### Young tableaux and snakes

Yuliy Baryshnikov joint work with Dan Romik (Hebrew University)

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#### Motivation

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• A Young tableaux is a filling of Young diagram consisting of n boxes with numbers 1, ..., n increasing top-to-down and left-to-right.

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|---|---|---|-----|---|
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| 4 |   |   | n=9 |   |
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- The number of YTs with given shape  $\lambda$  has various interpretations (dimension of the representation  $\lambda$  of  $S_n$ , for example).
- Asymptotic regime is of interest:





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**Conjecture** A *typical* YT, considered as a function on the Young diageam  $t\lambda$  is close to some *deterministic* limiting function.

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   Conjecture A typical YT, considered as a function on the Young diageam tλ is close to some deterministic limiting function.
- How one would prove it?

• By finding the rate function and then solving variational problem.

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- Rate function will count the (normalized, per unit area) number of YT filling the shapes approximating a strip



• Hence we have to compute the number of Young tableaux filling the strips like

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• We start with the simplest task: finding the number of YT filling the strip of width 2 and slope 1.

 A permutation σ ∈ S<sub>n</sub> is called an up-down permutation (also zig-zag permutation, alternating permutation) if it satisfies

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Equivalent to "2-strip" tableaux:

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• **Theorem** (D. André 1881): Let  $A_n = \#$  of *n*-element up-down permutations. Then

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{A_n x^n}{n!} = \tan x + \sec x.$$

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• Up-down permutations were named *snakes* and studied by V. Arnold to enumerate *morsifications of real singularities*.

### Up-down permutations (continued)

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$$x = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{E_n x^n}{n!}$$
,  $(E_n)_{n \ge 0}$  – Euler numbers,  
tan  $x = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{T_n x^{2n-1}}{(2n-1)!}$ ,  $(T_n)_{n \ge 0}$  – Tangent numbers,  
 $\frac{x}{e^x - 1} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{B_n x^n}{n!}$ ,  $(B_n)_{n \ge 0}$  – Bernoulli numbers.

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#### Up-down permutations (continued)

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• In this notation:  $A_{2n} = |E_{2n}|, A_{2n-1} = T_n = \frac{(-1)^{n-1}4^n(4^n-1)}{2n}B_{2n}.$ 

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Many proofs of André's theorem, mostly algebraic. Proof using transfer operators (due to N. Elkies, 2003):

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• Let 
$$P_n = \left\{ (x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n) \in [0, 1]^n : x_1 < x_2 > x_3 < x_4 > \dots \right\}.$$

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where

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(continuous analogue of using adjacency matrix to count paths in graphs).

#### Transfer operators (continued)

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• Note that  $S = C \circ T \circ C$  where (Cg)(x) = g(1-x), so we have shown that  $A_n = n! \langle R^{n-1}\mathbf{1}, \mathbf{1} \rangle_{L_2[0,1]}$ , where

$$R = C \circ T,$$
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• Therefore

$$A_n = n! \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \lambda_k^{n-1} \langle \mathbf{1}, \phi_k \rangle_{L_2[0,1]}^2,$$

where  $(\phi_k)_{k\geq 1}$  is the orthonormal system of eigenfunctions of the self-adjoint operator R, with corresponding eigenvalues  $(\lambda_k)_{k\geq 1}$ .

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• It remains to diagonalize the operator *R*.
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- Then the numbers  $A_{n,k}$  form the *snake triangle*:

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• Plotting the last line one already can guess the base eigenfunction!

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• Looking for an eigenfunction:

$$\lambda f(x) = (Rf)(x) = \int_0^{1-x} f(y) dy,$$

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• The (normalized) solutions are

$$\phi_k(x) = \sqrt{2} \cos\left(\frac{(2k-1)\pi x}{2}\right), \qquad \lambda_k = \frac{(-1)^{k-1}}{(2k-1)\pi}, \qquad k = 1, 2, \dots$$

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• So  $A_n = \frac{2^{n+2}n!}{\pi^{n+1}} \sum_{k=1}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^{(k-1)(n-1)}}{(2k-1)^{n+1}}$ , which is equivalent to André's theorem. :)

## The transfer operator for the 2*m*-strip

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Figure: The coordinate filtration for the 4-strip.

#### The transfer operator for the 2m-strip



Figure: The coordinate filtration for the 4-strip.

• (main observation: better to cut tableau along diagonals!)

• The transfer operator works on the function space over the *m*-dimensional simplex

$$\Omega_m = \Big\{ (x_1,\ldots,x_m) : 0 \le x_1 \le x_2 \le \ldots \le x_m \le 1 \Big\},$$

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and is given by

$$(Tf)(x_1,\ldots,x_m) = \int_0^{1-x_m} \int_{1-x_m}^{1-x_{m-1}} \int_{1-x_{m-1}}^{1-x_{m-2}} \ldots \int_{1-x_2}^{1-x_1} f(y_1,\ldots,y_m) dy_m \ldots dy_1.$$

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• Diagonalizing leads to boundary value problem:

$$\frac{\partial^{2m}f}{\partial^2 x_1 \dots \partial^2 x_m} = \frac{(-1)^m}{\lambda^2} f,$$

$$f \equiv 0 \quad \text{on:} \ x_1 = x_2, x_2 = x_3, \dots, x_{m-1} = x_m, x_m = 1,$$

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Solutions are

$$\begin{split} \phi_{k_1,...,k_m}(x_1,...,x_m) &= 2^{m/2} \det \left( \cos \left( \frac{\pi k_i x_j}{2} \right) \right)_{i,j=1,...,m}, \\ \lambda_{k_1,...,k_m} &= \frac{2^m (-1)^{\frac{1}{2} \sum (k_j-1)}}{\pi^m k_1 k_2 \dots k_m}, \end{split}$$

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where  $0 < k_1 < k_2 < \ldots < k_m$  are odd integers.

• Diagonalizing leads to boundary value problem:

$$\frac{\partial^{2m}f}{\partial^2 x_1 \dots \partial^2 x_m} = \frac{(-1)^m}{\lambda^2} f,$$
  

$$f \equiv 0 \quad \text{on:} \ x_1 = x_2, x_2 = x_3, \dots, x_{m-1} = x_m, x_m = 1,$$
  

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• In physicspeak: *m*-fermion systems

## Other slopes

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- One considers the "ribbon" shape



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$$J(g) = \int_0^1 \int_{-\infty}^\infty \left( \log\left(\frac{2}{\pi} \cos\left(\frac{\pi}{2} \frac{\partial g}{\partial u}\right)\right) - \log\frac{\partial g}{\partial t} \right) \frac{\partial g}{\partial t} \, du \, dt$$

subject to being a feasible growth profile for the shape  $\lambda$ .



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Thank you!