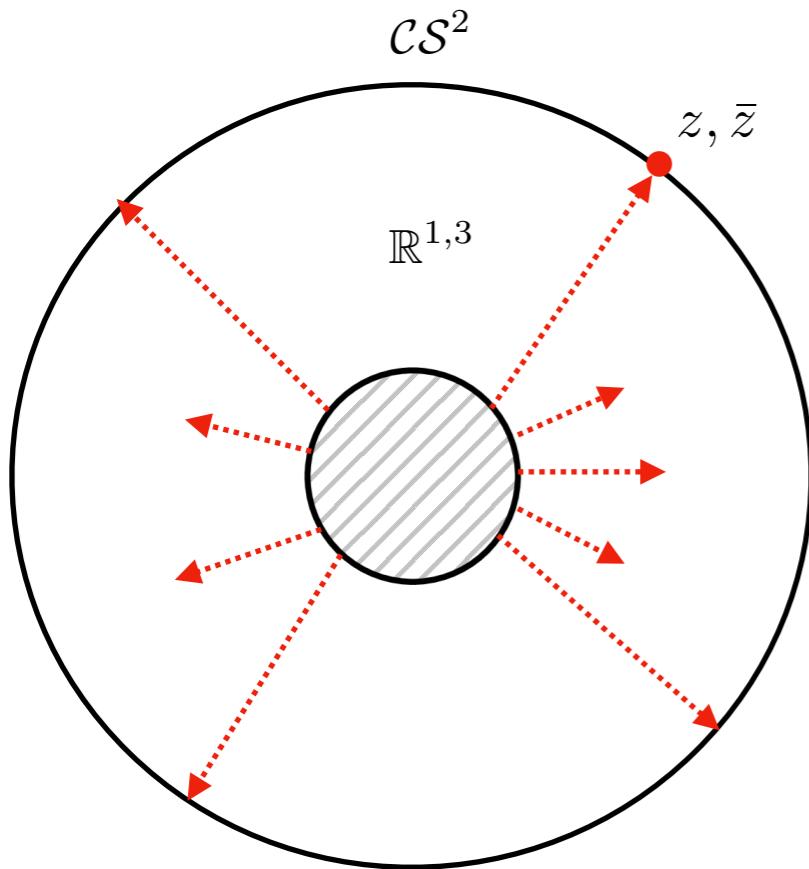
Edinburgh, 2021

Atul Sharma
Mathematical Institute
Oxford

Based on [\[2107.06250\]](#)

Locality in the sky?

[Pasterski, Shao '17]



Momentum
Eigenstates

Boost
Eigenstates

$$|\omega, z, \bar{z}, \ell, \epsilon\rangle \longrightarrow |z, \bar{z}, h, \bar{h}, \epsilon\rangle = \int_0^\infty \frac{d\omega}{\omega} \omega^\Delta |\omega, z, \bar{z}, \ell, \epsilon\rangle$$

$$h = \frac{\Delta + \ell}{2}, \bar{h} = \frac{\Delta - \ell}{2}$$

$$\epsilon = \pm 1$$

$\mathcal{O}_{h, \bar{h}}^\epsilon(z, \bar{z})$
Local?

**Shadow
transform**

Bulk dual state

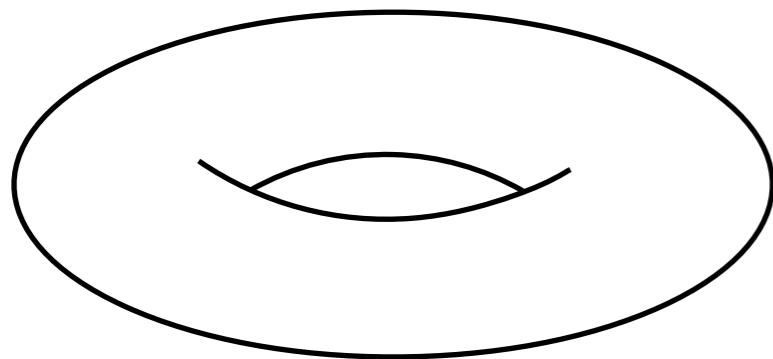
$$\mathbf{S}[\mathcal{O}_{h, \bar{h}}^\epsilon](z, \bar{z}) = \int_{\mathbb{C}} \frac{d^2 w \mathcal{O}_{h, \bar{h}}^\epsilon(w, \bar{w})}{(w - z)^{2-2h} (\bar{w} - \bar{z})^{2-2\bar{h}}} \quad |z, \bar{z}, 1-h, 1-\bar{h}, \epsilon\rangle_{\mathbf{S}}$$

Light transforms

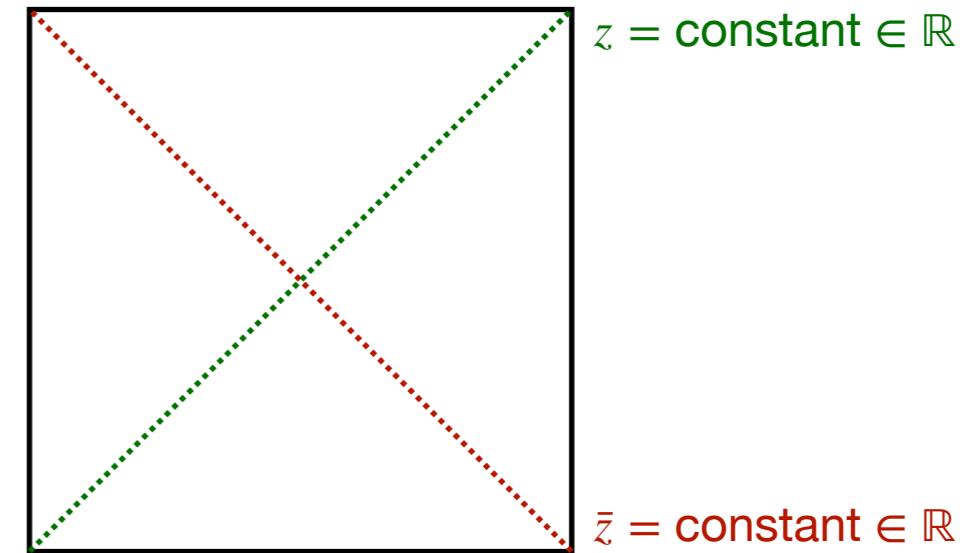
[Atanasov, Ball, Melton, Raclariu, Strominger '21]

Celestial torus

of $\mathbb{R}^{2,2}$



$$ds^2 = dz d\bar{z}$$



Lights
transforms

$$\mathbf{L}[\mathcal{O}_{h,\bar{h}}^\epsilon](z, \bar{z}) = \int_{\mathbb{R}} \frac{dw \mathcal{O}_{h,\bar{h}}^\epsilon(w, \bar{z})}{(w - z)^{2-2h}}$$

Bulk dual state

$$|z, \bar{z}, 1-h, \bar{h}, \epsilon\rangle_{\mathbf{L}}$$

$$\bar{\mathbf{L}}[\mathcal{O}_{h,\bar{h}}^\epsilon](z, \bar{z}) = \int_{\mathbb{R}} \frac{d\bar{w} \mathcal{O}_{h,\bar{h}}^\epsilon(z, \bar{w})}{(\bar{w} - \bar{z})^{2-2\bar{h}}}$$

$$|z, \bar{z}, h, 1-\bar{h}, \epsilon\rangle_{\bar{\mathbf{L}}}$$

[Atanasov, Melton, Raclariu, Strominger '21] [Kravchuk, Simmons-Duffin '18]

Previously in celestial news

- Shadow transform  adjoint operation in 2d CCFT.
[Crawley, Miller, Narayanan, Strominger '21]
- Shadow transforms used for gluon conformal block expansions.
[Fan, Fotopoulos, Stieberger, Taylor, Zhu '21]
- Light transform exchanges observed in scalar conformal block expansions.
[Atanasov, Melton, Raclariu, Strominger '21]
- Light transform unravels symmetries of self-dual CCFT.
[Himwich, Pate, Singh '21] [Strominger '21] [Guevara, Himwich, Pate, Strominger '21]

Today...

- From twistors to light transforms
- Light transformed celestial amplitudes
- Toward a Grassmannian formulation

Twistor eigenstates

Spinor-helicity

$$p_{\alpha\dot{\alpha}} = \lambda_\alpha \bar{\lambda}_{\dot{\alpha}}, \quad \lambda_\alpha, \bar{\lambda}_{\dot{\alpha}} \in \mathbb{R}^2$$

Real and independent
in $\mathbb{R}^{2,2}$

**Witten's
1/2 Fourier
transform**

$$|Z, \ell\rangle_{\mathbb{T}} \equiv |\lambda, \mu, \ell\rangle_{\mathbb{T}} := \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} d^2 \bar{\lambda} e^{i[\mu \bar{\lambda}]} |\lambda, \bar{\lambda}, \ell\rangle$$

↑
Twistor eigenstate

↑
Momentum eigenstate

[Witten '03]

$$\mu^{\dot{\alpha}} \xleftrightarrow{\text{Fourier conjugate}} \bar{\lambda}_{\dot{\alpha}}$$

Little group

$$|r Z, \ell\rangle_{\mathbb{T}} = r^{-2\ell-2} |Z, \ell\rangle_{\mathbb{T}}, \quad r \in \mathbb{R}^*$$

Twistors

$$Z^A = (\mu^{\dot{\alpha}}, \lambda_\alpha) \in \mathbb{RP}^3$$

Ambidextrous twistor amplitudes

$$\mathcal{M}_n = \int \prod_{\bar{a} \in -} d^2 \bar{\lambda}_{\bar{a}} e^{i[\mu_{\bar{a}} \bar{\lambda}_{\bar{a}}]} \prod_{a \in +} d^2 \lambda_a e^{i\langle \bar{\mu}_a \lambda_a \rangle} A_n(\lambda_i, \bar{\lambda}_i) \delta^4 \left(\sum_{i=1}^n \lambda_i \bar{\lambda}_i \right)$$

↑
Transform to
twistor space

↑
Transform to
dual twistor space

[Arkani-Hamed, Cachazo,
Cheung, Kaplan '09]

[Mason, Skinner '09]

Utilities

- Parity-symmetric prescription with cleanest results.
- Provides a natural home for BCFW recursion and on-shell diagrams.
- Inverse transforms give rise to Grassmannian formulae.

Twistors for AdS_3

Space-time
dilatations

$$x^{\alpha\dot{\alpha}} \mapsto r x^{\alpha\dot{\alpha}}$$

Twistor space
dilatations

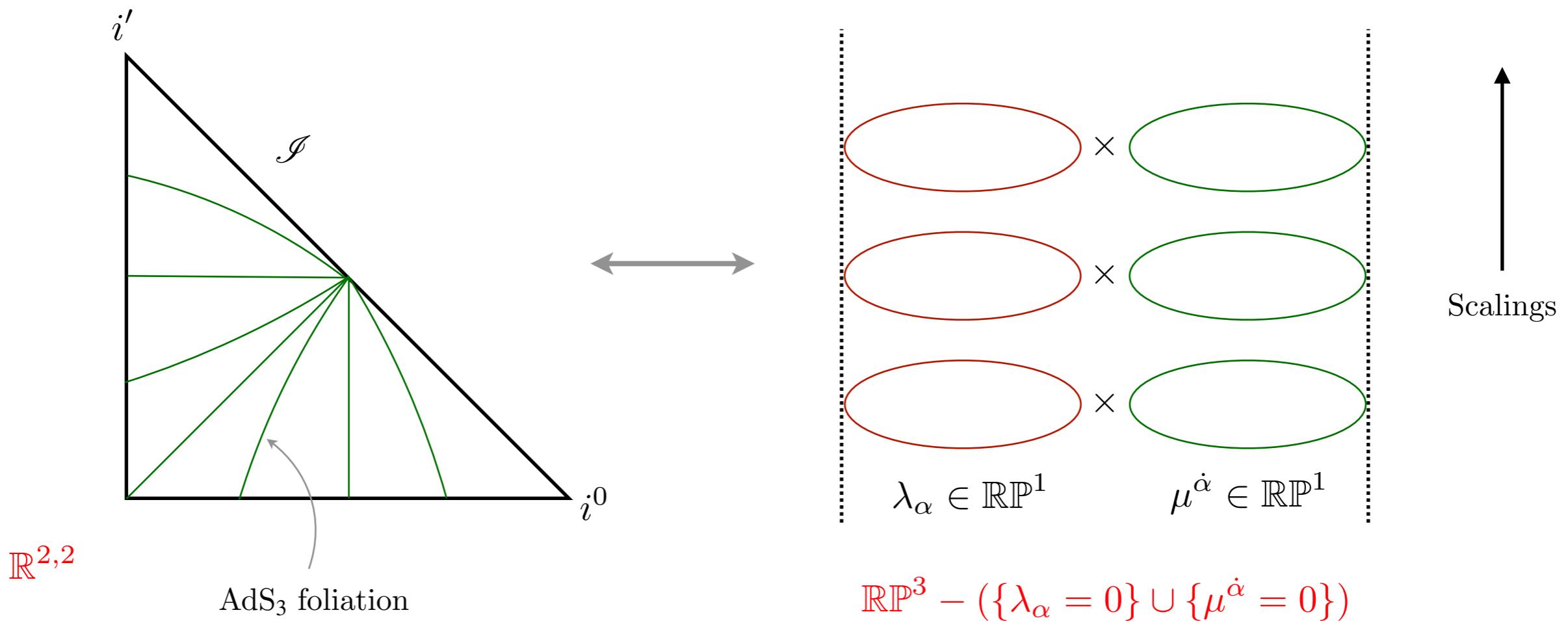
$$\begin{aligned} \text{Incidence relations} \\ \mu^{\dot{\alpha}} &= x^{\alpha\dot{\alpha}} \lambda_{\alpha} \\ \implies \mu^{\dot{\alpha}} &\mapsto r \mu^{\dot{\alpha}} \end{aligned}$$

Minitwistor
space of AdS_3

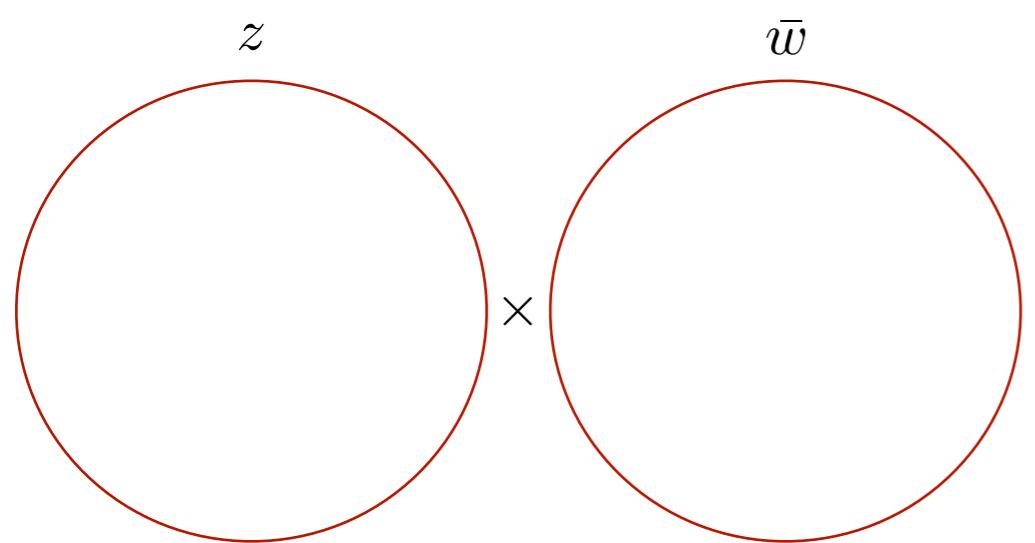
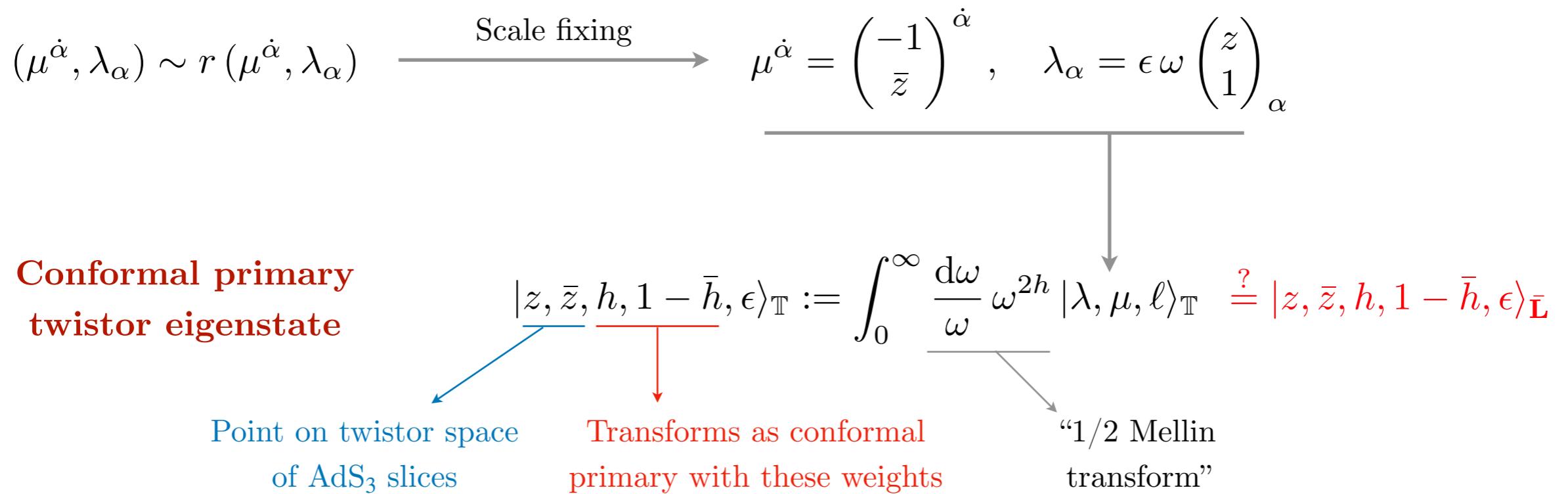
$$= \mathbb{RP}^1 \times \mathbb{RP}^1 = \frac{\{\mu^{\dot{\alpha}} \in \mathbb{R}^2 - \{0\}\}}{\mu^{\dot{\alpha}} \sim r \mu^{\dot{\alpha}}} \times \frac{\{\lambda_{\alpha} \in \mathbb{R}^2 - \{0\}\}}{\lambda_{\alpha} \sim s \lambda_{\alpha}}$$

[Hitchin '82]

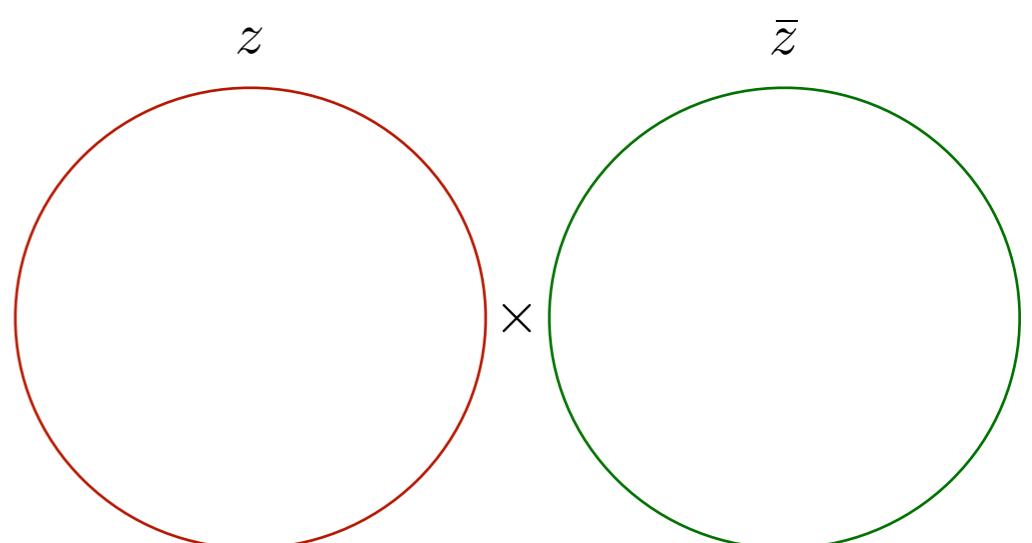
[Jones, Tod '85]



Primary twistor eigenstates



1/2 Fourier transform
or light transform?

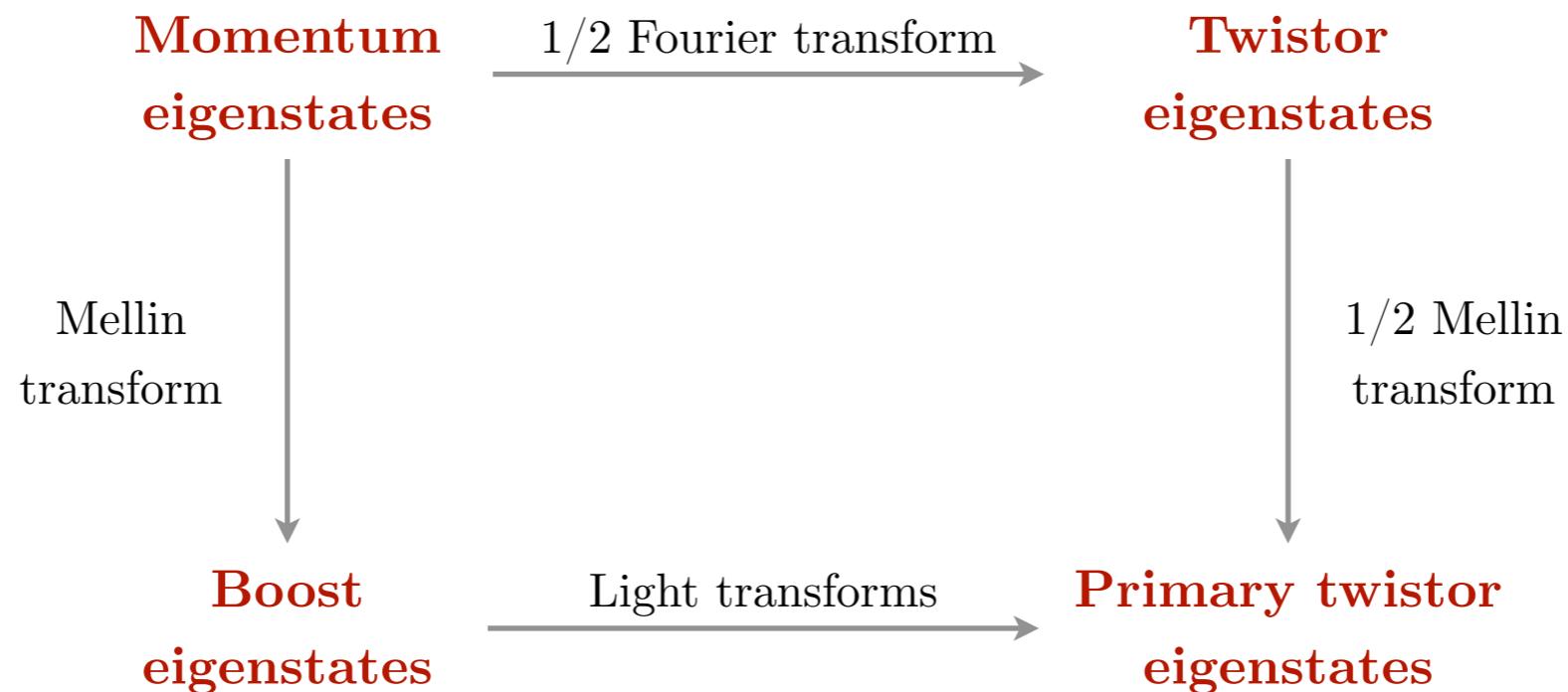


(Considered as an auxiliary copy of the celestial torus.)

Twistors to light transforms

$$|z, \bar{z}, h, 1 - \bar{h}, \epsilon\rangle_{\mathbb{T}}$$

$$= \epsilon^{-2\ell} \Gamma(2 - 2\bar{h}) \left(e^{\pi i(1-\bar{h})} |z, \bar{z}, h, 1 - \bar{h}, \epsilon\rangle_{\bar{\mathbf{L}}} + e^{\pi i\bar{h}} |z, \bar{z}, h, 1 - \bar{h}, -\epsilon\rangle_{\bar{\mathbf{L}}} \right)$$



Motivates ambidextrous prescription for light transforms!

Ambidextrous light transforms

[Pasterski, Shao, Strominger '17]

$$\mathcal{A}_n(z_i, \bar{z}_i, \Delta_i, \ell_i, \epsilon_i) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n_+} \prod_{j=1}^n \frac{d\omega_j}{\omega_j} \omega_j^{\Delta_j} A_n(\epsilon_i \omega_i q_i, \ell_i) \delta^4 \left(\sum_{j=1}^n \epsilon_i \omega_i q_i \right)$$

↑
Celestial amplitude

↑
Momentum space amplitude

$$q_i{}_{\alpha\dot{\alpha}} = \begin{pmatrix} z_i \bar{z}_i & z_i \\ \bar{z}_i & 1 \end{pmatrix}_{\alpha\dot{\alpha}}$$

$$\epsilon_i = \pm 1$$

$$\mathcal{L}_n(z_i, \bar{z}_i, \Delta_i, \ell_i, \epsilon_i) = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \prod_{\bar{a}} \frac{d\bar{w}_{\bar{a}}}{(\bar{w}_{\bar{a}} - \bar{z}_{\bar{a}})^{2-2\bar{h}_{\bar{a}}}} \prod_a \frac{dw_a}{(w_a - z_a)^{2-2h_a}} \times \mathcal{A}_n(z_{\bar{a}}, \bar{w}_{\bar{a}}, \Delta_{\bar{a}}, -, \epsilon_{\bar{a}} ; w_a, \bar{z}_a, \Delta_a, +, \epsilon_a)$$

$a \longrightarrow$ Positive helicity
gluon/graviton

$\bar{a} \longrightarrow$ Negative helicity
gluon/graviton

Gluon examples

$$\mathcal{A}_n(i_{\Delta_i, \ell_i}^{\epsilon_i}) \equiv \mathcal{A}_n(z_i, \bar{z}_i, \Delta_i, \ell_i, \epsilon_i) \propto \delta(\beta), \quad \beta = i \sum_{j=1}^n (\Delta_j - 1)$$

2 points

$$\mathcal{A}_2(1_{\Delta_1, +1}^+, 2_{\Delta_2, -1}^-) = \delta(\beta) \delta(z_{12}) \delta(\bar{z}_{12})$$

$$z_{ij} = z_i - z_j$$

$$\begin{aligned} \implies \mathcal{L}_2(1_{\Delta_1, +1}^+, 2_{\Delta_2, -1}^-) &= \delta(\beta) \int_{\mathbb{R}^2} \frac{dw_1 d\bar{w}_2 \delta(w_1 - z_2) \delta(\bar{z}_1 - \bar{w}_2)}{(w_1 - z_1)^{1-\Delta_1} (\bar{w}_2 - \bar{z}_2)^{1-\Delta_2}} \\ &= \frac{\delta(\beta)}{z_{21}^{1-\Delta_1} \bar{z}_{12}^{1-\Delta_2}}. \end{aligned}$$

Gluon examples

3 points

$$\mathcal{A}_3(1_{\Delta_1, -1}^-, 2_{\Delta_2, -1}^-, 3_{\Delta_3, +1}^+) = \delta(\beta) \Theta\left(\frac{z_{13}}{z_{12}}\right) \Theta\left(\frac{z_{32}}{z_{12}}\right) \frac{\delta(\bar{z}_{13}) \delta(\bar{z}_{23})}{z_{12}^{-\Delta_3} z_{32}^{2-\Delta_1} z_{13}^{2-\Delta_2}}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{L}_3(1_{\Delta_1, -1}^-, 2_{\Delta_2, -1}^-, 3_{\Delta_3, +1}^+) &= \delta(\beta) \int_{\mathbb{R}^3} \frac{d\bar{w}_1}{(\bar{w}_1 - \bar{z}_1)^{1-\Delta_1}} \frac{d\bar{w}_2}{(\bar{w}_2 - \bar{z}_2)^{1-\Delta_2}} \frac{dw_3}{(w_3 - z_3)^{1-\Delta_3}} \\ &\quad \times \Theta\left(\frac{z_1 - w_3}{z_1 - z_2}\right) \Theta\left(\frac{w_3 - z_2}{z_1 - z_2}\right) \frac{\delta(\bar{w}_1 - \bar{z}_3) \delta(\bar{w}_2 - \bar{z}_3)}{z_{12}^{-\Delta_3} (w_3 - z_2)^{2-\Delta_1} (z_1 - w_3)^{2-\Delta_2}} \\ &= \frac{\delta(\beta)}{z_{12}^{-\Delta_3} \bar{z}_{31}^{1-\Delta_1} \bar{z}_{32}^{1-\Delta_2}} \int_{z_2}^{z_1} \frac{\operatorname{sgn}(z_{12}) dw_3}{(w_3 - z_3)^{1-\Delta_3} (w_3 - z_2)^{2-\Delta_1} (z_1 - w_3)^{2-\Delta_2}} \end{aligned}$$

$$\Rightarrow \mathcal{L}_3(1_{\Delta_1, -1}^-, 2_{\Delta_2, -1}^-, 3_{\Delta_3, +1}^+) = \frac{\delta(\beta) B(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) \operatorname{sgn}(z_{12})}{z_{13}^{\Delta_1 - 1} z_{23}^{\Delta_2 - 1} \bar{z}_{31}^{1-\Delta_1} \bar{z}_{32}^{1-\Delta_2}}.$$

Parity conjugate

$$\mathcal{L}_3(1_{\Delta_1, +1}^+, 2_{\Delta_2, +1}^+, 3_{\Delta_3, -1}^-) = \frac{\delta(\beta) B(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) \operatorname{sgn}(\bar{z}_{12})}{z_{31}^{1-\Delta_1} z_{32}^{1-\Delta_2} \bar{z}_{13}^{\Delta_1 - 1} \bar{z}_{23}^{\Delta_2 - 1}}.$$

Observations

$$\mathcal{L}_2(1_{\Delta_1,+1}^+, 2_{\Delta_2,-1}^-) = \frac{\delta(\beta)}{z_{21}^{1-\Delta_1} \bar{z}_{12}^{1-\Delta_2}}.$$

$$\mathcal{L}_3(1_{\Delta_1,+1}^+, 2_{\Delta_2,+1}^+, 3_{\Delta_3,-1}^-) = \frac{\delta(\beta) B(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) \operatorname{sgn}(\bar{z}_{12})}{z_{31}^{1-\Delta_1} z_{32}^{1-\Delta_2} \bar{z}_{13}^{\Delta_1 - 1} \bar{z}_{23}^{\Delta_2 - 1}}.$$

- Ambidextrous prescription absorbs *all* momentum conserving delta functions.
- Brings amplitude to standard conformally covariant power law.
- Can read off light transform celestial OPE.

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{L}[O_{\Delta_1,+}^a](z_1, \bar{z}_1) \mathbf{L}[O_{\Delta_2,+}^b](z_2, \bar{z}_2) \\ \sim \operatorname{sgn}(\bar{z}_{12}) \textcolor{blue}{B}(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) f^{abc} \mathbf{L}[O_{\Delta_1+\Delta_2-1,+}^c](z_2, \bar{z}_2) + \dots \end{aligned}$$

Graviton examples

2 points

$$\mathcal{A}_2(1_{\Delta_1,+2}^+, 2_{\Delta_2,-2}^-) = \delta(\beta) \delta(z_{12}) \delta(\bar{z}_{12})$$

3 points

$$\mathcal{A}_3(1_{\Delta_1,+2}^+, 2_{\Delta_2,+2}^+, 3_{\Delta_3,-2}^-) = \delta(\beta + i) \Theta\left(\frac{\bar{z}_{13}}{\bar{z}_{12}}\right) \Theta\left(\frac{\bar{z}_{32}}{\bar{z}_{12}}\right) \frac{\delta(z_{13}) \delta(z_{23})}{\bar{z}_{12}^{-2-\Delta_3} \bar{z}_{32}^{2-\Delta_1} \bar{z}_{13}^{2-\Delta_2}}$$



$$\mathcal{L}_2(1_{\Delta_1,+2}^+, 2_{\Delta_2,-2}^-) = \frac{\delta(\beta)}{z_{21}^{-\Delta_1} \bar{z}_{12}^{-\Delta_2}}.$$

$$\mathcal{L}_3(1_{\Delta_1,+2}^+, 2_{\Delta_2,+2}^+, 3_{\Delta_3,-2}^-) = \frac{\delta(\beta + i) B(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) |\bar{z}_{12}|}{z_{31}^{-\Delta_1} z_{32}^{-\Delta_2} \bar{z}_{13}^{\Delta_1 - 1} \bar{z}_{23}^{\Delta_2 - 1}}.$$

Celestial

$$\mathbf{L}[G_{\Delta_1,+}](z_1, \bar{z}_1) \mathbf{L}[G_{\Delta_2,+}](z_2, \bar{z}_2)$$

OPE

$$\sim |\bar{z}_{12}| B(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) \mathbf{L}[G_{\Delta_1+\Delta_2,+}](z_2, \bar{z}_2) + \dots$$

Comparing celestial OPE

[Pate, Raclariu, Strominger, Yuan '19] [Fan, Fotopoulos, Taylor '19]

For boost
eigenstates

$$O_{\Delta_1,+}^a(z_1, \bar{z}_1) O_{\Delta_2,+}^b(z_2, \bar{z}_2) \sim \frac{1}{z_{12}} B(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) f^{abc} O_{\Delta_1+\Delta_2-1,+}^c(z_2, \bar{z}_2) + \dots$$

$$G_{\Delta_1,+}(z_1, \bar{z}_1) G_{\Delta_2,+}(z_2, \bar{z}_2) \sim \frac{\bar{z}_{12}}{z_{12}} B(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) G_{\Delta_1+\Delta_2,+}(z_2, \bar{z}_2) + \dots$$

For light
transformed
states

$$\mathbf{L}[O_{\Delta_1,+}^a](z_1, \bar{z}_1) \mathbf{L}[O_{\Delta_2,+}^b](z_2, \bar{z}_2) \sim \text{sgn}(\bar{z}_{12}) B(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) f^{abc} \mathbf{L}[O_{\Delta_1+\Delta_2-1,+}^c](z_2, \bar{z}_2) + \dots$$

$$\mathbf{L}[G_{\Delta_1,+}](z_1, \bar{z}_1) \mathbf{L}[G_{\Delta_2,+}](z_2, \bar{z}_2) \sim |\bar{z}_{12}| B(\Delta_1 - 1, \Delta_2 - 1) \mathbf{L}[G_{\Delta_1+\Delta_2,+}](z_2, \bar{z}_2) + \dots$$

Non-singular OPE?



Toward positive geometries

(Ongoing work with Matteo Parisi and Anders Schreiber)

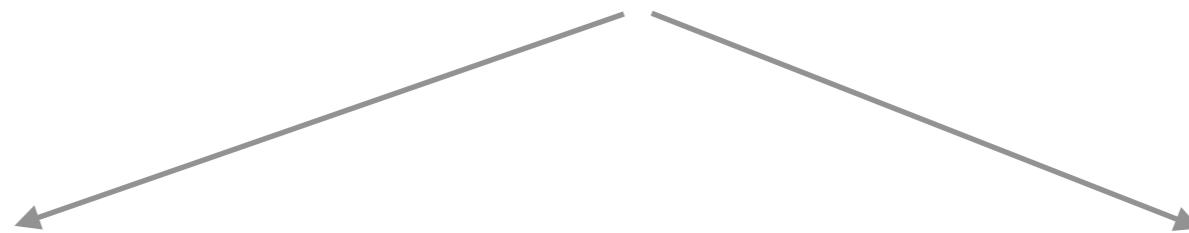
$N=4$ SYM super-amplitude in non-chiral superspace $(\lambda_i^\alpha, \bar{\lambda}_i^{\dot{\alpha}}, \eta_i^\alpha, \bar{\eta}_i^{\dot{\alpha}})$

$$A_{n,k} = \int_{\Gamma} \Omega_{n,k}(C) \delta^{2k|2k}(C \cdot (\bar{\lambda} | \bar{\eta})) \delta^{2(n-k)|2(n-k)}(C^\perp \cdot (\lambda | \eta))$$

- $\lambda \equiv (\lambda_i^\alpha)_{2 \times n}$, etc. [Arkani-Hamed, Cachazo, Cheung, Kaplan '10]
- $C \in \mathrm{G}(k, n)$ = Space of k -planes in n dimensions [He, Zhang '18]
- $\Omega_{n,k}(C) = \frac{\mathrm{d}^{k \times n} C / \mathrm{vol} \mathrm{GL}(k)}{(1 \ 2 \ \dots \ k) (2 \ 3 \ \dots \ k+1) \dots (n \ 1 \ \dots \ k-1)}$
- $C^\perp \in \mathrm{G}(n-k, n)$ s.t. $C^\perp \cdot C^t = 0$
- $\Gamma \xrightarrow{\hspace{2cm}} \text{BCFW contour}$ Ordered minors of C labeled by columns involved

Grassmannian for celestial amplitudes

$$\mathcal{A}_{n,k} = \int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} \frac{d\omega_i}{\omega_i} \omega_i^{\Delta_i} \int_{\Gamma} \Omega_{n,k}(C) \delta^{2k|2k}(C \cdot (\bar{\lambda} | \bar{\eta})) \delta^{2(n-k)|2(n-k)}(C^\perp \cdot (\lambda | \eta))$$



Can *perform* the
Mellin integrals

Can *geometrize* the
Mellin integrals

- $(\lambda_i, \bar{\lambda}_i, \eta_i, \bar{\eta}_i) \equiv \sqrt{\omega_i} (\zeta_i, \bar{\zeta}_i, \chi_i, \bar{\chi}_i)$
- Gauge fix: $C = \begin{pmatrix} I_{k \times k} & | & (c)_{k \times n-k} \end{pmatrix}$

$$C^\perp = \begin{pmatrix} (-c^t)_{n-k \times k} & | & I_{n-k \times n-k} \end{pmatrix}$$

Performing the integrals

[AS '21] [Ferro, Moerman '21]

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{A}_{n,k} = \int_{\Gamma} \Omega_{n,k}(C) \prod_{j=1}^n \Theta(E_j) E_j^{\Delta_j - 1} \prod_{\bar{a}} \delta \left(\sum_b \epsilon_b c_{\bar{a}b} z_{\bar{a}b} \right) \delta^{0|2} \left(E_{\bar{a}} \chi_{\bar{a}} + \sum_b \epsilon_b c_{\bar{a}b} \chi_b \right) \\ \times \prod_a \delta \left(\sum_{\bar{b}} \epsilon_{\bar{b}} c_{\bar{b}a} z_{a\bar{b}} \right) \delta^{0|2} \left(E_a \chi_a - \sum_{\bar{b}} \epsilon_{\bar{b}} c_{\bar{b}a} \chi_{\bar{b}} \right) \end{aligned}$$

$$C_{\bar{a}\bar{b}} = \delta_{\bar{a}\bar{b}}, \quad C_{\bar{a}a} = c_{\bar{a}a}$$

Gauge choice

$$i = a, \bar{a}$$

$$\bar{a} = 1, 2, \dots, k$$

“Negative helicity”

$$a = k+1, k+2, \dots, n$$

“Positive helicity”

$$E_{\bar{a}} = \omega_{\bar{a}} = - \sum_b \epsilon_b c_{\bar{a}b}$$

$$E_a = \omega_a = \sum_{\bar{b}} \epsilon_{\bar{b}} c_{\bar{b}a}$$

$$(\lambda_i, \bar{\lambda}_i, \eta_i, \bar{\eta}_i) \equiv \sqrt{\omega_i} (\zeta_i, \bar{\zeta}_i, \chi_i, \bar{\chi}_i)$$

Geometrizing the integrals

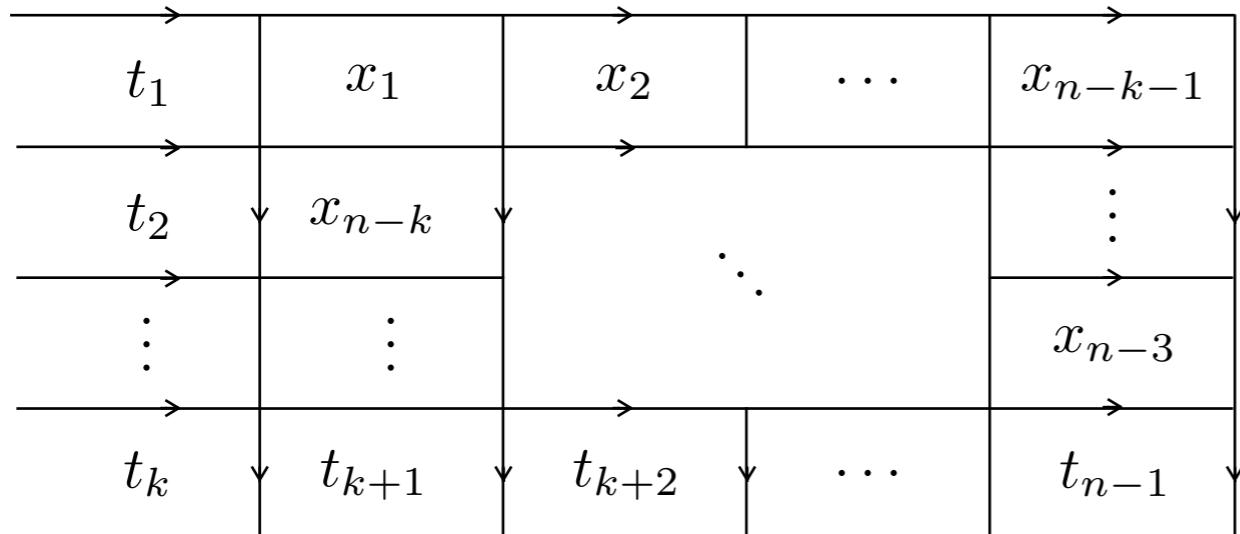
Upcoming: [Parisi, Schreiber, AS]

$$\mathcal{A}_{n,k} = \delta\left(\mathrm{i} \sum_{i=1}^n \Delta_i\right) \int_{\Gamma} \prod_{i=1}^{n-1} \Theta\left(\frac{\bar{t}_i}{t_i}\right) \frac{dt_i}{t_i^{1+\sum_{p=1}^i \Delta_p}} \frac{d\bar{t}_i}{\bar{t}_i^{1+\sum_{p=i+1}^n \Delta_p}} \prod_{e=1}^{n-3} \frac{dx_e}{x_e}$$

$$\times \delta^{2k|2k} (C(t) \cdot (\bar{\zeta} | \bar{\chi})) \delta^{2(n-k)|2(n-k)} (C(\bar{t})^\perp \cdot (\zeta | \chi))$$

Web parametrisation of C with
two copies of torus actions

[Speyer, Williams '05]



$$C_{\bar{a}\bar{b}}(t) = \delta_{\bar{a}\bar{b}}$$

$$C_{\bar{a}a}(t) = (-1)^{\bar{a}+k} \prod_{i=\bar{a}}^{a-1} t_i \sum_{p:\bar{a} \rightarrow a} \text{Prod}_p(x)$$

$$\bar{a} = 1, 2, \dots, k \quad a = k+1, k+2, \dots, n$$

Future directions

- Find the right basis of conformal primary local operators.
- Determine light and shadow transform OPEs in generality.
- Clarify twistorial origins of $w_{1+\infty}$ symmetries in a light transform basis.
[Strominger '21]
- Build bridges with positive geometries.