

# Loop recursion relation and dual conformal symmetry for form factors

based on 1812.09001 and 1812.10468 with A. Brandhuber, R. Panerai and G. Travaglini

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Amplitudes, Trinity College Dublin

## Motivation and definitions

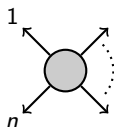
- Progress for the computation of scattering amplitudes using **on-shell techniques**.
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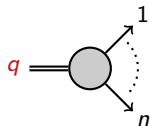
### Scattering amplitudes

$$A_n = \langle 1, \dots, n | 0 \rangle$$



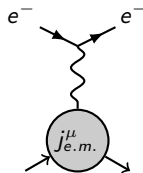
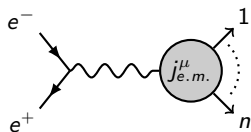
### Form factors

$$F_n(q) = \int d^4x e^{iqx} \langle 1, \dots, n | \mathcal{O}(x) | 0 \rangle$$



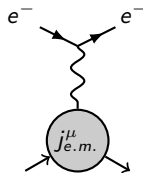
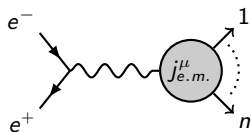
## Examples of form factors

- $e^+e^-$  annihilation and deep inelastic scattering

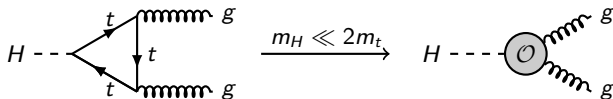


## Examples of form factors

- $e^+e^-$  annihilation and deep inelastic scattering



- Higgs effective theory



$$\mathcal{O} = \text{Tr}\{F^{\mu\nu} F_{\mu\nu}\}$$

## Form factors in $\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM

- ✓ Strong coupling [Alday, Maldacena, 2007; Maldacena, Zhiboedov, 2010]
- ✓ Tree-level BCFW recursion relation [Brandhuber, Gurdogan, Mooney, Travaglini, Yang, 2011]
- ✓ Generalized unitarity [Brandhuber, Spence, Travaglini, Yang, 2010]
- ✓ Color-kinematic duality [Boels, Kniehl, Tarasov, Yang, 2012]
- ✓ On-shell diagrams and Grassmanian [Frassek, Meidinger, Nandan, Wilhelm, 2015]
- ✓ Twistor-space formulation [Koster, Mitev, Staudacher, Wilhelm, 2016]
- ✓ Scattering equations [He, Zhang, 2016; Brandhuber, Hughes, Panerai, Spence, Travaglini, 2016]
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### Results for chiral primary $\text{Tr}(\phi^2)$ in $\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM

loops \ legs	2	3	4	5	6
0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1	✓	✓	✓	MHV	MHV
2	✓	✓			
3	✓				
4	✓				

[van Neerven, 1986; Brandhuber, Gurdogan, Mooney, Travaglini, Yang, 2011; Brandhuber, Spence, Travaglini, Yang, 2010; Bork, Kazakov, Vartanov, 2010; Bork, 2012; Brandhuber, Travaglini, Yang, 2012; Gehrmann, Henn, Huber, 2012; Brandhuber, Penante, Travaglini, Wen, 2014; Boels, Huber, Yang, 2018]

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- ✓ Loop-level recursion relation [LB, Brandhuber, Panerai, Travaglini, 2018]
- ✓ Dual conformal invariance [LB, Brandhuber, Panerai, Travaglini, 2018]



## Loop recursion and dual conformal invariance

- The discovery of dual conformal invariance for scattering amplitudes goes back 13 years [Drummond, Henn, Smirnov, Sokatchev, 2006; Alday, Maldacena, 2007; Drummond, Henn, Korchemsky, Sokatchev, 2007; Brandhuber, Heslop, Travaglini, 2007, 2008]
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### Why now?

- Form factors are inherently **non-planar**.
- Definition of the loop integrand  $\leftrightarrow$  **Region variables**
- Presence of **triangle integrals**

$$I_4 = \int d^4 x_0 \frac{1}{x_{01}^2 x_{02}^2 x_{03}^2 x_{04}^2} \quad I_3 = \int d^4 x_0 \frac{1}{x_{01}^2 x_{02}^2 x_{03}^2}$$

$$\text{Inversion: } x_i \rightarrow x_i/x_i^2 \Rightarrow x_{0i}^2 \rightarrow \frac{x_{0i}^2}{x_0^2 x_i^2}$$

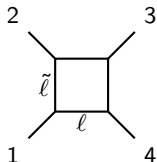
$$\text{Change of variable: } x_0 \rightarrow x_0/x_0^2 \Rightarrow d^4 x_0 \rightarrow d^4 x_0/x_0^8$$

# Part I

## Loop Recursion Relation

## Integrand poles

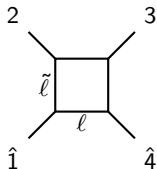
- The main issue with the extension of BCFW recursion relation at loop level is the **definition of the integrand**.



$$= \int d^4 l \frac{1}{l^2(\ell+p_1)^2(\ell+p_{12})^2(\ell-p_4)^2} = \int d^4 \tilde{l} \frac{1}{\tilde{l}^2(\tilde{l}+p_2)^2(\tilde{l}+p_{23})^2(\tilde{l}-p_1)^2}$$

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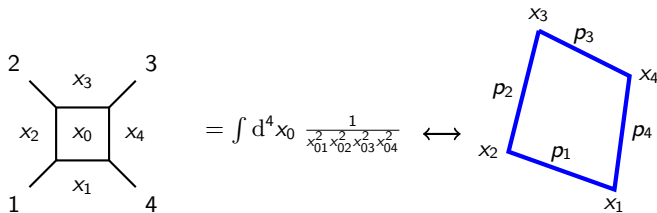


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$$p_i = x_i - x_{i+1}$$



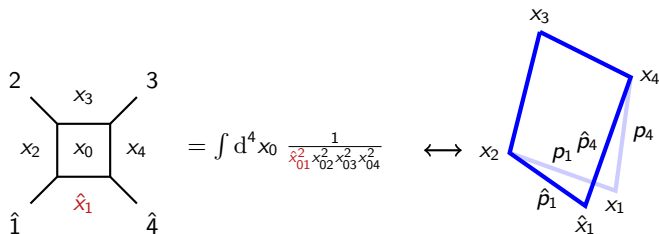
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- The BCFW shift is a shift of  $x_1$

$$\hat{x}_1 = x_1 - z\lambda_n\tilde{\lambda}_1$$



## Non-planarity

- Region variable assignment is natural for **planar diagrams**.
- For amplitudes they correspond to the vertices of the dual **polygon Wilson loop**.
- The strong coupling picture suggests that the Wilson loop dual should be **periodic**.

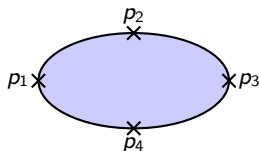


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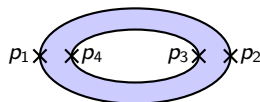
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- For amplitudes they correspond to the vertices of the dual **polygon Wilson loop**.
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- Similarities with **double trace** part of amplitudes. [Ben-Israel, Tumanov, Sever, 2018]

## Colour ordering

$$A_4 = N \operatorname{Tr}\{T^{a_1} T^{a_2} T^{a_3} T^{a_4}\} \mathcal{A}_4 + \operatorname{Tr}\{T^{a_1} T^{a_2}\} \operatorname{Tr}\{T^{a_3} T^{a_4}\} \mathcal{A}_4^{\text{dt}} + \text{non-cyclic perms}$$

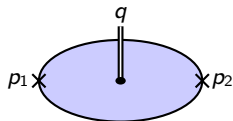


Single trace

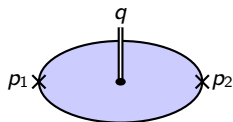


Double trace

- The form factor is similar since the gauge invariant operator is a **trace on its own**.



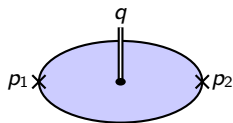
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- On the punctured disk diagrams are planar



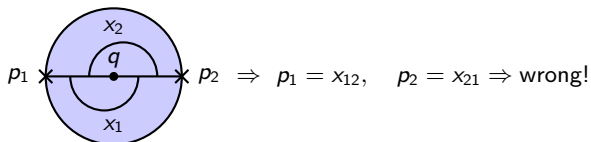
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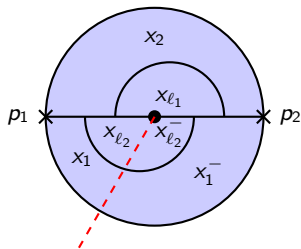
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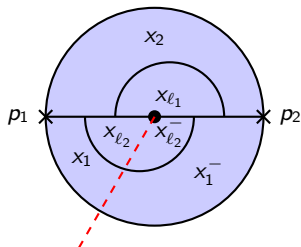
- Can I assign region variables on the punctured disk? No, unless I **cut** it.



- In this picture the operator insertion looks like a **branch point**.



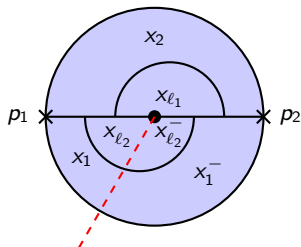
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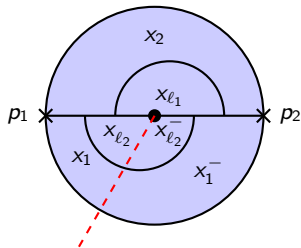
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- The integrand is (notice  $x_1 - x_{l_2} = x_1^- - x_{l_2}^-$ )

$$\int d^4 x_{l_1} d^4 x_{l_2} \frac{1}{x_{2l_2}^2 x_{2l_1}^2 (x_{1l_1}^-)^2 x_{1l_2}^2 x_{l_2l_1}^2 (x_{l_2l_1}^-)^2}$$

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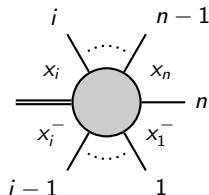
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- Nothing changes if we shift all the variables by  $q$ : **periodicity**.



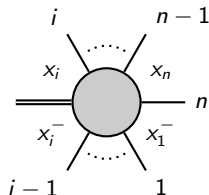
## Region variable assignment [LB, Brandhuber, Panerai, Travaglini]

- We can give a **prescription to assign region variables** diagram by diagram.

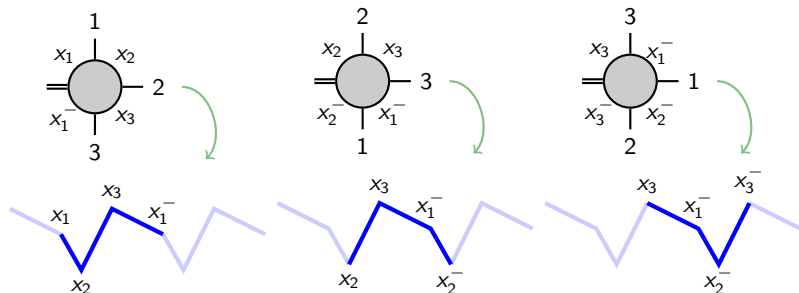


## Region variable assignment [LB, Brandhuber, Panerai, Travaglini]

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- This is like choosing where to start in the periodic configuration.



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$$F_{n,k}^{(1)} = \int d^d x_0 \mathcal{F}_{n,k}^{(1)}(\{x_i\}; x_0)$$

- $\mathcal{F}_{n,k}^{(1)}(\{x_i\}; x_0)$  is actually a function only of  $x_{ij}$  and  $x_{0j}$ .
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- We can define equivalence classes

$$\mathcal{F}_{n,k}^{(1)}(\{x_i\}; x_0) \sim \mathcal{F}_{n,k}^{(1)}(\{x_i\}; x_0 + m q) \quad m \in \mathbb{Z}$$

- Of course they yield the same result **after integration**.

## BCFW for the integrand [LB, Brandhuber, Panerai, Travaglini]

- Define the shifted **integrand**  $\mathcal{F}_{n,k}^{(1)}(\{\hat{x}_i\}; x_0) \equiv \widehat{\mathcal{F}}_{n,k}^{(1)}(z)$
- Use residue theorem

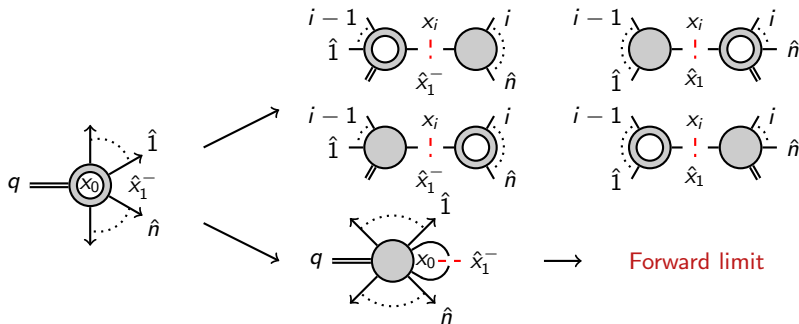
$$0 = \frac{1}{2\pi i} \oint \frac{dz}{z} \widehat{\mathcal{F}}_{n,k}^{(1)}(z) = \mathcal{F}_{n,k}^{(1)}(\{x_i\}; x_0) + \sum_{z_i \neq 0} \text{Res}_{z=z_i} \frac{\widehat{\mathcal{F}}_{n,k}^{(1)}(z)}{z}$$

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Two types of poles [Caron-Huot, 2010; Arkani-Hamed, Bourjaily, Cachazo, Caron-Huot, Trnka, 2010]



Forward limit



## Loop recursion relation

### Result

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{F}_{n,k}^{(l)} &= F_{n,k}^{(0)} \tilde{\mathcal{F}}_{n-1,k}^{(l)}(\hat{x}_1, x_3, \dots, x_n, x_0) \\ &+ \frac{1}{x_{01}^2} \int d^4 \eta_\ell \mathcal{F}_{n+2,k+1}^{(l-1)}(\hat{x}_1, \dots, x_n, \hat{x}_1^-, x_0^-) \\ &+ \sum_{l_L, i, k_L} \int d^4 \eta_\ell \left[ \mathcal{F}_{i, k_L}^{(l_L)}(\hat{x}_1, \dots, x_i) \frac{1}{(x_{i1}^+)^2} \mathcal{A}_{n-i+2, k_R}^{(l_R)}(\hat{x}_1, x_i, \dots, x_n) \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \mathcal{A}_{i, k_L}^{(l_L)}(\hat{x}_1, \dots, x_i) \frac{1}{(x_{i1}^-)^2} \mathcal{F}_{n-i+2, k_R}^{(l_R)}(\hat{x}_1, x_i, \dots, x_n) \right]\end{aligned}$$

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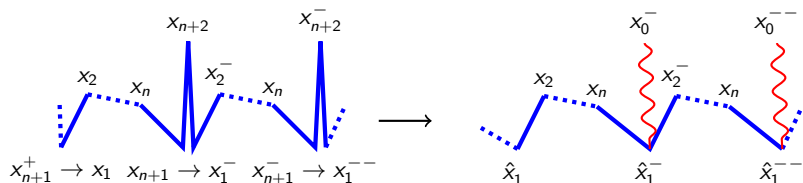
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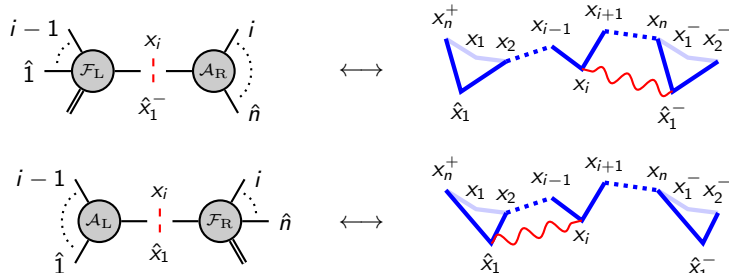
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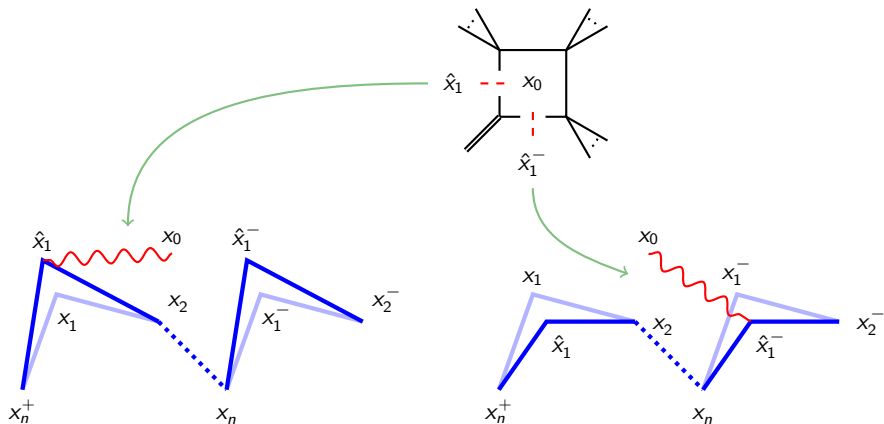
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## A peculiarity



## Subtleties and features

- The forward limit in general is **singular**, but for **supersymmetric theories** the singularity cancels in the sum over states.
- As for amplitudes, the result contains **spurious poles**.
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- It is very important, as a matter of principles, to know that **the integrand can be determined recursively**.
- We checked for  $n = 2, 3$  at one loop that the formula works.
- We also derived an **all-line recursion formula**.

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- The forward limit in general is **singular**, but for **supersymmetric theories** the singularity cancels in the sum over states.
- As for amplitudes, the result contains **spurious poles**.
- It is very important, as a matter of principles, to know that **the integrand can be determined recursively**.
- We checked for  $n = 2, 3$  at one loop that the formula works.
- We also derived an **all-line recursion formula**.
- It gives the same result of generalized unitarity **after integration** for two reasons:
  - ① As for amplitudes, it agrees with unitarity up to parity odd terms that integrate to zero. [Cachazo, 2008; Bourjaily, Caron-Huot, Trnka, 2013]
  - ② Furthermore, for form factors, agreement is obtained **up to shifts**  $x_0 \rightarrow x_0 + nq$ .



## Part II

### Dual conformal symmetry

## Periodic momentum twistors

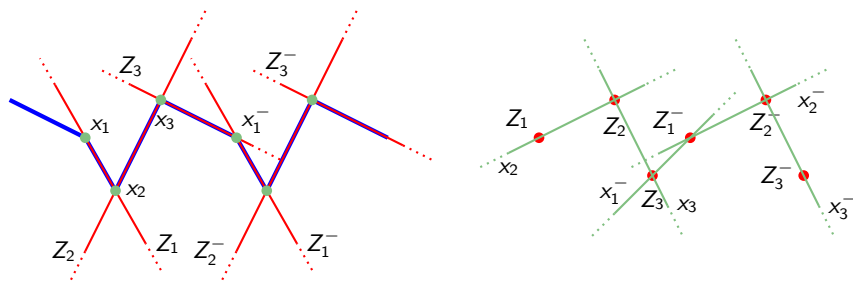
- Supermomentum variables are **periodic**

$$x_i^{[m]} = x_i + m q \quad (\theta_i^{[m]})^{A\alpha} = (\theta_i)^{A\alpha} + m q^{A\alpha}$$

- One can introduce a **periodic configuration for supertwistors**

$$\mathcal{Z}_i^{[m]M} = \begin{pmatrix} Z_i^{[m]\hat{A}} \\ \chi_i^{[m]A} \end{pmatrix}$$

$$Z_i^{[m]\hat{A}} = \begin{pmatrix} \lambda_i^\alpha \\ \mu_i^{[\dot{m}]\dot{\alpha}} \end{pmatrix} \quad \mu_i^{[\dot{m}]\dot{\alpha}} = (x_i^{[m]})^{\dot{\alpha}\alpha} \lambda_{i\alpha} \quad \chi_i^{[m]A} = (\theta_i^{[m]})^{A\alpha} \lambda_{i\alpha}$$



## Dual conformal invariance at tree level

- Usual **superconformal invariant**

$$[a, b, c, d, e] = \frac{\delta^{(4)}(\langle a, b, c, d \rangle \chi_e + \text{cyclic})}{\langle a, b, c, d \rangle \langle b, c, d, e \rangle \langle c, d, e, a \rangle \langle d, e, a, b \rangle \langle e, a, b, c \rangle}$$
$$\langle i, j, k, l \rangle = \epsilon_{\hat{A}\hat{B}\hat{C}\hat{D}} Z_i^{\hat{A}} Z_j^{\hat{B}} Z_k^{\hat{C}} Z_l^{\hat{D}}$$

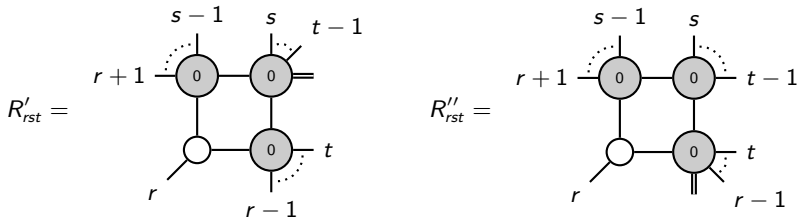
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$$\langle i, j, k, l \rangle = \epsilon_{\hat{A}\hat{B}\hat{C}\hat{D}} Z_i^{\hat{A}} Z_j^{\hat{B}} Z_k^{\hat{C}} Z_l^{\hat{D}}$$

- Using BCFW one can express **all tree level ratios**  $\tilde{F}_{n,k}^{(0)}$  as combinations of



- For example, for the NMHV four-point four factor

$$\tilde{F}_{4,1}^{(0)} = R'_{133} + R'_{134} + R'_{144} + R''_{131}$$

- General configurations are **dual superconformal invariant**

$$\begin{aligned}
 R'_{1st} &= \text{Diagram} \\
 &= [(s-1)^-, s^-, t-1, t, 1^-]
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 R''_{1st} &= \text{Diagram} \\
 &= [s-1, s, t-1, t, 1]
 \end{aligned}$$

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 &= [s-1, s, t-1, t, 1]
 \end{aligned}$$

- There is a special case

$$\begin{aligned}
 R'_{rss} &= \text{Diagram} \\
 &= \frac{\langle r, (s-1)^-, s^-, s-1 \rangle \langle r, (s-1)^-, s^-, s \rangle}{\langle r^+, s-1, s, r \rangle \langle s, s^-, s-1, (s-1)^- \rangle} [(s-1)^-, s^-, s-1, s, r]
 \end{aligned}$$

## Dual conformal invariance at one loop

- At one-loop the **dual conformal anomaly** reads [Drummond, Henn, Korchemsky, Sokatchev, 2007]

$$K^\mu A_{n,k}^{(1)} = -4 A_{n,k}^{(0)} \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{x_{i+1}^\mu (-x_{i+2}^2)^{-\epsilon}}{\epsilon}$$

## Dual conformal invariance at one loop

- At one-loop the **dual conformal anomaly** reads [Drummond, Henn, Korchemsky, Sokatchev, 2007]

$$K^\mu F_{n,k}^{(1)} = -4 F_{n,k}^{(0)} \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{x_{i+1}^\mu (-x_{ii+2}^2)^{-\epsilon}}{\epsilon}$$

- Relation with the **IR divergence**

$$F_{n,k}^{(1)} \Big|_{\text{IR}} = -F_{n,k}^{(0)} \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(-x_{ii+2}^2)^{-\epsilon}}{\epsilon^2} \quad \Rightarrow \quad K^\mu F_{n,k}^{(1)} = 4 \epsilon x_{i+1}^\mu F_{n,k}^{(1)} \Big|_{\text{IR}}$$



## Dual conformal invariance at one loop

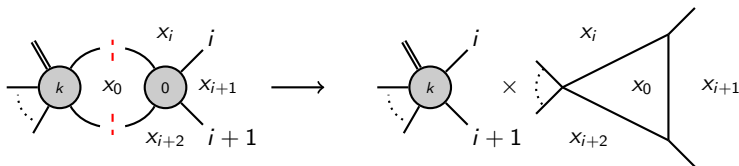
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- This can be seen by looking at the **only IR-divergent cut** [Brandhuber, Heslop, Travaglini, 2009]



- The IR-singular part of this cut is given entirely by the **forward configuration**

$$\ell_1 = -p_i \quad \ell_2 = -p_{i+1} \quad x_0 = x_{i+1}$$

# NHMV example

- Let us focus on the **finite part**

$$K^\mu F_{n,k}^{(1)} \Big|_{\text{fin}} = -2 F_{n,k}^{(0)} \sum_{i=1}^n p_i^\mu \log \left( \frac{x_{ii+2}^2}{x_{i-1 i+1}^2} \right)$$

Result for NMHV at 4 points

$$\begin{aligned} \tilde{F}_{4,1}^{(1)} = & b^{1m} \text{ (square with double line on bottom-right)} + b_1^{2mh} \text{ (square with double line on top-right)} + b_2^{2mh} \text{ (square with double line on bottom-right)} \\ & + c^{2m} \text{ (triangle with double line on left)} + c^{3m} \text{ (triangle with double line on left)} + \text{cyclic,} \end{aligned}$$

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Result for NMHV at 4 points

$$\tilde{F}_{4,1}^{(1)} = \frac{c^{2m}}{2} \left( \begin{array}{c} 2 \quad 3 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ 1 \quad 4 \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 1 \quad 4 \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} 4 \quad \text{=} \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ 3 \quad 2 \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 3 \quad 2 \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} 1 \quad 2 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ 4 \quad 3 \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 4 \quad 3 \end{array} + 2 \begin{array}{c} 4 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ 1 \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 3 \quad 2 \end{array} \right)$$

$$+ c^{3m} \begin{array}{c} 1 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ 2 \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 3 \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 4 \end{array} + \text{cyclic.}$$

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Finite part

$$\tilde{F}_{4,1}^{(1)} \Big|_{\text{fin}} = \frac{c^{2m}}{2} \left( \begin{array}{c} 2 \quad 3 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ \text{F} \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 1 \quad 4 \\ \parallel \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} 4 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ \text{F} \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 3 \quad 2 \\ \parallel \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} 1 \quad 2 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ \text{F} \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 4 \quad 3 \\ \parallel \end{array} \right)$$

$$+ c^{3m} \begin{array}{c} 1 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ \text{F} \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 2 \quad 3 \\ \parallel \\ 4 \end{array} + \text{cyclic.}$$

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$$K^\mu F_{n,k}^{(1)} \Big|_{\text{fin}} = -2 F_{n,k}^{(0)} \sum_{i=1}^n p_i^\mu \log \left( \frac{x_{ii+2}^2}{x_{i-1 i+1}^2} \right)$$

### Dual conformal variations

$$\frac{c^{2m}}{2} \left( \begin{array}{c} 2 \quad 3 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ \text{F} \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 1 \quad 4 \\ \parallel \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} 4 \quad \parallel \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ \text{F} \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 3 \quad 2 \quad 1 \\ \parallel \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} 1 \quad 2 \\ \diagdown \quad \diagup \\ \text{F} \\ \diagup \quad \diagdown \\ 4 \quad 3 \\ \parallel \end{array} \right) + \text{cyclic}$$

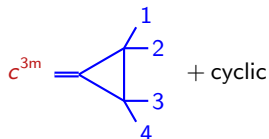
$$K^\mu c^{2m} = 0 \quad \sum_{\text{cyclic}} \frac{c^{2m}}{2} K^\mu (\text{Boxes}) = -2 F_{4,1}^{(0)} \sum_{i=1}^4 p_i^\mu \log \left( \frac{x_{ii+2}^2}{x_{i-1 i+1}^2} \right)$$

## NHMV example

- Let us focus on the **finite part**

$$K^\mu F_{n,k}^{(1)} \Big|_{\text{fin}} = -2 F_{n,k}^{(0)} \sum_{i=1}^n p_i^\mu \log \left( \frac{x_{ii+2}^2}{x_{i-1 i+1}^2} \right)$$

Dual conformal variations



$$K^\mu c^{3m} = 0 \quad K^\mu \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{triangle with } x_1, x_3, x_1^- \\ \text{triangle with } x_3, x_1^-, x_3^- \end{array} \right) = 0$$

The equation shows the dual conformal variation of the triangle diagram. The first term is  $K^\mu c^{3m} = 0$ . The second term is  $K^\mu$  applied to a sum of two triangles. The first triangle has vertices 1, 2, 3, 4 and internal lines  $x_1$  and  $x_3$ . The second triangle has vertices 3, 4, 1, 2 and internal lines  $x_3^-$  and  $x_1^-$ .

### Conclusion

- We provided a natural **prescription to assign region variables** in the perturbative computation of form factors.
- This allowed to define the loop integrand and to derive a **loop recursion relation**.
- We also found that the dual variables representation provided by our assignment exhibits **dual conformal invariance**.
- We explicitly checked dual conformal symmetry for the **MHV** and **NMHV** one-loop amplitude, finding that **triangle integrals do not contribute to the anomaly**.

# Conclusion and outlook

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- We explicitly checked dual conformal symmetry for the **MHV** and **NMHV** one-loop amplitude, finding that **triangle integrals do not contribute to the anomaly**.

## Outlook

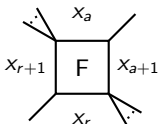
- It would be desirable to have a **more direct recipe** to go from momenta to dual variables
- The integrands provided by generalized unitarity or loop recursion are not ideal. One would like a **local integrand representation** like that provided by **prescriptive unitarity**. [Bourjaily, Herrmann, Trnka, 2017]
- **Wilson loop dual** and finite coupling.

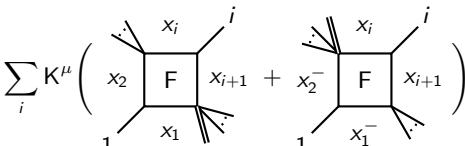


## Examples

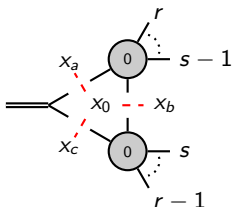
$$K^\mu F_{n,k}^{(1)} \Big|_{\text{fin}} = -2 F_{n,k}^{(0)} \sum_{i=1}^n p_i^\mu \log \left( \frac{x_{ii+2}^2}{x_{i-1 i+1}^2} \right)$$

MHV

$$F_{n,0}^{(1)} = F_{n,0}^{(0)} \left( - \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(-x_{ii+2}^2)^{-\epsilon}}{\epsilon^2} + \sum_{r,a} \text{Diagram} \right)$$


$$\sum_i K^\mu \left( \text{Diagram}_1 + \text{Diagram}_2 \right) \sim -2 p_1^\mu \log \left( \frac{x_{13}^2}{(x_{2n}^-)^2} \right)$$


# Triangles



$$c^{3m} = \mathcal{R}_{r,s}(\ell_2) \frac{\sqrt{uv}}{\Delta},$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{R}_{r,s}(\ell_2) &= [\ell_2, r, r-1, r^-, (r-1)^-] \frac{\langle \ell_2, r, r-1, r^- \rangle \langle \ell_2, r^-, (r-1)^-, r-1 \rangle}{\langle \ell_2, r, r-1, s-1 \rangle \langle \ell_2, r^-, (r-1)^-, s \rangle} \\ &\times \frac{\langle s-1, s, r-1, r \rangle^{\frac{1}{2}} \langle s-1, s, (r-1)^-, r^- \rangle^{\frac{1}{2}}}{\langle r-1, r, (r-1)^-, r^- \rangle}. \end{aligned}$$

$$Z_{\ell_2}^M = \begin{pmatrix} Z_{\ell_2}^{\hat{A}} \\ \theta_b^{A\alpha} \lambda_{\ell_2 \alpha} \end{pmatrix}, \quad Z_{\ell_2}^{\hat{A}} = \begin{pmatrix} \lambda_{\ell_2}^\alpha \\ x_b^{\dot{\alpha}\alpha} \lambda_{\ell_2 \alpha} \end{pmatrix}$$