

# A semi-canonical reduction for periods of Kontsevich-Zagier

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PART I

## INTRODUCTION

## What is a "period"?

- "Most of the important constants in mathematics, coming from algebraic geometry".
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- Betti cohomology :  $H_{\mathbb{B}}^{\bullet}(X, Y; \mathbb{Q}) = \left( H_{\bullet}^{\text{sing}}(X(\mathbb{C}), Y(\mathbb{C}); \mathbb{Q}) \right)^{\vee}$
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 H_B^\bullet(X, Y; \mathbb{Q}) \times H_{\text{dR}}^\bullet(X, Y; \mathbb{Q}) & \longrightarrow & \mathbb{C} \\
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represented taking  $\mathbb{Q}$ -basis by the *period matrix*  $\Pi = \left( \int_{\gamma_i} \omega_j \right)_{i,j=1, \dots, s}$ .

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A set  $S \subset \mathbb{R}^d$  is called  $\mathbb{R}_{\text{alg}}$ -*semi-algebraic* if can be described as finite unions of sets  $\{f_1 *_1 0, \dots, f_s *_s 0\}$ , where  $f_i \in \mathbb{R}_{\text{alg}}[x_1, \dots, x_d]$  and  $*_i \in \{=, >\}$  for  $i = 1, \dots, s$ .

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A *period of Kontsevich-Zagier* (or *effective period*) is a complex number whose real and imaginary parts are values of absolutely convergent integrals of the form

$$\mathcal{I}(S, P/Q) = \int_S \frac{P(x_1, \dots, x_d)}{Q(x_1, \dots, x_d)} \cdot dx_1 \wedge \dots \wedge dx_d$$

where  $S \subset \mathbb{R}^d$  is a  $d$ -dimensional  $\mathbb{R}_{\text{alg}}$ -semi-algebraic set and  $P/Q \in \mathbb{R}_{\text{alg}}(x_1, \dots, x_d)$ .

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## Examples of numbers in $\mathcal{P}_{KZ}$

- 1 Algebraic numbers:  $\alpha = \int_0^\alpha dx, \forall \alpha \in \mathbb{R}_{\text{alg}}$ .
- 2 As a first transcendental number

$$\pi = \int_{\{x^2+y^2 \leq 1\}} 1 \, dx dy = \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} \frac{1}{1+x^2} \, dx = \int_{\{(1-x^2)y^2 < 1\}} \frac{dx dy}{2}$$



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## Open problems and conjectures

From the foundational paper:



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### Conjecture (Kontsevich-Zagier periods conjecture)

*If a real period admits two integral representations, then we can pass from one formulation to the other using only three operations (called the KZ-rules):*

- *integral additions by domains or integrands.*
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*Moreover, these operations should respect the class of the objects previously defined.*

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PART II

A SEMI-CANONICAL REDUCTION FOR PERIODS

"Periods of Kontsevich-Zagier I: A semi-canonical reduction.",  
arXiv:1509.01097, 26 pags., (Preprint)

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Our principal result:

### Theorem (Semi-canonical reduction)

Let  $p \in \mathcal{P}_{\text{KZ}}$  be non-zero given in an integral form  $\mathcal{I}(S, P/Q)$  in  $\mathbb{R}^d$ . Then there exists an effective algorithm satisfying the KZ-rules such that  $\mathcal{I}(S, P/Q)$  can be written as

$$p = \text{sgn}(p) \cdot \text{vol}_{d+1}(K),$$

where  $K \subset \mathbb{R}^{d+1}$  is a top-dimensional compact semi-algebraic set.

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## Compactification

We define the *projective closure* of a semi-algebraic set  $S \subset \mathbb{R}^d$  by the topological closure of the inclusion of  $S \hookrightarrow \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{R}}^d$ .

### Theorem

$\mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{R}}^d$  can be constructed as the gluing of  $C_1, \dots, C_{d+1}$  affine unit hypercubes through their opposite faces, and such that the Zariski closure of  $\bigcup_{i,j=0}^d (C_i \cap C_j)$  is the hyperplane arrangement

$$\mathcal{A} = \{x_i^2 - x_j^2 = 0 \mid 0 \leq i < j \leq d\} \subset \mathbb{P}_{\mathbb{R}}^d$$

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We can assume that we are dealing with integrals  $\mathcal{I}(S, P/Q)$  with compact domains.

Let  $W_0$  be a smooth real algebraic variety defined over  $\mathbb{R}_{\text{alg}}$ . Let  $S \subset W_0$  be a compact semi-algebraic set in  $W_0$  and  $\omega$  a top differential rational form in  $W_0$ . Denote by  $\partial_z S$  the Zariski closure of  $\partial S$  and by  $Z(\omega)$  and  $P(\omega)$  the real zero and pole locus of  $\omega$ , respectively.

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## Compact domains in $\mathbb{R}^2$ and tangent cones

This case is more easy to manipulate:

- Blow-ups over points  $p \in \partial S$ .
- The compactity of the domain can be controlled *a priori* using the *tangent cone*  $T_p(\partial_z S)$  at  $p$  of  $\partial_z S$ .

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Let  $p \in \partial S$  and suppose that there exists a line  $L$  such that  $\bar{S} \cap L = \{p\}$ . If  $L \notin T_p(\partial_z S)$  then there exist a Zariski open  $U \subset \widehat{\mathbb{R}^2}$  such that  $\widetilde{S}^\tau \cap U$  is compact.

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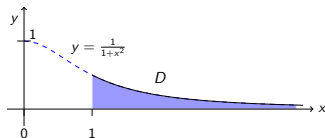
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A classical way to write  $\pi/4$  as an integral is:

$$\frac{\pi}{4} = \int_1^{\infty} \frac{1}{1+x^2} dx = \int_D dx dy$$

with  $D = \{x > 1, 0 < y(1+x^2) < 1\} \subset \mathbb{R}^2$ .



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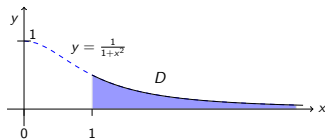
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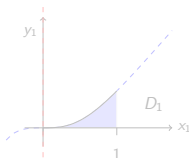


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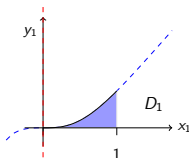
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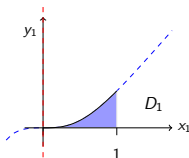


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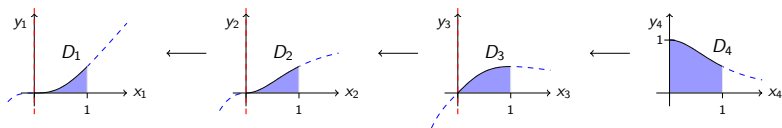


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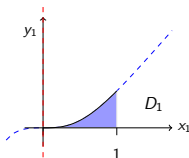


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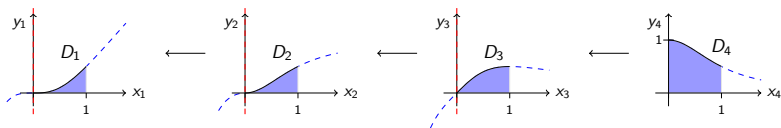
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PART III

## PERSPECTIVES AND CONTINUATION

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