

# Special Kähler Structures for $\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM

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Based on upcoming work with  
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# Motivations

The **moduli space of supersymmetric vacua** is a fundamental geometrical structure attached to SQFTs.

- Contains data on the *local structure* of a QFT (OPE of local operators, e.g. chiral rings).
- What about the *global structure* (additional data needed to properly define the theory on topologically non-trivial manifolds) ?

Our goal:

**Show that global structures are also encoded in MSV**  
*(with the appropriate bells and whistles)*

Today, demonstrate on simple example of  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  SYM.

# Outline

- 1 Moduli Space of Vacua of  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  SYM
- 2 A glimpse of Special Kähler geometry
- 3 Classification of  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  SK geometries
- 4 Examples
- 5 Conclusion

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## 4d $\mathcal{N} = 2$ SCFT Moduli Space of Vacua

4d  $\mathcal{N} = 2$  superconformal algebra:

$$\mathfrak{su}(2, 2|2) \supset \mathfrak{so}(4, 2) \oplus \mathfrak{su}(2)_H \oplus \mathfrak{u}(1)_C$$

Moduli space of  $\mathcal{N} = 2$  preserving vacua:

- Higgs branch ( $\mathfrak{u}(1)_C$  invariant scalar operators VEVs) is singular **hyperKähler**.
- Coulomb branch ( $\mathfrak{su}(2)_H$  invariant scalar operators VEVs) is singular **special Kähler (SK)**.
- Mixed branches.

## 4d $\mathcal{N} = 2$ SCFT Moduli Space of Vacua

Nature of the singularities:

- **Complex singularities** are singularities of the spaces viewed as algebraic varieties
- **Metric singularities** are loci where the metric curvature diverges.

General observation :

*The metric aspects are more difficult to grasp than the algebraic ones.*

Branch	Metric aspects	Complex / Algebraic aspects
Higgs	hyperKähler	Symplectic singularity
Coulomb	special Kähler	Algebraic singularity (often trivial)

# $\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM moduli space

Consider  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  SYM with simple complex gauge algebra  $\mathfrak{g}$ .

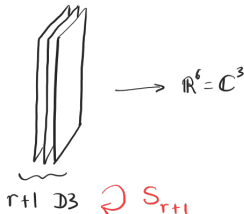
$$r = \text{rank}(\mathfrak{g}) \quad W = \text{Weyl}(\mathfrak{g})$$

**Fact 1 : the moduli space of vacua is the flat orbifold**

$$\mathcal{M} = \mathbb{C}^{3r} / W$$

**where  $W$  acts on each of the three  $\mathbb{C}$  factors in its fundamental reflection representation.**

XXX Draw branes XXX

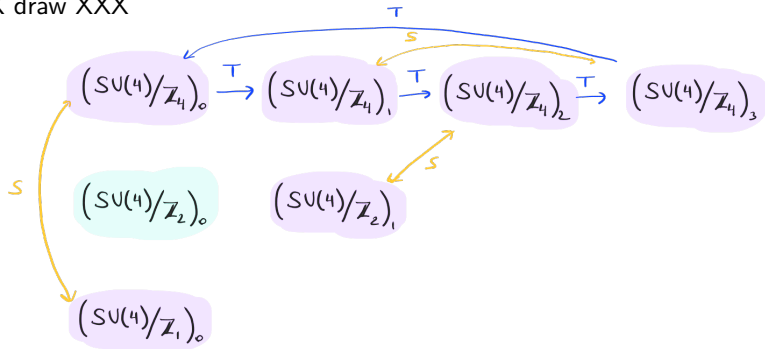


# $\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM moduli space

On a generic point on  $\mathcal{M}$ , gauge group broken to  $U(1)^r$ .

Singularities (metric and algebraic) on loci fixed by some  $w \in W$ . The Hasse diagram [AB, Grimminger, 2022]:

XX draw XXX



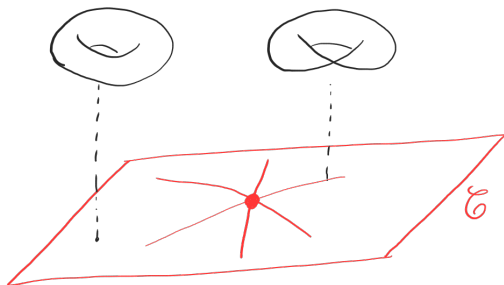


# $\mathcal{N} = 4$ SYM moduli space

$\mathcal{N} = 4$  superconformal algebra  $\mathfrak{psu}(2, 2|4) \supset \mathfrak{su}(2, 2|2)$

Choosing an  $\mathcal{N} = 2$  subalgebra is equivalent to picking a "Higgs branch" within. The "Coulomb branch" now is freely generated (but has metric singularities).

Flat orbifolds are easy! Let's study the SK structure on the Coulomb branch.



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*There is some amount of freedom in what is meant by Special Kähler geometry...  
Here we adopt the following definition:*

[Donagi, Witten 1995] [Freed 1997]

[Argyres, Martone, Ray 2022]

A SK structure is a quadruple  $(E \rightarrow \mathcal{C}^*, J, \Lambda, s)$  where

- $E \rightarrow \mathcal{C}^*$  is a rank  $r$  complex vector bundle over  $\mathcal{C}^*$  with structure group  $\mathrm{Sp}_J(2r, \mathbb{Z})$
- $\Lambda$  is a rank  $2r$  symplectic lattice in the fibers such that  $J$  induces an integral symplectic form on  $\Lambda$ .
- $s$  is a holomorphic section of the dual bundle  $E^*$  such that  $J(ds \wedge ds) = 0$  where  $d$  is the exterior derivative on  $\mathcal{C}^*$ .

The (positive) metric on  $\mathcal{C}^*$  is given by  $ds^2 = iP(ds, d\bar{s})$ .

XXX draw XXX

Two simplifying assumptions will be used:

**Fact 2** : the CB of  $\mathcal{N} \geq 3$  QFTs has isotrivial special Kähler geometry, i.e. the fibers are all isomorphic to a given fixed Abelian variety  $A$ .

[Cecotti, Del Zotto, Martone, Moscrop 2021]

**Fact 3** : Theories arising as limits of consistent quantum theories containing gravity have principally polarized SK structures (Banks-Seiberg, Caorsi-Cecotti)

[Banks, Seiberg, 2011]

[Caorsi, Cecotti 2018]

NB : the status of non principally polarized theories is still slightly unclear to me (is it equivalent to being a relative theory?).

Putting together Facts 1, 2 and 3 :

**Fact 4 :** An  $\mathcal{N} = 4$  SK structure for algebra  $\mathfrak{g}$  is an  $\mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$ -orbit of pairs  $(S, \tau)$  with

- $S$  a symplectic integral representations  $S : W \rightarrow \mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$  which is  $\mathbb{Q}$ -equivalent to two copies of the fundamental reflection representation of  $W$ .
- $\tau$  is an  $r \times r$  matrix in the Siegel half space such that  $\tau \in \mathrm{Fix}(\mathrm{Im} S)$ , i.e. for all  $w \in W$ ,  $S(w) \circ \tau = \tau$ .

under the action given by

$$M \cdot (S, \tau) = (MSM^{-1}, M \circ \tau)$$

for  $M \in \mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$ .

Let's classify those!

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# $GL(r, \mathbb{Z})$ representations of $W$

Step 1 : classify  $\mathbb{Z}$ -equivalence classes of representations of  $W$  that are  $\mathbb{Q}$ -equivalent to the reflection representation.

Equivalently, we need to find lattice representations.

Introduce

$$Z = \Gamma_{\text{weight}} / \Gamma_{\text{root}}$$

the center of  $\mathfrak{g}$ . For any subgroup  $H \subseteq Z$ , there is a lattice  $\Gamma_H$  such that  $H = \Gamma_{\text{weight}} / \Gamma_H$ .

**Theorem (Feit 1998):** The  $\Gamma_H$  for  $H \subseteq Z$  provide an exhaustive list.

We call  $R_H$  the corresponding representations.

# $GL(r, \mathbb{Z})$ representations of $W$

$W$	Number of lattices	Lattices
$A_1$	1	$\Gamma_{\text{root}} \simeq \Gamma_{\text{weight}} \simeq \mathbb{Z}$
$A_\ell$ ( $\ell \geq 2$ )	$\sigma_0(\ell + 1)$	$\Gamma_d$ (for $d   \ell + 1$ )
$B_2 = C_2$	2	$\Gamma_{\text{root}}(C_2) \simeq \Gamma_{\text{weight}}(B_2), \Gamma_{\text{root}}(B_2) \simeq \Gamma_{\text{weight}}(C_2)$
$B_\ell, C_\ell$ ( $\ell \geq 3$ )	3	$\Gamma_{\text{root}}(C_\ell), \Gamma_{\text{root}}(B_\ell) \simeq \Gamma_{\text{weight}}(C_\ell), \Gamma_{\text{weight}}(B_\ell)$
$D_{2\ell}$ ( $\ell \geq 2$ )	5	$\Gamma_{\text{root}}, \Gamma_V, \Gamma_S, \Gamma_C, \Gamma_{\text{weight}}$
$D_{2\ell+1}$ ( $\ell \geq 1$ )	3	$\Gamma_{\text{root}} = \Gamma_4, \Gamma_2, \Gamma_{\text{weight}} = \Gamma_1$
$E_6, E_7$	2	$\Gamma_{\text{root}}, \Gamma_{\text{weight}}$
$E_8$	1	$\Gamma_{\text{root}}$
$F_4, G_2$	2	$\Gamma_{\text{root}}, \Gamma_{\text{coroot}}$



# $\mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$ representations of $W$

Step 2 : Find canonical forms for  $\mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$  representations of  $W$ .

Let  $H \subseteq Z$  be a subgroup and  $D \in \mathrm{Mat}(r, \mathbb{Q})$  be a *symmetric* matrix such that for all  $w \in W$ , the combination

$$L_{(H,D)}(w) := R_H(w)D - DR_H^{-t}(w)$$

has *integer coefficients*. We then call  $S_{(H,D)}$  the following symplectic integral representation of  $W$ :

$$S_{(H,D)} : W \rightarrow \mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$$
$$w \mapsto \begin{pmatrix} R_H(w) & L_{(H,D)}(w) \\ 0 & R_H^{-t}(w) \end{pmatrix}.$$

**Theorem:** Any representation  $W \rightarrow \mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Q})$  that is  $\mathbb{Q}$ -equivalent to the direct sum of two copies of the fundamental reflection representation is  $\mathbb{Z}$ -equivalent to some  $S_{(H,D)}$ .

# $\mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$ representations of $W$

Step 3 : Now that we know that the  $S_{(H,D)}$  are sufficient, count how many  $\mathbb{Z}$ -equivalences there are.

$$\begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{1} & D \\ 0 & \mathbf{1} \end{pmatrix}^{-1} S_{(H,0)} \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{1} & D \\ 0 & \mathbf{1} \end{pmatrix} = S_{(H,D)}$$

Group of *bindings*:

$$\mathcal{B} = \{L : W \rightarrow \mathrm{Mat}(r, \mathbb{Z}) \mid \exists D \in \mathrm{Sym}(r, \mathbb{Q}), \forall w \in W, L(w) = R(w)D - DR(w)^{-t}\}$$

Subgroup of *inner bindings*:

$$\mathcal{B}_0 = \{L : W \rightarrow \mathrm{Mat}(r, \mathbb{Z}) \mid \exists D \in \mathrm{Sym}(r, \mathbb{Z}), \forall w \in W, L(w) = R(w)D - DR(w)^{-t}\}$$

**The  $\mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$ -equivalence classes of representations of the form  $S_{(H,D)}$  for  $H$  fixed are labelled by  $\mathcal{B}/\mathcal{B}_0$ .**

# $\mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$ representations of $W$

Step 4 : Now that we know that the  $S_{(H,D)}$  are sufficient and how many they are, find when two of them are equivalent.

Introduce the intertwiners (normalized so that  $I_{H,H} = 1$  and  $K_{H,H}$  is the Killing form):

$$\begin{aligned}I_{H,H'} R_{H'}(w) &= R_H(w) I_{H,H'} \\ K_{H,H'} R_{H'}(w) &= R_H^{-t}(w) K_{H,H'}\end{aligned}$$

Then any matrix  $M \in \mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$  that satisfies  $MS_{(H_1,D_1)}(w) = S_{(H_2,D_2)}(w)M$  for all  $w \in W$  is of the form

$$M = \begin{pmatrix} al_{21} - cD_2K_{21} & bK_{12}^{-1} + al_{21}D_1 - dD_2l_{12}^t - cD_2K_{21}D_1 \\ cK_{21} & dl_{12}^t + cK_{21}D_1 \end{pmatrix}$$

for  $a, b, c, d \in \mathbb{Q}$  such that  $ad - bc = 1$ .

**This allows to fully classify the SK structures**

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# $A_3$ example

Step 1 : There are three  $\mathbb{Z}$ -inequivalent representations  $R_H$ , for  $H = 1, 2, 4$ .

Representation	$H = 1$	$H = 2$	$H = 4$
Reflection 1	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 \\ -3 & 1 & 0 \\ -4 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 \\ -3 & 1 & 0 \\ -2 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 0 & 0 \\ -3 & 1 & 0 \\ -1 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$
Reflection 2	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} -1 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$
Reflection 3	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 1 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 2 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$	$\begin{pmatrix} 1 & 0 & 0 \\ 1 & -1 & 4 \\ 0 & 0 & 1 \end{pmatrix}$

# $A_3$ example

## Step 2 and 3 : Representations

$$S_{(H,D)} : W \rightarrow \mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$$
$$w \mapsto \begin{pmatrix} R_H(w) & L_{(H,D)}(w) \\ 0 & R_H^{-t}(w) \end{pmatrix}.$$

where we have to compute  $\mathcal{B}/\mathcal{B}_0$  for each case. For  $H = 1$ , generic form of  $D$  such that  $L_{(H,D)}(w)$  has integer coefficients for all  $w \in \mathfrak{S}_4$  is

$$\begin{pmatrix} \beta & \frac{3\beta}{2} - \frac{3n_1}{2} + \frac{n_2}{2} + \frac{n_3}{2} & 2\beta - 2n_1 + n_3 \\ \frac{3\beta}{2} - \frac{3n_1}{2} + \frac{n_2}{2} + \frac{n_3}{2} & 3\beta - 3n_1 + 2n_3 & 4\beta - 4n_1 + 2n_3 \\ 2\beta - 2n_1 + n_3 & 4\beta - 4n_1 + 2n_3 & 6\beta - 6n_1 + 3n_3 \end{pmatrix}$$

for  $\beta \in \mathbb{Q}$  and  $n_1, n_2, n_3 \in \mathbb{Z}$ . Then  $\mathcal{B}/\mathcal{B}_0 = \{0\}$ , as for any  $n_1, n_2, n_3 \in \mathbb{Z}$ , there is a  $\beta \in \mathbb{Q}$  such that the above has integer coefficients.

# $A_3$ example

## Step 2 and 3 : Representations

$$S_{(H,D)} : W \rightarrow \mathrm{Sp}(2r, \mathbb{Z})$$
$$w \mapsto \begin{pmatrix} R_H(w) & L_{(H,D)}(w) \\ 0 & R_H^{-t}(w) \end{pmatrix}.$$

where we have to compute  $\mathcal{B}/\mathcal{B}_0$  for each case. For  $H = 2$ , generic form of  $D$  such that  $L_{(H,D)}(w)$  has integer coefficients for all  $w \in \mathfrak{S}_4$  is

$$\begin{pmatrix} \beta & \frac{3\beta}{2} - \frac{3n_1}{2} + \frac{n_2}{2} + \frac{n_3}{2} & \beta - n_1 \\ \frac{3\beta}{2} - \frac{3n_1}{2} + \frac{n_2}{2} + \frac{n_3}{2} & 3\beta - 3n_1 + n_3 & 2\beta - 2n_1 + n_3 \\ \beta - n_1 & 2\beta - 2n_1 + n_3 & \frac{3\beta}{2} - \frac{3n_1}{2} + \frac{n_3}{2} \end{pmatrix}$$

for  $\beta \in \mathbb{Q}$  and  $n_1, n_2, n_3 \in \mathbb{Z}$ . Then  $\mathcal{B}/\mathcal{B}_0 = \mathbb{Z}_2$ , as for any  $(n_1, n_2, n_3) = (0, 1, 0)$ , one would need  $\beta$  integer and both odd and even so that the above has integer coefficients.

## $A_3$ example

Step 2 and 3 : In total, there are four  $\mathbb{Z}$ -equivalence classes  $(H, D)$ :

$$(1, 0) \quad (2, 0) \quad (2, 1) \quad (4, 0).$$

Step 4 : Consider for instance  $(H, D) = (1, 0)$ . Then the Killing form and its inverse are

$$K = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & -1 & 0 \\ -1 & 2 & -1 \\ 0 & -1 & \frac{3}{4} \end{pmatrix} \quad K^{-1} = \begin{pmatrix} 2 & 3 & 4 \\ 3 & 6 & 8 \\ 4 & 8 & 12 \end{pmatrix}.$$

So the intertwiner reads

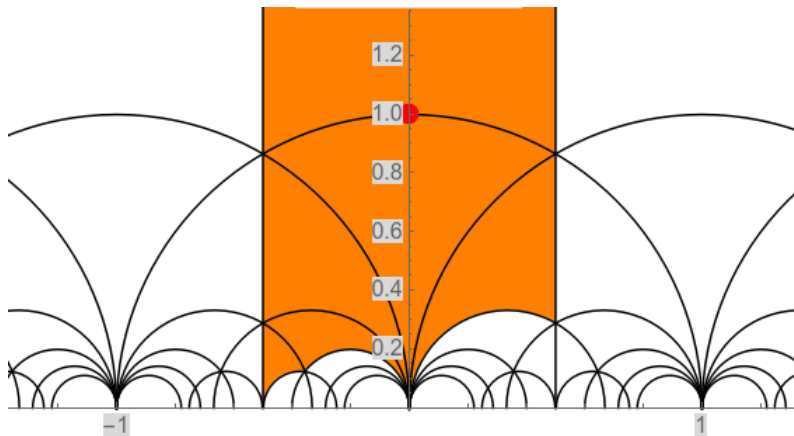
$$M = \begin{pmatrix} a\mathbf{1} & bK^{-1} \\ cK & d\mathbf{1} \end{pmatrix}$$

and for it to have integer entries, one needs that  $c \equiv 0 \pmod{4}$ . In other words, the orbits of the form  $(S_{(1,0)}, \gamma \circ \tau)$  for  $\gamma \in \mathrm{SL}(2, \mathbb{Z})/\Gamma_0(4)$  are all disjoint. One can show something similar for  $(S, D) = (2, 1), (4, 0)$ .

For  $(S, D) = (2, 0)$ , one finds instead no condition on  $a, b, c, d$  so the orbit of  $(S_{(2,0)}, \tau)$  is isolated.



# $A_3$ example



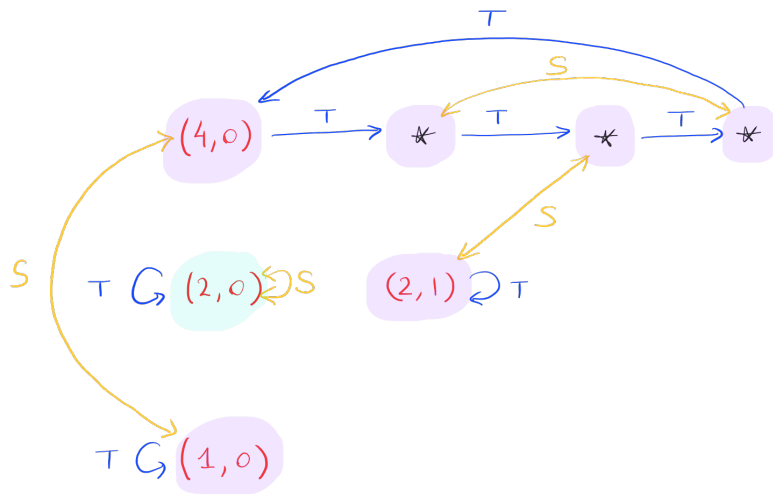
\* Add  $n_H$  number.  
\* Ref to AST

\* Add table mat  
for  $SU(4)$ .

# $A_3$ example

Summary:

XXX draw XXX



## $D_4$ example

In a similar way one finds :

Lattice	$\mathcal{B}/\mathcal{B}_0$
$\Gamma_{\text{root}}$	$\mathbb{Z}_4$
$\Gamma_V$	$\mathbb{Z}_2$
$\Gamma_S$	$\mathbb{Z}_2$
$\Gamma_C$	$\mathbb{Z}_2$
$\Gamma_{\text{weight}}$	$\mathbb{Z}_1$

The congruence subgroups and the orbits can be read from

[illegible]

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# Conclusion

- One reproduces the results of [Aharony, Seiberg, Tachikawa 2013] from SK geometry and group theory.
- The method can be readily applied to more general orbifolds, yielding e.g. the global forms of  $\mathcal{N} = 3$  SCFTs.
- We can also treat non-principal polarizations in the same way.
- Can similar ideas apply to more general SK geometries (non orbifold, non isotrivial, etc)?
- The same information about the global structure of SCFTs should be hidden in the metric aspects of Higgs branch geometry (?)