

Stable Envelopes and Janus

A QFT Home For Some Geometric constructions

[Based on w.i.p. with N. Nekrasov]

I. Introduction

→ Study physical realizations of a few constructions in mathematics, namely by:

(a) Maulik-Okounkov, Aganagic-Okounkov, Okounkov-Smirnov, ... : Stable Envelopes, R-matrices

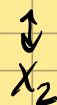


(b) Nakajima, Varagnolo : $K_T(x)$, $H_T(x)$, $Ell_T(x)$

Both (a) & (b) constructions look very "physical."

Maps between $H_T(x_1)$ and $H_T(x_2)$ defined via correspondences remind interfaces ... between QFT₁ and QFT₂

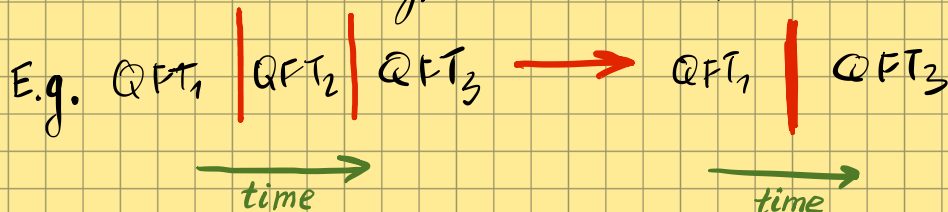
In fact, this can be viewed as part of Bethe/Gauge correspondence [Nekrasov-Shatashvili]



→ Main idea: SUSY Interfaces between SUSY QFTs

⇒ linear maps between SUSY vacua

→ sought after structures.



→ Study theories w/ 8 supercharges:

1d $N=8$ on \mathbb{R}
↓
 H_T, Y_h

2d $N=(4,4)$ on $S^1 \times \mathbb{R}$
↓
 K_T, L_h

3d $N=4$ on $E_2 \times \mathbb{R}$
↓
 Ell_T, E_h

- Will identify SUSY Janus interfaces - building blocks (spoiler: stable envelopes)
- Compute their matrix elements.
- Phase transitions = stable envelopes; Wall-crossing = R-matrices

II. 3d $\mathcal{N}=2, \mathcal{N}=4$ theories, quivers, etc...

- 3d $\mathcal{N}=2$ theory is determined by: $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{Gauge group } G ; \text{ its } \mathbb{C}\text{-rep. } \mathcal{R} ; \\ \text{superpotential } W \in \mathbb{C}[\mathcal{R}]^W \\ \text{real masses } m_{\mathcal{R}} ; \text{ real F.I. terms } \zeta_{\mathcal{R}} \end{array} \right\}$

- Focus on $\mathcal{N}=4$ theories with matter in H-rep $\mathcal{R} \oplus \bar{\mathcal{R}}$, where \mathcal{R} - \mathbb{C} -rep.

Viewed as an $\mathcal{N}=2$ theory, it has matter (chiral multiplets) (Q, \tilde{Q}, Φ)
 where $Q \in \mathcal{R}$ $\tilde{Q} \in \bar{\mathcal{R}}$ $\Phi \in \text{adj}$

And $\mathcal{W} = \text{Tr } \tilde{Q} \Phi Q + \text{Tr } \tilde{Q} m_c Q + \text{Tr } \zeta_c \Phi$

$\mathcal{N}=2$ R-symmetry $U(1)_r = \text{Diag}(U(1)_H \times U(1)_C)$, $U(1)_H \times U(1)_C \subset SU(2)_H \times SU(2)_C$

$\mathcal{N}=2$ flavor symmetry is $G_F^{\mathcal{N}=2} = G_F^{\mathcal{N}=4} \times U(1)_H$, $U(1)_H = \text{Adiag}(U(1)_H \times U(1)_C)$

Masses and flat connections for $U(1)_H$ "softly break" $\mathcal{N}=4$ to $\mathcal{N}=2$

→ 2d and 1d analogs are obtained by dimensional reduction.

We study 3d on $E_c \times \mathbb{R}$; 2d on $S^1 \times \mathbb{R}$; 1d on \mathbb{R}
 ↑ Elliptic ↑ Trigonometric ↑ Rational

Notation: X_H = Higgs branch, X_C = 3d Coulomb branch.

Think of quiver theories, so X_H = quiver variety.

We work equivariantly w.r.t. $T \equiv T_F^{\mathcal{N}=2} = T_F^{\mathcal{N}=4} \times U(1)_H$ - max. torus of flavor gp.

Interested in $H_T(X_H)$, $K_T(X_H)$, $\text{Ell}_T(X_H)$

→ Must preserve $U(1)_H$ (so no complex masses m_c or complex FI ζ_c !)

→ Can have real masses $m_{\mathcal{R}} \in \text{Lie}(T_F^{\mathcal{N}=4})$ and real FI $\zeta_{\mathcal{R}} \in \text{Lie}(T^{\text{top}})$
 resolve X_C chambers resolve X_H chambers

III. Supercharges and constructions in Q-cohomology

Consider our theory on $E_\tau \times \mathbb{R}$, $y \in \mathbb{R}$ - Euclidean time, $\mathcal{H}[E_\tau]$ -Hilbert space

Pick $Q \in \text{SUSY algebra}$. It acts both on $\mathcal{H}[E_\tau]$ and on operators.

Classic path to interesting math: pass to Q-cohomology (possibly equivariant).

Standard argument: W.r.t. a Hermitian \langle, \rangle on $\mathcal{H}[E_\tau]$, there is Q^\dagger ,
 \Rightarrow Q -cohomology on $\mathcal{H}[E_\tau] \simeq \ker \{Q, Q^\dagger\}$ (like in Hodge theory)
 Often $\{Q, Q^\dagger\} = H$ is a Hamiltonian $\Rightarrow \ker H = \text{SUSY ground states (vacua)}$

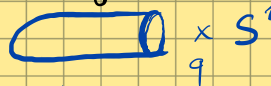
Q -closed observables lead to linear operators on the space of vacua.

Interesting supercharges in 3d $N=2$

- $Q_A = 3d$ version ("uplift") of the 2d A-model supercharge (Gromov-Witten theory / Fukaya-Seidel cat....)
 lift of A-branes = (1,1) boundary conditions

$$Q_A^2 = i\partial_{\bar{y}} + \mathcal{G}(\sigma_R, m_R) \quad \text{"3d A-twist" (Benini-Zaffaroni, Closset-Kim-Willet)}$$

Interesting partition function

on  $\times S^1 \Rightarrow$ K-theoretic count of quasimaps
 ["Vertex function" / "in 2d-cohomological"]

- $Q_B = 3d$ uplift of the B-model supercharge. B-branes = (0,2) boundary conditions
 "3d holomorphic-topological twist" (Costello-Dimofte-Gaiotto)

- $Q = Q_A + Q_A^\dagger = Q_B + Q_B^\dagger = 3d$ uplift of the Ω -deformation supercharge
 "OUR" supercharge; common Q preserved by A and B branes.

Consider theory on $E_\tau \times \mathbb{R}_y \xrightarrow{\quad} 3d N=1$ supercharge
 $Q^2 = D_{\bar{z}}$ z -complex coordinate on E_τ .

- Q -cohomology on $\mathcal{H}[E_\tau] \simeq$ "SUSY vacua on E_τ "
- Q -cohomology on operators contains interfaces wrapped on E_τ .

[We will observe a relation between Q and Q_A]

BPS equations for Q

$$E_\tau \times \mathbb{R}_y$$

- Path integral localizes on supersymmetric configurations determined by the "BPS" eqns.

(1) $\partial W = 0 \Rightarrow \mu_\sigma = 0$ (complex moment map constraint)

(2) $(D_y + \sigma_R + m_R)\phi = 0$ for every chiral ϕ (matter field)

(3) $D_y \sigma_R = \mu_R + [\sigma, \bar{\sigma}]$

GRADIENT FLOW on $T^*R \times \mathfrak{g} \otimes \mathbb{R}^3$

FOR $h = \underbrace{\text{Tr}(\sigma_R \mu_R)}_{\text{gauge action}} + \underbrace{\text{Tr}(m_R \mu_R^F)}_{\text{flavor action}} + \underbrace{\text{Tr} \sigma_R [\sigma, \bar{\sigma}]}_{\text{part of gauge action}}$

Additionally, there are equations that follow from equivariance (i.e. $Q^2 \phi = 0$), such as: $D_{\bar{z}} \phi = 0$. [they are less important]

Notice: we neither have stability condition, nor $\mu_R = 0$.

! Instead, we have a gradient flow on $M_C^{-1}(0)/G$.

For Morse function $h = \dots$

If masses vanish, $m_R = 0$, then fixed points of this flow have $\mu_R = 0, \sigma_R = 0$

\Rightarrow we find $X_H = \{M_C^{-1}(0) \cap \mu_R^{-1}(0)\} / G$ there.

[If we ignore σ_R , i.e. look at $T^*R \times \mathfrak{g} \otimes \mathbb{C}$, then gradient trajectories $\subset G_C$ -orbits]

If masses corresponding to $A \subset T_F$ are turned on, then

fixed points of this flow do not form the whole X_H .

We get $X_H^A = A$ -fixed locus in X_H .

[Ignoring σ_R , now gradient trajectories lie within $G_C \times A$ -orbits]

So the Higgs branch image of our gradient flow [impose stability & quotient by $G_C \rightsquigarrow$ induces flow on X_H]
 $=$ orbits of the $\mathbb{C}^\times \subset A$ action on X_H , where \mathbb{C}^\times is determined by masses.

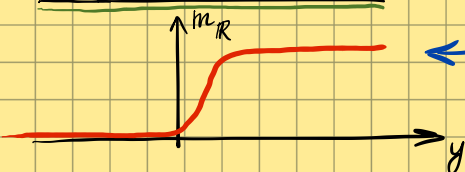
The fixed points of this flow $= X_H$, i.e. torus fixed points.

\rightarrow All critical points of h have the same index $= \frac{1}{2} \dim$.

\Rightarrow half-dimensional attractors \rightsquigarrow leads to stable envelopes.

We will find that Stab is a map from the vector space of SUSY vacua at $m_R \neq 0$ to the vector space of SUSY vacua at $m_R = 0$. Realized via a SUSY interface that varies mass.

IV. Janus interface. Can we interpolate between different values of m_R preserving Q ?



\leftarrow Want something like this...

Standard physical approach: find a supersymmetric background!

Consider a background vector multiplet "gauging" flavor symmetry, \mathcal{V}^F

[add flavor connection $A_\mu^f dx^\mu$ and its superpartners, but don't integrate over them in the path integral.]

$$\mathcal{V}^F = (A_\mu^f, \sigma_R^f, D_{R^f}, \bar{\lambda}^f, \lambda^f)$$

Constant real mass corresponds to: $\sigma_R^f = m_R$; else $= 0$.

A simple generalization: $\sigma_R = m_R(y); D_{R^f} = i m_R'(y)$

\rightarrow preserves 2d $\mathcal{N}=(0,2)$ SUSY (or even $(2,2)$, if we switch off t_2).

the mass term is given by the Lagrangian: $\mathcal{L}_m = \bar{\phi} m_R(y)^2 \phi + 2 \bar{\phi} \sigma_R^f(y) \phi - \bar{\phi} m_R'(y) \phi + i \bar{\psi} m_R'(y) \psi$

what happens under: $m_R(y) \rightarrow m_R(y) + \delta m_R(y)$?

Answer: in a general $N=2$ theory, $\delta \mathcal{L}_m \neq 0$, details of $m_R(y)$ are important...
 But, in an $N=4$ theory, $\delta \mathcal{L}_m = \{Q, \dots\}$ [+ something vanishing under correlators]
 as long as $\delta m_R(\pm\infty) = 0 \Rightarrow$ precise shape of $m_R(y)$ doesn't matter!

- Pick $m_R(-\infty)$, $m_R(+\infty)$ and interpolate them in some way...
 \Rightarrow unique answer in Q -cohomology.
 In fact, only chambers of $m_R(-\infty)$ and $m_R(+\infty)$ matter...
 in the space $\mathcal{A} \ni m_R$ $\mathcal{A} \setminus \bigcup_i \alpha_i^\pm = \bigsqcup_i C_i$

Physics provides us a unique (up to Q -exact terms) interface interpolating between $m_R(-\infty) \in C_i$ and $m_R(+\infty) \in C_j$

Recall that Q -cohomology of states in $\mathcal{H}[E_c] =$ space of vacua
 Therefore we find in the Q -cohomology:

$$\mathcal{J}(m_R(+\infty), m_R(-\infty)): \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{space of} \\ \text{vacua at} \\ m_R(-\infty) \end{array} \right\} \longrightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{space of} \\ \text{vacua at} \\ m_R(+\infty) \end{array} \right\}$$

Janus for the F.I. parameter:

There is an analogous construction of a SUSY background with $G_R(y)$.

[FI term = mass for "topological symmetry"]

If $A = U(1)$ gauge field, $F = dA \Rightarrow J = *F$ is conserved $d*J^{\text{top}} = 0$

$$\Rightarrow \text{Linear map } \tilde{\mathcal{J}}(G_R(+\infty), G_R(-\infty)): \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{vacua} \\ \text{at } G_R(-\infty) \end{array} \right\} \longrightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{vacua} \\ \text{at } G_R(+\infty) \end{array} \right\}$$

Recall: Higgs phase $\leftrightarrow G_R \gg 0, m_R = 0$ Coulomb phase $\leftrightarrow G_R = 0, m_R \gg 0$

$$\Rightarrow \mathcal{J}(0, m_R) \tilde{\mathcal{J}}(G_R, 0) = \text{phase interface between Higgs \& Coulomb ph.}$$

Stable envelope for X_H Stable envelope for X_C

can be understood in the original theory via BPS eqns (gradient flow)

Interesting in the Coulomb phase can be understood via BPS eqns in the mirror theory

Interesting in the Higgs phase.

Let us apply this.

Study of Higgs and Coulomb phases and transition between them

Symplectic duality mathematically

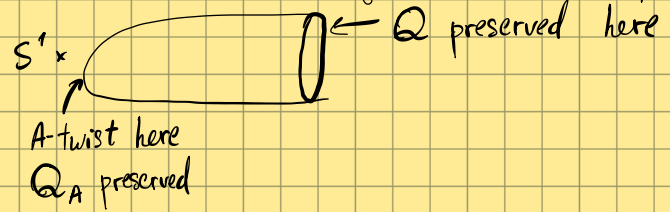
[Bullimore-Dimofte-Gaiotto-Hilburn]

Vertex function = K -theoretic count of quasimaps [Okounkov'15] $V_\alpha = K_T(X_H)$

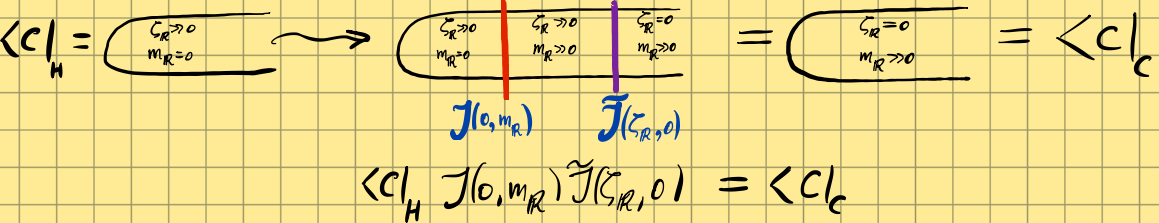
Physically: partition function on $S^1 \times (A\text{-twist}) \leftarrow$ vacuum $|\alpha\rangle \leftarrow$ In the Higgs phase

[BPS eqns: $D_{\bar{z}}\phi = 0$, $m_R = e^z F_{z\bar{z}}$] \Rightarrow vortices \rightarrow quasimaps in the $e \rightarrow \infty$ limit

There exists another background that computes the same:



Let us use it to understand what happens to V_α under the phase transition:



Rk: $m_R \gg 0$ or $\zeta_R \gg 0$
 always means tending to infinity within a chosen chamber.

$$\langle C|_H J(0, m_R) J(\zeta_R, 0) = \langle C|_C$$

→ Janus interfaces realize a phase transition, "transports" $\langle C|$ into Coulomb phase
 $\langle C|_C$ gives "vertex function" that counts "quasimaps into the Coulomb branch"

Coulomb branch X_C is the Higgs branch \tilde{X}_H of the 3d mirror theory.

If the mirror admits a quiver description, $\tilde{X}_H = X_C$ is a GIT quotient → notion of quasimaps is clear
 → arrive at the fact known from [Aganagic-Okounkov],

that Elliptic Stable envelope = transition matrix that relates V_α of X_H to \tilde{V}_α of \tilde{X}_H .

More generally, X_C might not admit a GIT description, yet our picture with phase transition still holds. (3d mirror)

→ Elliptic stable envelopes realize a phase transition that relates vertex functions of the Higgs & Coulomb branches.

Problem: how to define quasimaps into the Coulomb branch and how to count them?

V. Vacua and cohomology.

Recall that $\{Q, Q^\dagger\} = H$, so $\{Q\text{-cohomology on } \mathcal{H}[E_r]\} \simeq \mathcal{V}$ - space of SUSY ground states.

• In 1d (i.e. in quantum mechanics), it is known that $\mathcal{V} = H_T^*(X_H)$ [Witten]

$Q = d + v_\nu$, $Q^\dagger = d^* + v^* \lrcorner$ → Q -cohomology = equivariant de Rham of X_H .

• Lift to 2d: H_T is lifted to K_T

It is natural to think of a 2d theory (NLSM into X_H) on $S^1 \times \mathbb{R}$ as a 1d NLSM into LX_H .

$$Q^2 = \underbrace{2iD_\varphi}_{S^1 \text{ rotation}} + \underbrace{m}_{\text{flavor transformation}} \implies H_{T \times S^1}(LX_H) \leftarrow \text{loop rotation}$$

• Lift to 3d: $Ell_T(X_H)$ Similar story:

this is Q -cohomology

$Q^2 = 2iD_{\tilde{z}}$; 3d NLSM into X_H is like 2d NLSM into LX_H , with extra equivariance w.r.t. loop rotations. $\implies K_{T \times S^1}(LX_H) \simeq "Ell_T(X_H)"$

Let us take the perspective as in e.g. [A-0] $\text{Ell}_T(X_H)$ is a scheme over

If for generic equivariant parameters, there are only isolated massive vacua, then

$$\mathcal{E}_T = \mathbb{T}^r / q^{\text{cochar}(\mathbb{T}^r)}$$

flat T-connections on $E_T =$ ^{elliptic} equivariant parameters

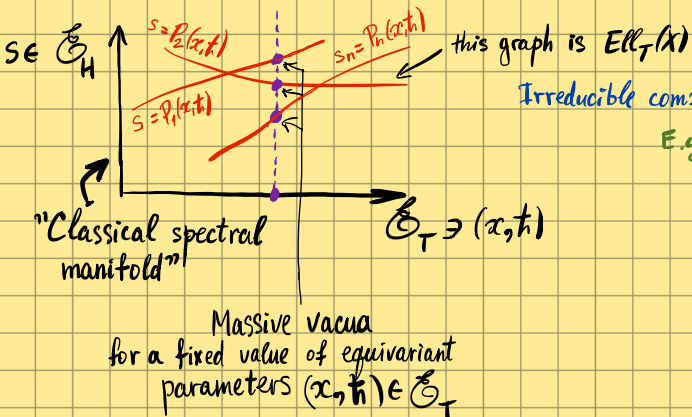
$\rightarrow \text{Ell}_T(X_H)$ can be understood as the classical description of such vacua.

We have equivariant parameters $(x, \hbar) \in \mathcal{E}_T$ for $T = A \times C_n^x$ and "gauge parameters", or Chern roots $s \in \mathcal{E}_H$,

Here $\mathcal{E}_H = H_C / q^{\text{cochar}(H)}$, $H =$ maximal torus of the gauge gp. G

Physically, (x, \hbar) and s are T- and H-flat connections on E_T .

In each massive vacuum, s adjust itself to a value $s_i = P_i(x, \hbar)$, which screens some x and \hbar , and allows a matter ver:



Irreducible component \leftrightarrow massive vacua

E.g. for SQED_n, $X_H = T^*CP^{n-1}$, Ell is given by:

$$\prod_{i=1}^n (s x_i \hbar^{1/2} - 1) = 0$$

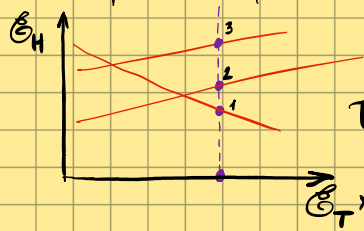
(n) gauge theory with n hypermultiplets

This is really $\text{Spec } K_T(X_H)$. Ell is obtained mod q

In the quantum case, vacua are states, i.e. elements of the vector space.

So in the picture, points 1, 2, 3 correspond to 1-dimensional vector spaces

$\mathbb{C}\langle 1 \rangle, \mathbb{C}\langle 2 \rangle, \mathbb{C}\langle 3 \rangle, \dots$ (quantum vacua)



Together, they add up to a fiber of a vector bundle over $\mathcal{E}_T \times \mathcal{E}_T$ - the bundle of vacua.

$\mathcal{E}_T \times \mathcal{E}_T$

$T = \text{Pic}(X_H)$

Here we replaced \mathcal{E}_T by $\mathcal{E}_T \times \mathcal{E}_T$, and $\text{Ell}_T(X_H)$ by $E_T(X_H) = \text{Ell}_T(X_H) \times \mathcal{E}_T$, \mathcal{E}_T - "Kähler parameters" \neq They are flat connections for T^{top} on E_T and must be included in quantum case.

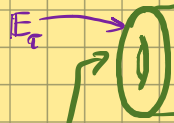
In fact, it is better to think of a line bundle:

$$\mathcal{L} \downarrow E_T(X) = \text{Ell}_T(X_H) \times \mathcal{E}_T$$

Then the bundle of vacua is a pushforward of \mathcal{L} with respect to

$$E_T(X_H) \downarrow \mathcal{E}_T \times \mathcal{E}_T$$

The topology of \mathcal{L} is determined by the 't Hooft anomalies in QFT.



\leftarrow isolated vacuum α

$[L \text{ on } T^*R]$

read off "wave functional" corresponding to α here.

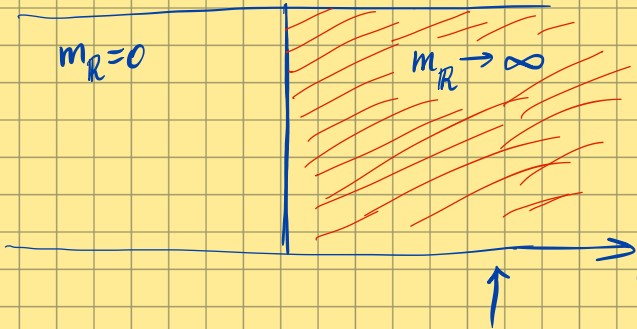
\rightarrow To construct $\mathcal{H}[E_T]$, need to choose polarization on the phase space.

\rightarrow Want SUSY, (2,2) polarization: comes from polarization on X_H (as holo. symp. mnfld.)

\mathcal{L} has sections $\sim \prod_{w, t \in \mathcal{L}} \frac{\vartheta(s^w x^t h^{1/2})}{\vartheta(s^w x^t) \vartheta(h^{1/2})} \times \left(\frac{\vartheta(h)}{\vartheta(h^{1/2})^2} \right)^{|G|} \times \frac{\vartheta(sz)}{\vartheta(s) \vartheta(z)}$ [work in progress]

VI. Effective 2d description of stable envelopes.

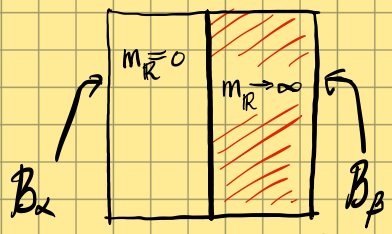
Consider mass Janus $J(0, m_R)$ for $m_R \rightarrow \infty$ in \mathbb{C} .



- This realizes
 $\text{Stab}: \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{vacua} \\ \text{at } m_R \gg 0 \end{array} \right\} \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{vacua} \\ \text{at } m_R = 0 \end{array} \right\}$
 $\Gamma(E_T(X_H^A), \mathcal{L}) \rightarrow \Gamma(E_T(X_H), \mathcal{L})$
- BPS eqn's = gradient flow correspond to the construction in math.

• Since mass is $m_R \rightarrow \infty$ here, the flow happens really fast.

I.e., we don't need infinite time.
 Enough to consider an interval:



\Rightarrow Partition function on $E_T \times I$.

"Interval reduction"

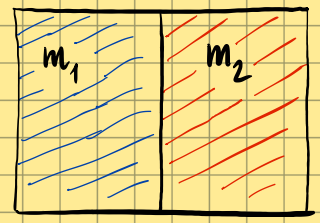
Special boundary conditions corresponding to vacua

This leads to an effective 2d (0,2) description on E_T .
 Elliptic genus = matrix element of **Stab**.

This part is in progress, but one can write quite general formulas for **Stab** in this way.

VII. R-matrices

Consider $J(m_1, m_2) = J(m_1, 0) \cdot J(0, m_2) = \text{Stab}_{C_1}^{-1} \circ \text{Stab}_{C_2}$
 where $m_1 \in C_1, m_2 \in C_2, m_1$ and m_2 are very large.



In 1d QFT case, we get a map

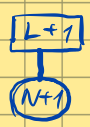
$$H_T(X^A) \rightarrow H_T(X^A).$$

• The interface supports some trapped modes.

• Such interfaces can "change" the gauge group via Higgs mechanism.

E.g. Consider $U(N+1)$ gauge theory w/ $L+1$ fundam. hypers.

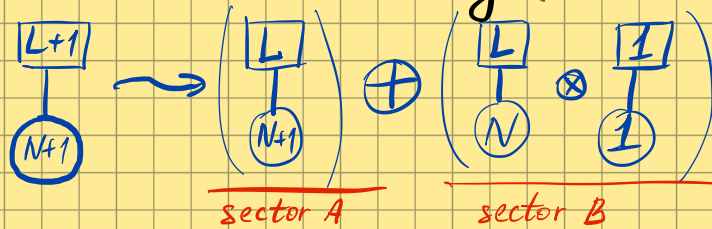
$$X_H = T^* \text{Gr}(N+1, L+1).$$



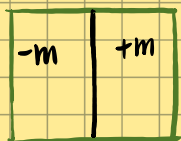
Consider mass for $U(1)$ that rotates the last hyper.

$$X_H^{U(1)} = T^*Gr(N+1, L) \sqcup T^*Gr(N, L)$$

At the QFT level, the mass breaks theory (at low energies) into subsectors:



Can consider an interface



Leads to a 2×2 ^{block} R-matrix [Maulik-Okounkov]

$\begin{matrix} A & B \\ \hline A & \begin{bmatrix} * & * \\ * & * \end{bmatrix} \\ B & \end{matrix}$ that talks between these two sectors.

To be continued... (see more in upcoming paper(s))