

Topological Matter, Strings, K-theory and related areas

26–30 September 2016

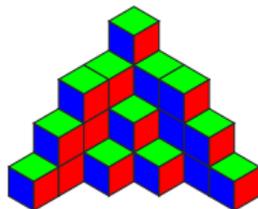
This talk is based on joint work with



from Caltech.

Outline

1. A string theorist's view of



2. Mixed Hodge polynomials associated with



The infinite wedge space

Let V be a linear space with basis $\{\underline{k}\}_{k \in \mathbb{Z} + \frac{1}{2}}$

A **semi-infinite monomial** v_S is an expression of the form

$$v_S = \underline{s_1} \wedge \underline{s_2} \wedge \underline{s_3} \wedge \cdots$$

where the $s_i \in \mathbb{Z} + \frac{1}{2}$, $s_i > s_{i+1}$ and $s_i - s_{i+1} = 1$ for $i \gg 1$.

We say that v_S has **charge** c if

$$s_i = c - i + \frac{1}{2} \quad \text{for } i \gg 1$$

Examples:

$$\underline{-\frac{1}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{3}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{5}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{7}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{9}{2}} \wedge \cdots \quad c = 0$$

$$\underline{\frac{7}{2}} \wedge \underline{\frac{3}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{1}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{3}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{5}{2}} \wedge \cdots \quad c = 2$$

and

$$\underline{\frac{5}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{1}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{7}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{9}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{11}{2}} \wedge \cdots \quad c = -1$$

The **infinite wedge space** (or fermionic Fock space) $\Lambda^{\frac{\infty}{2}} V$ is the linear space with basis $\{v_S\}$, equipped with an inner product for which this basis is orthonormal.

The **wedging operator** ψ_k , $k \in \mathbb{Z} + \frac{1}{2}$ is defined by

$$\psi_k : \Lambda^{\frac{\infty}{2}} V \rightarrow \Lambda^{\frac{\infty}{2}} V, \quad f \mapsto \underline{k} \wedge f$$

Together with its adjoint, the **contraction operator** ψ_k^* (which “sign-removes \underline{k} ”), this yields the anti-commutation relations of the infinite **Clifford algebra**:

$$\{\psi_k, \psi_l^*\} = \delta_{kl}, \quad \{\psi_k, \psi_l\} = \{\psi_k^*, \psi_l^*\} = 0$$

Obviously,

$$\psi_k \psi_k^*(v_S) = \begin{cases} v_S & \text{if } k \in S \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases} \quad \psi_k^* \psi_k(v_S) = \begin{cases} v_S & \text{if } k \notin S \\ 0 & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

Using the free fermions ψ_k and ψ_k^* one can further define the free bosons

$$\alpha_n = \sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z} + \frac{1}{2}} \psi_{k-n} \psi_k^* \quad n \in \mathbb{Z} \setminus \{0\}$$

with Heisenberg commutation relations

$$[\alpha_n, \alpha_m] = n \delta_{n,-m}$$

and adjoint $a_n^* = a_{-n}$.

Finally we use these to define the vertex operators

$$\Gamma_{\pm}(z) = \exp \left(\sum_{n \geq 1} \frac{z^n}{n} \alpha_{\pm n} \right)$$

Partitions

The infinite wedge space $\Lambda^{\infty} V$ is a direct sum of charge- c subspaces

$$\Lambda^{\infty} V = \bigoplus_{c \in \mathbb{Z}} (\Lambda^{\infty} V)_c$$

The semi-infinite monomials spanning each subspace are in one-to-one correspondence with integer partitions: If

$$v_S = \underline{s_1} \wedge \underline{s_2} \wedge \underline{s_3} \wedge \cdots$$

has charge c then the partition corresponding to v_S is

$$\lambda = (\lambda_1, \lambda_2, \dots) \quad \text{where} \quad \lambda_i = s_i + i - c - \frac{1}{2}$$

Examples:

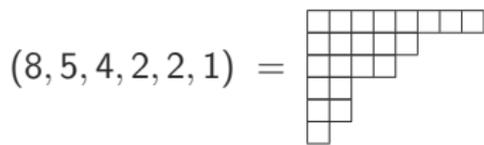
$$c = 0 \quad \underline{-\frac{1}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{3}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{5}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{7}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{9}{2}} \wedge \cdots \quad \lambda = 0$$

$$c = 2 \quad \underline{\frac{7}{2}} \wedge \underline{\frac{3}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{1}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{3}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{5}{2}} \wedge \cdots \quad \lambda = (2, 1)$$

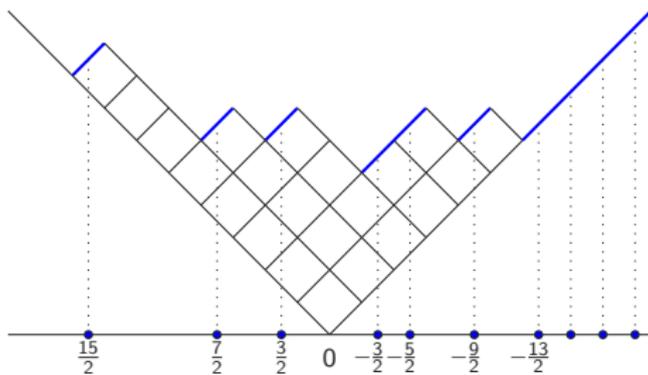
and

$$c = -1 \quad \underline{\frac{5}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{1}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{7}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{9}{2}} \wedge \underline{-\frac{11}{2}} \wedge \cdots \quad \lambda = (3, 2)$$

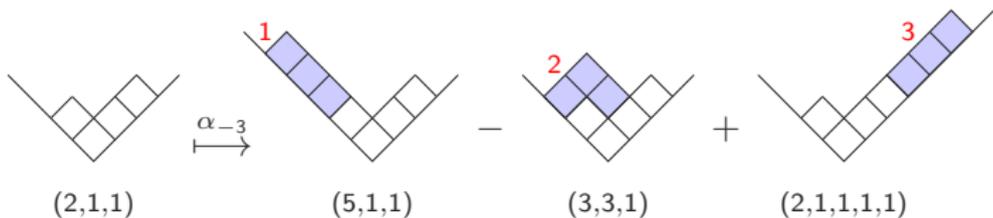
For $c = 0$ Okounkov introduced the following graphical description obtained by rotating a partition, such as



by 135° to get



Using partitions to represent the charge-0 semi-infinite monomials and adopting “bra” and “ket” notation, for $n \geq 1$ the operators α_{-n} and α_n act on $|\lambda\rangle$ by adding/deleting **border strips** of length n , weighted by the factor $(-1)^{h+1}$ where h is the **height** of the border strip.



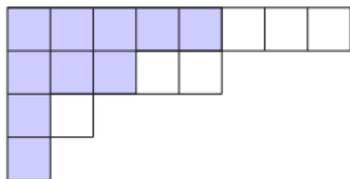
$$\alpha_{-3}|(2, 1, 1)\rangle = |(5, 1, 1)\rangle - |(3, 3, 1)\rangle + |(2, 1, 1, 1, 1)\rangle$$

Accordingly, the vertex operators $\Gamma_{\pm}(z)$ satisfy

$$\Gamma_{-}(z)|\mu\rangle = \sum_{\lambda \succ \mu} z^{|\lambda - \mu|} |\lambda\rangle \quad \text{and} \quad \Gamma_{+}(z)|\lambda\rangle = \sum_{\mu \prec \lambda} z^{|\lambda - \mu|} |\mu\rangle$$

where a pair of partitions λ, μ is **interlacing**, denoted as $\lambda \succ \mu$, if

$$\lambda_1 \geq \mu_1 \geq \lambda_2 \geq \mu_2 \geq \dots$$



$$(8, 5, 2, 1) \succ (5, 3, 1, 1)$$

Schur functions

The **Schur functions** $s_\lambda(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n)$ are the characters of the irreducible polynomial representations of $GL(n, \mathbb{C})$ of highest weight λ .

For λ, μ partitions such that $\mu \subseteq \lambda$, the **skew Schur function** $s_{\lambda/\mu}(x)$ may be computed combinatorially as

$$s_{\lambda/\mu}(x) = \sum_T x^T$$

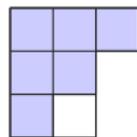
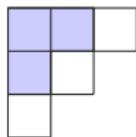
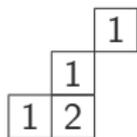
where the sum is over **semi-standard Young tableaux** on $\{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\}$ of skew shape λ/μ .

For example

$$\begin{aligned} s_{(3,2,2)/(2,1)}(x_1, x_2) &= \begin{array}{|c|c|} \hline & 1 \\ \hline 1 & 2 \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|c|c|} \hline & 2 \\ \hline 2 & 2 \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|c|c|} \hline & 2 \\ \hline 1 & 2 \\ \hline \end{array} + \begin{array}{|c|c|} \hline & 1 \\ \hline 2 & 2 \\ \hline \end{array} \\ &= x_1 x_2 (x_1^2 + x_2^2) + 2x_1^2 x_2^2 \end{aligned}$$

Since a semi-standard Young tableaux of shape λ/μ on $\{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ is in one-to-one correspondence with sequences of interlacing partitions

$$\mu = \lambda^{(0)} \prec \lambda^{(1)} \prec \lambda^{(2)} \prec \dots \prec \lambda^{(n)} = \lambda$$



$$\lambda^{(0)} = (2, 1) = \mu$$

$$\lambda^{(1)} = (3, 2, 1)$$

$$\lambda^{(2)} = (3, 2, 2) = \lambda$$

$$(2,1) \prec (3,2,1)$$

$$(3,2,1) \prec (3,2,2)$$

we have

$$s_{\lambda/\mu}(x) = \sum_{\substack{\lambda^{(0)} \prec \lambda^{(1)} \prec \dots \prec \lambda^{(n)} \\ \lambda^{(0)} = \mu \\ \lambda^{(n)} = \lambda}} x_1^{|\lambda^{(1)} - \lambda^{(0)}|} x_2^{|\lambda^{(2)} - \lambda^{(1)}|} \dots x_n^{|\lambda^{(n)} - \lambda^{(n-1)}|}$$

Hence

$$\left\langle \lambda \left| \prod_{i \geq 1} \Gamma_{-}(x_i) \right| \mu \right\rangle = \left\langle \mu \left| \prod_{i \geq 1} \Gamma_{+}(x_i) \right| \lambda \right\rangle = s_{\lambda/\mu}(x_1, x_2, \dots)$$

3-dimensional partitions

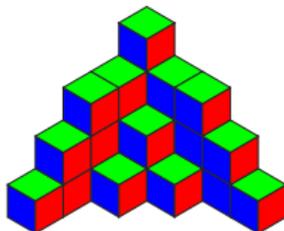
A **plane partition** or **3-dimensional partition** is a two-dimensional array of nonnegative integers such that the numbers are weakly decreasing from left to right and from top to bottom, and such that finitely many numbers are positive.

Geometrically, a plane partition may also be thought of as a configuration of stacked unit cubes, such that . . .

For example,

4	3	3	2	1
3	2	1		
3	1			
2				
1				

and



represent the same plane partition of 26.

A famous result of **MacMahon** is the following closed-form formula for the generating function of plane partitions

$$\sum_{\pi} q^{|\pi|} = \prod_{n \geq 1} \frac{1}{(1 - q^n)^n}$$

where $|\pi|$ is the number of unit cubes in π .

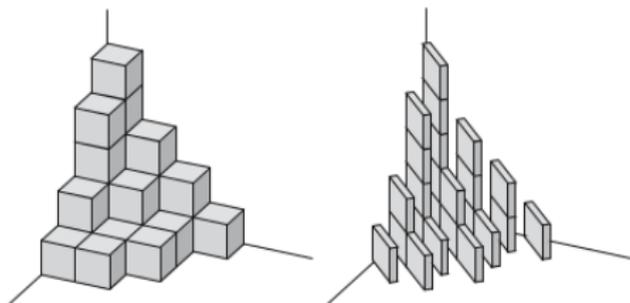
Okounkov and **Reshetikhin** showed that the above formula follows as a straightforward application of the vertex operators $\Gamma_{\pm}(z)$.

Given a plane partition

5	3	2	1
4	2	1	
2	1	1	
1	1		

we can read off its sequence of **diagonal slices** to obtain a sequence of interlacing partitions

$$0 \prec (1) \prec (2, 1) \prec (4, 1) \prec (5, 2, 1) \succ (3, 1) \succ (2) \succ (1) \succ 0$$



Each partition λ in the sequence of diagonal slices contributes $q^{|\lambda|}$ to the weight q^π of π . For this we need the operator

$$Q|\lambda\rangle = q^{|\lambda|}|\lambda\rangle$$

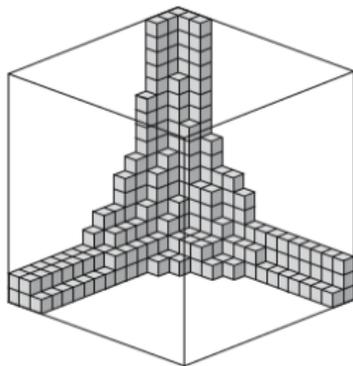
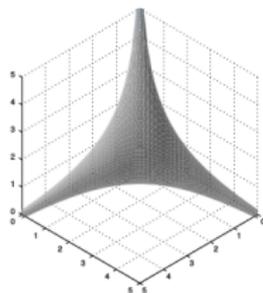
which q -commutes with the vertex operators $\Gamma_\pm(z)$:

$$\Gamma_\pm(z) Q = Q \Gamma_\pm(zq^{\pm 1})$$

Putting this all together yields

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{\pi} q^\pi &= \langle 0 | \prod_{i \geq 1} (\Gamma_+(1)Q) \prod_{i \geq 1} (\Gamma_-(1)Q) | 0 \rangle \\ &= \dots \quad \Gamma_+(z)\Gamma_-(1/w) = \frac{1}{1-z/w} \Gamma_-(z)\Gamma_+(1/w) \\ &= \prod_{n \geq 1} \frac{1}{(1-q^n)^n} \end{aligned}$$

In their work on the limit shape of 3-d partitions, **Okounkov, Reshetikhin and Vafa** introduced the following model for 3-d partitions:



$$\lambda = (3, 2) \quad N_1 = 16$$

$$\mu = (3, 1) \quad N_2 = 16$$

$$\nu = (3, 1, 1) \quad N_3 = 16$$

$$P(\lambda, \mu, \nu) := \lim_{N_1, N_2, N_3 \rightarrow \infty} q^{-N_1|\lambda| - N_2|\mu| - N_3|\nu|} P_{N_1, N_2, N_3}(\lambda, \mu, \nu)$$

Okounkov, Reshetikhin and Vafa first let $N_3 \rightarrow \infty$ and then again read off the sequence of diagonal slices, now of the form

$$\lambda' \prec \cdots \succ \mu$$

with possible shapes of the slices determined by the choice of ν . Using the vertex operator formalism, they then show that

$$P(\lambda, \mu, \nu) = \frac{q^{-n(\lambda') - n(\mu) - n(\nu')}}{\prod_{n \geq 1} (1 - q^n)^n} \times s_{\nu'}(q^\rho) \sum_{\eta} q^{-|\eta|} s_{\lambda'/\eta}(q^{-\nu+\rho}) s_{\mu/\eta}(q^{-\nu'+\rho})$$

where $n(\lambda) = \sum_{i \geq 1} (i-1)\lambda_i$, $\rho = (0, 1, 2, \dots)$ and

$$f(q^{-\lambda+\rho}) = f(q^{-\lambda_1+0}, q^{-\lambda_2+1}, q^{-\lambda_3+2}, \dots)$$

For $\lambda = \mu = \nu = 0$ this simplifies to MacMahon's formula.

The Nekrasov–Okounkov formula

The **topological vertex** $C_{\lambda\mu\nu}(q)$ was introduced by **Aganagic, Klemm, Marino and Vafa** to compute **Gromov–Witten** and **Donaldson–Thomas invariants** of **toric Calabi–Yau threefolds**. It may be expressed in terms of skew Schur functions as

$$C_{\lambda\mu\nu}(q) = q^{n(\lambda) - n(\lambda') + n(\nu) - n(\nu') + \frac{1}{2}(|\lambda| + |\mu| + |\nu|)} \\ \times s_{\nu'}(q^\rho) \sum_{\eta} q^{-|\eta|} s_{\lambda'/\eta}(q^{-\nu+\rho}) s_{\mu/\eta}(q^{-\nu'+\rho})$$

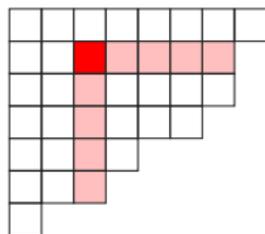
Comparing this with the **Okounkov–Reshetikhin–Vafa** formula we get

$$C_{\lambda\mu\nu}(q) = q^{n(\lambda) + n(\mu) + n(\nu) + \frac{1}{2}(|\lambda| + |\mu| + |\nu|)} P(\lambda, \mu, \nu) \prod_{n \geq 1} (1 - q^n)^n$$

Since $P(\lambda, \mu, \nu)$ clearly is cyclically symmetric, we may infer that

$$C_{\lambda\mu\nu}(q) = C_{\mu\nu\lambda}(q) = C_{\nu\lambda\mu}(q)$$

The **hook-length** $h(s)$ of a square $s \in \lambda$ is the number of squares immediately to the right and below s , including s itself. For example, the square $s = (3, 2) = \blacksquare$ in $(8, 7, 7, 6, 4, 3, 1)$ has hook-length 9.



Using the cyclic symmetry of the topological vertex to compute the sum

$$\sum_{\lambda, \mu} T^{|\lambda|} (-u)^{|\lambda| - |\mu|} C_{0\lambda\mu}(q) C_{0\lambda'\mu'}(q)$$

in two different ways yields

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{\lambda} T^{|\lambda|} \prod_{s \in \lambda} \frac{(1 - uq^{h(s)})(1 - u^{-1}q^{h(s)})}{(1 - q^{h(s)})^2} \\ = \prod_{k, r \geq 1} \frac{(1 - uq^r T^k)^r (1 - u^{-1}q^r T^k)^r}{(1 - q^{r-1} T^k)^r (1 - q^{r+1} T^k)^r} \end{aligned}$$

Setting $u = q^z$ and letting q tend to 1 yields the Nekrasov–Okounkov formula for an arbitrary power of the Dedekind η -function

$$\prod_{k \geq 1} (1 - T^k)^{z^2 - 1} = \sum_{\lambda} T^{|\lambda|} \prod_{s \in \lambda} \left(1 - \frac{z^2}{h(s)^2} \right) \quad z \in \mathbb{C}$$

Mixed Hodge polynomials of character varieties

In the following we are interested in the affine variety

$$\mathcal{M}_n := \{A_1, B_1, \dots, A_g, B_g \in \mathrm{GL}(n, \mathbb{C}) : \\ A_1 B_1 A_1^{-1} B_1^{-1} \cdots A_g B_g A_g^{-1} B_g^{-1} = \zeta_n I\} // \mathrm{GL}(n, \mathbb{C})$$

where g is a nonnegative integer, ζ_n a primitive n th-root of unity and $//$ a GIT quotient.

\mathcal{M}_n is the twisted character variety of a closed Riemann surface Σ of genus g with points the twisted homomorphisms from $\pi_1(\Sigma)$ to $\mathrm{GL}(n, \mathbb{C})$ modulo conjugation. It is nonsingular of dimension d_n given by

$$d_n = 2n^2(g - 1) + 2 \quad g \geq 1$$

Hausel and Rodriguez-Villegas considered the problem of computing the Poincaré polynomials

$$P(\mathcal{M}_n; t) = \sum_i b_i(\mathcal{M}_n) t^i$$

with $b_i(\mathcal{M}_n)$ the Betti numbers of \mathcal{M}_n —extending earlier work of Hitchin ($n = 2$) and Gothen ($n = 3$).

\mathcal{M}_n admits a **mixed Hodge structure** (in the sense of **Deligne**) on its cohomology which is of “diagonal type”. Hence its (mixed) **Hodge polynomial**, which is a 3-parameter deformation of the Poincaré polynomial, is effectively a 2-variable polynomial, $H(\mathcal{M}_n; q, t)$.

Moreover

$$P(\mathcal{M}_n; t) = H(\mathcal{M}_n; 1, t)$$

$$E(\mathcal{M}_n; q) = q^{d_n} H(\mathcal{M}_n; 1/q, -1)$$

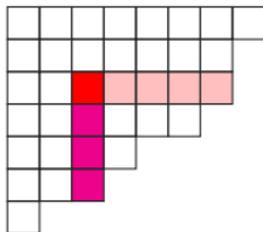
where $E(\mathcal{M}_n; q)$ is the E -polynomial of \mathcal{M}_n , counting the number of points of \mathcal{M}_n when considered over the finite field \mathbb{F}_q instead of \mathbb{C} .

More generally, **Hausel and Rodriguez-Villegas** tried to get a handle on $H(\mathcal{M}_n; q, t)$.

We refine the hook-length of a square $s \in \lambda$ by defining the **arm-length** $a(s)$ and **leg-length** $l(s)$ as the number of squares immediately to the right respectively below s , excluding s itself.

Hence $h(s) = a(s) + l(s) + 1$.

For example, the square $s = (3, 3) = \blacksquare$ in $(8, 7, 7, 6, 4, 3, 1)$ has arm-length 4 and leg-length 3.



Defining the function $\bar{H}_n(u, q, t) = \bar{H}_n(u, q, t; g)$ by

$$\sum_{\lambda} T^{|\lambda|} t^{(1-g)(2n(\lambda)+|\lambda|)} \prod_{s \in \lambda} \frac{((1 - uq^{a(s)+1} t^{l(s)})(1 - u^{-1} q^{a(s)} t^{l(s)+1}))^g}{(1 - q^{a(s)+1} t^{l(s)})(1 - q^{a(s)} t^{l(s)+1})}$$

$$= \text{Exp} \left(\sum_{n \geq 1} \frac{\bar{H}_n(u, q, t) T^n}{(1 - q)(t^{-1} - 1)} \right)$$

where **Exp** is a **plethystic exponential**; if

$$f(u, q, t; T) = \sum_{n \geq 1} c_n(u, q, t) T^n$$

then

$$\text{Exp} (f(u, q, t; T)) = \exp \left(\sum_{n \geq 1} \frac{f(u^n, q^n, t^n; T^n)}{n} \right)$$

Example

$$\text{Exp} \left(\frac{T}{1 - T} \right) = \prod_{n \geq 1} \frac{1}{1 - T^n}$$

Conjecture. (Hausel, Rodriguez-Villegas)

The mixed Hodge polynomial of \mathcal{M}_n is given by

$$H(\mathcal{M}_n; q, t) = (q^{1/2}t)^{d_n} \bar{H}_n(-t^{-1}, qt^2, q)$$

In the genus-0 case \mathcal{M}_n consists of a single point for $n = 1$ and has no points for $n > 1$. Hence $H(\mathcal{M}_n; q, t) = \delta_{n,1}$ which is consistent with the conjecture.

Theorem. (Rains–SOW, Carlsson–Rodriguez-Villegas (2016))

The conjecture holds for genus $g = 1$.

Proof.

The following q, t -analogue of the Nekrasov–Okounkov formula holds:

Theorem.

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{\lambda} T^{|\lambda|} \prod_{s \in \lambda} \frac{(1 - uq^{a(s)+1}t^{l(s)})(1 - u^{-1}q^{a(s)}t^{l(s)+1})}{(1 - q^{a(s)+1}t^{l(s)})(1 - q^{a(s)}t^{l(s)+1})} \\ = \prod_{i,j,k \geq 1} \frac{(1 - uq^i t^{j-1} T^k)(1 - u^{-1}q^{i-1} t^j T^k)}{(1 - q^{i-1} t^{j-1} T^k)(1 - q^i t^j T^k)} \end{aligned}$$

This may either be proved using **Macdonald polynomial theory** or the equivariant **Dijkgraaf–Moore–Verlinde–Verlinde** (DMVV) formula for the Hilbert scheme of n points in the plane, $(\mathbb{C}^2)^{[n]}$, due to **Waelder**.

Let (u_1, u_2) be the equivariant parameters of the natural torus action on $(\mathbb{C}^2)^{[n]}$, and set $q := e^{-2\pi i u_1}$ and $t := e^{2\pi i u_2}$. Let $\text{Ell}((\mathbb{C}^2)^{[n]}; u, p, q, t)$ be the equivariant elliptic genus of $(\mathbb{C}^2)^{[n]}$, where $p := \exp(2\pi i \tau)$ and $u := \exp(2\pi i z)$ for $\tau \in \mathbb{H}$ and $z \in \mathbb{C}$. According to the equivariant DMVV formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{n \geq 0} T^n \text{Ell}((\mathbb{C}^2)^{[n]}; u, p, q, t) \\ = \prod_{m \geq 0} \prod_{k \geq 1} \prod_{\ell, n_1, n_2 \in \mathbb{Z}} \frac{1}{(1 - p^m T^k u^\ell q^{n_1} t^{n_2})^{c(m, \ell, n_1, n_2)}} \end{aligned}$$

The integers $c(m, \ell, n_1, n_2)$ are determined by the equivariant elliptic genus of \mathbb{C}^2 given by

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Ell}(\mathbb{C}^2, u, p, q, t) &= \frac{\theta(uq; p)\theta(u^{-1}t; p)}{\theta(q; p)\theta(t; p)} \\ &= \sum_{m \geq 0} \sum_{\ell, n_1, n_2 \in \mathbb{Z}} c(m, \ell, n_1, n_2) p^m u^\ell q^{n_1} t^{n_2} \end{aligned}$$

where

$$\theta(u; p) := \sum_{k \in \mathbb{Z}} (-u)^k p^{\binom{k}{2}}$$

Li, Liu and Zhou obtained an explicit formula in terms of arm- and leg-lengths for the generating function (over n) of elliptic genera of the framed moduli spaces $M(r, n)$ of torsion-free sheaves on \mathbb{P}^2 of rank r and $c_2 = n$.

Since $M(1, n)$ coincides with $(\mathbb{C}^2)^{[n]}$ this implies

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{n \geq 0} T^n \text{Ell}((\mathbb{C}^2)^{[n]}; u, p, q, t) \\ = \sum_{\lambda} T^{|\lambda|} \prod_{s \in \lambda} \frac{\theta(uq^{a(s)+1}t^{l(s)}; p)\theta(u^{-1}q^{a(s)}t^{l(s)+1}; p)}{\theta(q^{a(s)+1}t^{l(s)}; p)\theta(q^{a(s)}t^{l(s)+1}; p)} \end{aligned}$$

This gives the **elliptic Nekrasov–Okounkov formula**

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{\lambda} T^{|\lambda|} \prod_{s \in \lambda} \frac{\theta(uq^{a(s)+1}t^{l(s)}; p)\theta(u^{-1}q^{a(s)}t^{l(s)+1}; p)}{\theta(q^{a(s)+1}t^{l(s)}; p)\theta(q^{a(s)}t^{l(s)+1}; p)} \\ = \prod_{m \geq 0} \prod_{k \geq 1} \prod_{\ell, n_1, n_2 \in \mathbb{Z}} \frac{1}{(1 - p^m T^k u^\ell q^{n_1} t^{n_2})^{c(km, \ell, n_1, n_2)}} \end{aligned}$$