

**Refined BPS Invariants, Chern-Simons Theory,
and the Quantum Dilogarithm**

**Thesis by
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Abstract

In this thesis, we consider two main subjects: the refined BPS invariants of Calabi-Yau threefolds, and three-dimensional Chern-Simons theory with complex gauge group. We study the wall-crossing behavior of refined BPS invariants using a variety of techniques, including a four-dimensional supergravity analysis, statistical-mechanical melting crystal models, and relations to new mathematical invariants. We conjecture an equivalence between refined invariants and the motivic Donaldson-Thomas invariants of Kontsevich and Soibelman. We then consider perturbative Chern-Simons theory with complex gauge group, combining traditional and novel approaches to the theory (including a new state integral model) to obtain exact results for perturbative partition functions. We thus obtain a new class of topological invariants, which are not of finite type, defined in the background of genuinely nonabelian flat connections. The two main topics, BPS invariants and Chern-Simons theory, are connected at both a formal and (we believe) deeper conceptual level by the striking central role that the quantum dilogarithm function plays in each.

This thesis is based on the publications [1, 2, 3], as well as [4] and [5], which are in preparation. Some aspects of Chern-Simons theory appear additionally in the conference proceedings [6]. The author's graduate work also included [7], which is not directly related to the present topics.

Contents

| | | |
|-----------|---|-----------|
| 1 | Introduction and Overview | 1 |
| | | |
| I | Refined Wall-Crossing | 12 |
| 2 | Multi-Centered Black Holes and Refined Microstate Counting | 13 |
| 2.1 | BPS states in $\mathcal{N} = 2$ supergravity | 14 |
| 2.2 | Physical wall-crossing formulas | 23 |
| 2.3 | BPS states of D-branes | 29 |
| 2.4 | Invisible walls | 34 |
| 3 | Refined Wall Crossing via Melting Crystals | 40 |
| 3.1 | Wall crossing for the conifold | 42 |
| 3.2 | Crystals and quivers | 47 |
| 3.3 | Pyramid crystals and wall crossing | 49 |
| 3.4 | Refined crystals | 57 |
| 4 | Refined = Motivic | 63 |
| 4.1 | Classical and motivic KS wall crossing | 64 |
| 4.2 | Refined = Motivic | 68 |
| 4.3 | Examples: $SU(2)$ Seiberg-Witten theory | 73 |
| | | |
| II | Chern-Simons Theory with Complex Gauge Group | 80 |
| 5 | Perturbation theory around a nontrivial flat connection | 81 |
| 5.1 | Basics | 82 |

| | | |
|----------|---|------------|
| 5.2 | Coefficients and Feynman diagrams | 83 |
| 5.3 | Arithmaticity | 86 |
| 5.4 | Examples | 90 |
| 6 | Geometric quantization | 95 |
| 6.1 | Quantization of $\mathcal{M}_{\text{flat}}(G_{\mathbb{C}}, \Sigma)$ | 95 |
| 6.2 | Analytic continuation and the Volume Conjecture | 99 |
| 6.3 | Hierarchy of differential equations | 101 |
| 6.4 | Classical and quantum symmetries | 105 |
| 6.5 | Brane quantization | 108 |
| 6.6 | Examples | 111 |
| 6.6.1 | Trefoil | 111 |
| 6.6.2 | Figure-eight knot | 114 |
| 7 | Wilson loops for complex gauge groups | 119 |
| 7.1 | Some representation theory | 120 |
| 7.2 | Representations as coadjoint orbits | 123 |
| 7.3 | Quantum mechanics for Wilson loops | 128 |
| 7.4 | Wilson loops <i>vs.</i> boundary conditions | 130 |
| 8 | The state integral model | 135 |
| 8.1 | Hyperbolic geometry | 136 |
| 8.1.1 | Example: figure-eight knot complement | 141 |
| 8.2 | Hikami's invariant | 144 |
| 8.3 | Quantum dilogarithm | 146 |
| 8.4 | A state integral model for $Z^{(\rho)}(M; \hbar)$ | 152 |
| 9 | Saddle points and new invariants | 158 |
| 9.1 | Figure-eight knot 4₁ | 159 |
| 9.1.1 | Checking $\hat{A} \cdot Z = 0$ | 163 |
| 9.2 | Three-twist knot 5₂ | 164 |
| 9.3 | Direct analytic continuation | 166 |

List of Figures

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 2.1 | Split attractor flows in supergravity. The walls of marginal stability shown correspond to $\gamma \rightarrow \gamma_1 + \gamma + 2$ and $\gamma_2 \rightarrow \gamma_3 + \gamma_4$ | 24 |
| 2.2 | Possibilities when t_∞ is on the “stable” (LHS) and “unstable” (RHS) side of the wall. | 25 |
| 2.3 | A “gas” of black holes with charges $k\gamma_2$ binding to a γ_1 center in physical space. | 27 |
| 2.4 | An example of a quiver with four nodes. | 31 |
| 2.5 | A three-center rearrangement. | 35 |
| 2.6 | An invisible wall located at a three-way split. | 37 |
| 2.7 | Possible multi-center tree topologies in the simplest non-primitive case. Here we draw two separate γ_3 attractor points just to distinguish flows of charge γ_3 and $2\gamma_3$; physically, they are the same point in moduli space. | 38 |
| 3.1 | Walls and chambers for the refined conifold. | 44 |
| 3.2 | The conifold quiver for the C_1 chamber, with charges of nodes and θ -parameters as indicated. The superpotential is $W = \text{Tr}(A_1 B_1 A_2 B_2 - A_1 B_2 A_2 B_1)$ | 49 |
| 3.3 | A set of atoms melted from the C_1 crystal (right); and assignment of arrows A_1, A_2, B_1, B_2 to atoms (left). | 50 |
| 3.4 | The “empty room configurations” for the crystals that count BPS states in chambers C_n and \tilde{C}_n | 50 |
| 3.5 | The relation between pyramid partitions and dimer states, illustrated for $n = 2$ | 52 |
| 3.6 | Even and odd boxes of dimers. | 52 |

| | | |
|------|--|-----|
| 3.7 | The weights assigned to edges of the dimer lattice of “length n ,” for $n = 2$. (The $n = 2$ ground state has been shaded in.) All vertical edges have weight 1 and all horizontal edges have an additional factor of $(-Q)^{-1/2}$ | 53 |
| 3.8 | The directions in which dimers move under the shuffle \tilde{S} , and an example of shuffling a partition of length $n = 2$ with odd boxes deleted. | 54 |
| 3.9 | The brick-like lattices around the upper and lower vertices as $n \rightarrow \infty$. The ground state state of the dimer is shaded in. As before, each horizontal edge also carries a weight of $(-Q)^{-1/2}$ | 55 |
| 3.10 | The map between the length-infinity dimer model and a pair of topological vertices. (The extra q_1 and q_2 notations are for the refined case in Section 3.4.) | 56 |
| 3.11 | Weights of atoms for the refined partition function in chamber C_1 | 58 |
| 3.12 | Refined weights of atoms for chambers C_n and \tilde{C}_n , with $n = 3$ | 59 |
| 3.13 | Refined weighting of the length- n dimer, for $n = 2$ | 60 |
| 3.14 | Neighborhoods of the refined upper and lower vertices as $n \rightarrow \infty$ | 61 |
| 4.1 | Left: the K_1 quiver. Right: the BPS rays of states γ_1 , γ_2 , and $\gamma_1 + \gamma_2$ in the <i>central charge plane</i> for stable (t_+) and unstable (t_-) values of moduli. | 69 |
| 4.2 | The K_2 Krönecker quiver. | 74 |
| 4.3 | The approximate structure of the wall of marginal stability separating weak and strong coupling in the u -plane of Seiberg-Witten theories. We also indicate different local regions within the strong-coupling chamber. For $N_f = 0, 2, 3$, there are BPS states of two different charges that become massless at singularities in the moduli space (the dots here), and for $N_f = 1$ there are three. | 76 |
| 5.1 | Two kinds of 2-loop Feynman diagrams that contribute to $S_2^{(\rho)}$ | 84 |
| 6.1 | Recurrent examples: the trefoil knot 3₁ , figure-eight knot 4₁ , and “three-twist” knot 5₂ , courtesy of KnotPlot. | 111 |
| 8.1 | An ideal tetrahedron in \mathbb{H}^3 | 137 |
| 8.2 | The 2-3 Pachner move. | 139 |
| 8.3 | Oriented tetrahedra, to which matrix elements $\langle p_1, p_3 \mathbf{S} p_2, p_4 \rangle$ (left) and $\langle p_2, p_4 \mathbf{S}^{-1} p_1, p_3 \rangle$ (right) are assigned. | 144 |

| | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| 8.4 | The complex z -plane, showing poles (X 's) and zeroes (O 's) of $\Phi_{\hbar}(z)$ at $\hbar = \frac{3}{4}e^{i\pi/3}$ | 149 |
| 9.1 | Plots of $ e^{\Upsilon(\hbar,p,u)} $ and its logarithm at $u = 0$ and $\hbar = \frac{i}{3}$ | 160 |
| 9.2 | Plots of $ e^{\Upsilon(\hbar,p,u)} $ and its logarithm at $u = \frac{1}{2}i$ and $\hbar = \frac{i}{3}$ | 160 |
| 9.3 | Poles, zeroes, and critical points of $e^{\Upsilon(\hbar,p,u)}$ for $u = \frac{1}{2}i$ and $\hbar = \frac{3}{4}e^{i\pi/6}$ | 161 |

List of Tables

| | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| 6.1 | Hierarchy of differential equations derived from $\widehat{A}(\hat{l}, \hat{m})$ $Z^{(\alpha)}(M; \hbar, u) = 0$. . . | 103 |
| 6.3 | Perturbative invariants $S_n^{(\text{geom})}(u)$ up to eight loops. | 117 |
| 6.4 | Perturbative invariants $S_n^{(\text{abel})}(u)$ up to six loops. | 118 |