Taming unsummable series

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Quantum field theorists often resort to **perturbative** expansions in a reasonably small parameter. Yet these may have **no** radius of convergence. Summation of **sign-alternating** asymptotic series is sometimes achievable by a **Borel transform**, which may be improved by **Padé approximates**. I shall give an example that yields to these methods. The less tractable **sign-constant** case occurs in condensed matter problems. Here, **Michael Borinsky** and I have developed a **trans-series**. This is a formal expansion in powers of x, $\exp(-1/x)$ and $\log(x)$, with coefficients whose **asymptotic** growth is determined by further terms in the trans-series, and so on, *ad infinitum*. This is referred to as **resurgence**. [arXiv:2202.01513]

- 1. Two sources of **divergent series**
- 2. Dyson-Schwinger equation and asymptotic expansion
- 3. Padé-Borel summation with alternating signs
- 4. Trans-series and resurgent hyperasymptotic expansions

Wilhem Killing (with help from Wolfgang Hein at Siegen)

- 1. Born 10 May 1847, Burbach, near Siegen. Died 11 February 1923, Münster.
- 2. 1865–1867: studied at the Königlich Theologische und Philosophische Akademie in Münster.
- 3. 1867–1872 student of Helmholtz, Kummer and Weierstrass in Berlin.
- 4. Taught in Berlin 1873–1878, Brilon 1878–1882, Braunsberg 1882-1892.
- 5. 1892–1919 Professor at Royal Academy/WWU, Münster. Rektor 1897/8.
- 6. Einführung in die Grundlagen der Geometrie, 1. Bd. 1893, 2. Bd. 1898.
- 7. 1894: Élie Cartan, doctoral thesis, Sur la structure des groupes de transformations finis et continus: "Le présent travail a pour but d'exposer et de compléter en certains points les recherches de M. Killing, en y introduisant toute la rigueur desirable."

1 Two sources of divergent series

Too many diagrams: An example of a divergent perturbation expansion in field theory by Angas Hurst in 1951 considers the super-renormalizable case of ϕ^3 theory in D = 4 space-time dimensions. The number of primitive *n*-loop digrams increases factorially with *n*. Each diagram gives a **positive** integral over Feynman parameters, bounded from below **geometrically**.

A renormalon: On high order estimates in QED by Benny Lautrup in 1977 considers the magnetic moment of the electron. At n loops there is a single gauge-invariant diagram whose contribution grows factorially with n.

Imaginary coupling: Divergence of perturbation theory in quantum electrodynamics by Freeman **Dyson** in 1952 remarks that convergence in $\alpha = e^2/(4\pi)$, would make sense of a **non-unitary** theory with **imaginary** coupling giving $\alpha < 0$ and a nightmarish world in which electrons **repel** positrons.

Recent work: Instantons or renormalons? A comment on ϕ^4 theory in the MS scheme by Gerald **Dunne** and Max **Meynig** in 2022 uses recent perturbative results to investigate a suggestion by Gerard 't **Hooft** that renormalons do **not** contribute to **anomalous dimensions** in a **mimimal subtraction** scheme.

2 Dyson-Schwinger equation and asymptotic expansion

Consider the perturbation expansion generated by a single divergent diagram, via the **non-linear** Dyson-Schwinger equation

$$-\bigcirc - \bigcirc - + - \bigcirc + - \bigcirc - + - \bigcirc - \bigcirc + - \cdots$$

contributing to the **self-energy** term Σ in the inverse propagator $q^2(1 - \Sigma)$, for a **massless scalar** particle with a ϕ^3 interaction, in the **critical** space-time dimension D = 6, for which the coupling constant is **dimensionless**.

The dependence of Σ on the external momentum q comes solely from **renormalization**. At n loops, we get a contribution that is a **polynomial** of degree n in the logarithm $\log(q^2/\mu^2)$, multiplied by a^n where $a = \lambda^2/(4\pi)^3$, λ is the coupling constant and μ is the **renormalization scale**.

If we use **momentum-space subtraction**, so that Σ vanishes at $q^2 = \mu^2$, the dependence on momentum is completely determined by the **anomalous dimension**, with

$$\gamma(a) = -q^2 \frac{\mathrm{d}\Sigma}{\mathrm{d}q^2} \bigg|_{q^2 = \mu^2} \quad \text{giving} \quad \frac{\mathrm{d}\log(1-\Sigma)}{\mathrm{d}\log q^2} = \gamma\left(\frac{a}{(1-\Sigma)^2}\right).$$

How many *n*-loop Feynman diagrams for this problem?

The number of distinct diagrams at n loops is the number T_n of **rooted trees** with n nodes, which gives the sequence

1, 1, 2, 4, 9, 20, 48, 115, 286, 719, 1842, 4766, 12486, 32973, 87811, 235381,

up to 16 loops. The **iterated** structure: tree = root + branches, with every branch being itself a tree, gives the asymptotic growth

$$T_n = \frac{b}{n^{3/2}}c^n(1 + O(1/n))$$

 $b = 0.43992401257102530404090339143454476479808540794011\ldots$

 $c = 2.95576528565199497471481752412319458837549230466359\ldots$

At **250 loops** the number of Feynman diagrams is

T_250=517763755754613310897899496398412372256908589980657316 271041790137801884375338813698141647334732891545098109934676

This is **not** the main source of the problem. If the contribution of each diagram was bounded, there would be a **finite** radius of convergence for the perturbation expansion. The divergence of the series comes from **renormalization**, which makes the *n*-loop term grow **factorially**. This is called a **renormalon** singularity.

At 4 loops, we have a **rainbow**, a **chain** and two more interesting diagrams:



The sum of rainbows converges. Chains can be summed by Borel transformation.

$$\gamma_{\text{rainbow}} = \frac{3 - \sqrt{5 + 4\sqrt{1 + a}}}{2} = -\frac{a}{6} + 11\frac{a^2}{6^3} - 206\frac{a^3}{6^5} + 4711\frac{a^4}{6^7} + O(a^5)$$

$$\gamma_{\text{chain}} = -\int_0^\infty \frac{6\exp(-6z/a)dz}{(z+1)(z+2)(z+3)} = -\frac{a}{6} + 11\frac{a^2}{6^3} - 170\frac{a^3}{6^5} + 3450\frac{a^4}{6^7} + O(a^5)$$

$$\gamma \sim \sum_{n>0} G_n\frac{(-a)^n}{6^{2n-1}} = -\frac{a}{6} + 11\frac{a^2}{6^3} - 376\frac{a^3}{6^5} + 20241\frac{a^4}{6^7} + O(a^5)$$

with large integers G_n in the alternating asymptotic series for γ . Note that $G_4 = 20241 > 4711 + 3450$, because of two further diagrams, above. In one we have a chain inside a double rainbow. In the other, a double rainbow is chained with the primitive divergence. This interplay is coded by **rooted trees**.

At 500 loops I determined the integer coefficient

G500=206261451966080541451119356265266407905816117576895601520616328670543304097 08694985337972553885925402003826420205441859988844001867088083850782378303677991

with 1675 decimal digits. The number of diagrams has merely 231 digits.

This was achieved in work with **Dirk Kreimer** that resulted in a **third-order** differential equation

$$8a^{3}\gamma \left\{ \gamma^{2}\gamma''' + 4\gamma\gamma'\gamma'' + (\gamma')^{3} \right\} + 4a^{2}\gamma \left\{ 2\gamma(\gamma - 3)\gamma'' + (\gamma - 6)(\gamma')^{2} \right\} + 2a\gamma(2\gamma^{2} + 6\gamma + 11)\gamma' - \gamma(\gamma + 1)(\gamma + 2)(\gamma + 3) = a$$

with **quartic** non-linearity.

Our interest in this problem came from his discovery of the **Hopf algebra** of the iterated subtraction of subdivergences, whose utility we illustrated in this example, with a single primitive divergence leading to **undecorated** rooted trees.

For the corresponding diagrams in Yukawa theory, in its critical dimension D = 4, we found a first-order equation with merely quadratic non-linearity, which we solved using the complementary error function, thereby achieving explicit all-orders results for both the anomalous dimension and the self energy. The expansion coefficients in this simpler case enumerate connected cord diagrams.

We also investigated the D = 4 and D = 6 examples in the more cumbersome **minimal subtraction** scheme, where one retains finite parts of Σ at $q^2 = \mu^2$. Here one encounters unwieldy products of **zeta values** with weights that increase linearly with the loop-number. Recently **Paul-Hermann Balduf** has shown how to absorb these into a rescaling of μ that can be expanded in the coupling a.

3 Padé-Borel summation with alternating signs

We sought to resum the factorially divergent alternating series by an Ansatz

$$\gamma(a) = -\frac{a}{6\Gamma(\beta)} \int_0^\infty B(ax/3) \exp(-x) x^{\beta-1} \mathrm{d}x, \quad B(z) = \frac{N(z)}{D(z)}.$$

The expansion coefficients of the **Borel transform** B(z) = 1 + O(z) are obtained from those those of $\gamma(a)/a$ by dividing the latter by factorially increasing factors, producing a function expected to have a **finite** radius of convergence in the Borel variable z, with singularities on the **negative** z-axis, as for the sum of chains.

The **Padé** trick is to convert the expansion of B, up to n loops, into a **ratio** N/D of polynomials of degrees close to n/2. Then one can **check** how well this method reproduces G_{n+1} . We found that this works rather well with $\beta \approx 3$.

We fitted the first 29 values of G_n with a ratio of polynomials of degree 14 and found a pole, coming from the denominator D(z), at z = -0.994. The other 13 poles occurred further to the left, with $\Re z < -1$. This method reproduced the first 15 decimal digits of G_{30} . Gerald Dunne has recently shown that this method works even **better** with $\beta = 35/12$, for reasons that I shall now explain.

4 Trans-series and resurgent hyperasymptotics

There is an old and rather loose argument, going back to **Freeman Dyson** in 1952, that we should **not expect** realistic field theories to give convergent expansions in the **square** of a coupling constant. If they did, we could get sensible answers for a pathological non-unitary theory with an **imaginary** coupling constant, such as an electrodynamics in which electrons repel positrons.

There is an amusing **converse** of this suggestion. If you find an expansion that is Borel summable, then study it at **imaginary coupling**, where ϕ^3 theory gives the **Yang-Lee edge singularity** in condensed matter physics, using PT symmetry.

So now I recast the Broadhurst-Kreimer problem, in the manner of Borinksy, Dunne and Meynig, by setting $g(x) = \gamma(-3x)/x$, to obtain an ODE that is economically written as

$$(g(x)P-1)(g(x)P-2)(g(x)P-3)g(x) = -3, \quad P = x\left(2x\frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}x}+1\right),$$

and has an **unsummable** formal perturbative solution

$$g_0(x) \sim \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} A_n x^n = \frac{1}{2} + \frac{11}{24}x + \frac{47}{36}x^2 + \frac{2249}{384}x^3 + \frac{356789}{10368}x^4 + \frac{60819625}{248832}x^5 + O(x^6).$$

The expansion coefficients behave as

$$A_n = S_1 \Gamma \left(n + \frac{35}{12} \right) \left(1 - \frac{97}{48} \left(\frac{1}{n} \right) + O \left(\frac{1}{n^2} \right) \right),$$

at large n, with a **Stokes constant**

$S_1 = 0.087595552909179124483795447421262990627388017406822\dots$

that can be determined, empirically, by considering a solution

$$g(x) = g_0(x) + \sigma_1 x^{-\beta} \exp(-1/x) h_1(x) + O(\sigma_1^2)$$

and retaining terms linear in σ_1 in the ODE. This yields a **linear homogeneous** ODE for $h_1(x)$, which permits a solution that is **finite and regular** at x = 0 if and **only if** $\beta = \frac{35}{12}$. Normalizing σ_1 by setting $h_1(0) = -1$, we obtain the expansion of

$$h_1(x) \sim \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} B_k x^k = -1 + \frac{97}{48}x + \frac{53917}{13824}x^2 + \frac{3026443}{221184}x^3 + \frac{32035763261}{382205952}x^4 + O(x^5)$$

which gives the **first-instanton** correction to the perturbative solution, suppressed by $\exp(-1/x)$.

By developing the series A_n and B_k , I was able to determine **3000 digits** of S_1 in

$$A_n \sim -S_1 \sum_{k \ge 0} \Gamma\left(n + \frac{35}{12} - k\right) B_k.$$

This is an example of **resurgence**: information about A_n resurges in B_k , and vice versa, because both $A(x) = g_0(x)$ and $B(x) = h_1(x)$ know about the **same** physics.

Hyperasymptotic expansions involve the study of how B_n behaves at large n, which involves another set of numbers C_k , at small k, and so on, and so on.

Large A's need smaller B's, especially to guide them, and larger B's need smaller C's, and so ad infinitum.

Hyperasymptotic investigation involves terms suppressed by $\exp(-m/x)$, with action m > 1. For this third-order ODE, there are 3 solutions to the linearized problem, namely

$$g(x) = g_0(x) + \sigma_m \left(x^{-\frac{35}{12}} e^{-\frac{1}{x}} \right)^m h_m(x) + O(\sigma_m^2), \quad m \in \{1, 2, 3\},$$

with $h_2/x^5 = C$ and $h_3/x^5 = D$ finite and regular near the origin.

Then we use the linearized ODE to develop the expansions

$$C(x) = h_2(x)/x^5 = -1 + \frac{151}{24}x - \frac{63727}{3456}x^2 + \frac{7112963}{82944}x^3 - \frac{7975908763x}{23887872}x^4 + O(x^5),$$

$$D(x) = h_3(x)/x^5 = -1 + \frac{227}{48}x + \frac{1399}{4608}x^2 + \frac{814211}{73728}x^3 + \frac{3444654437}{42467328}x^4 + O(x^5).$$

Before presenting the trans-series, I remark on some of its general features.

- 1. The terms suppressed by $\exp(-2/x)$ involve σ_2 and σ_1^2 . The former are given by C and the latter are determined by an **inhomogeneous** linear ODE, whose solution is **ambiguous**, up to a multiple of the homogeneous solution $h_2 = x^5 C$, since we can **shift** σ_2 by a multiple of σ_1^2 .
- 2. In the terms suppressed by $\exp(-3/x)$ there a **second ambiguity**, since we can shift σ_3 by a multiple of σ_1^3 .
- 3. Ambiguities of inhomogeneous solutions occur at places in expansions where **logarithms** first arise. This happens when the **power** of x in an expansion is a multiple of **5**.
- 4. The highest power of $\log(x)$, in terms with action m, is $\lfloor m/2 \rfloor$.

The terms in the **trans-series** with action $m \leq 4$ are of the form

$$g = \sum_{m \ge 0} g_m \left(x^{-\frac{35}{12}} e^{-\frac{1}{x}} \right)^m, \quad L = \frac{21265}{2304} x^5 \log(x),$$

$$g_0 = A, \quad g_1 = \sigma_1 B, \quad g_2 = \sigma_2 x^5 C + \sigma_1^2 (F + CL),$$

$$g_3 = \sigma_3 x^5 D + \sigma_1 \sigma_2 x^5 E + \sigma_1^3 (I + (D + E)L),$$

$$g_4 = \sigma_1 \sigma_3 x^5 G + \sigma_2^2 x^{10} H + \sigma_1^2 \sigma_2 x^5 (J + 2HL) + \sigma_1^4 (K + (G + J)L + HL^2).$$

Denoting the coefficients of x^n in functions by subscripts, we found that the choices

$$\frac{F_5}{2!} = \frac{I_5}{3!} = \frac{32642693907919}{36691771392}$$

greatly simplify of our system of hyperasymptotic expansions. Then

$$B_n \sim -2S_1 \sum_{k \ge 0} F_k \Gamma(n + \frac{35}{12} - k) + 4S_1 \sum_{k \ge 0} C_k \Gamma(n - \frac{25}{12} - k) \left(\frac{21265}{4608} \psi(n - \frac{25}{12} - k) + d_1\right),$$

 $d_1 = -43.332634728250755924500717390319380703460728022278\dots$

with $\psi(z) = \Gamma'(z)/\Gamma(z) = \log(z) + O(1/z)$, shows the m = 1 term, at large n, looking forward to m = 2 terms, at small k.

For the asymptotic expansion of the **second-instanton** coefficients, we found

$$C_n \sim -S_1 \sum_{k \ge 0} E_k \Gamma(n + \frac{35}{12} - k) + S_3 \sum_{k \ge 0} B_k(-1)^{n-k} \Gamma(n + \frac{25}{12} - k).$$

The first sum looks forwards to m = 3 in the trans-series, where coefficients of

$$E(x) = -4 + \frac{371}{12}x - \frac{111785}{1152}x^2 + \frac{8206067}{18432}x^3 - \frac{18251431003}{10616832}x^4 + O(x^5)$$

appear. It does not contain the coefficients D_k of the third instanton, which decouples from the asymptotic expansion for the second instanton.

The second sum has **alternating** signs, looks **backwards** to m = 1 and is **suppressed** by a factor of $1/n^{5/6}$. This can be understood using **alien calculus**. Likewise,

$$F_n \sim -3S_1 \sum_{k \ge 0} I_k \Gamma(n + \frac{35}{12} - k)$$

+ $2S_1 \sum_{k \ge 0} (3D_k + 2E_k) \Gamma(n - \frac{25}{12} - k) \left(\frac{21265}{4608}\psi(n - \frac{25}{12} - k) + d_1\right)$
- $2S_3 \sum_{k \ge 0} B_k (-1)^{n-k} \Gamma(n - \frac{35}{12} - k) \left(\frac{21265}{4608}\psi(n - \frac{35}{12} - k) + f_1\right)$

looks forwards to I_k , D_k and E_k , at m = 3, and backwards to B_k at, m = 1.

The new constants are

$$\begin{split} S_3 &= 2.1717853140590990211608601227903892302479464193027\ldots \\ f_1 &= -40.903692509228515003814479126901354785263669553014\ldots \end{split}$$

Two more were discovered in the backward looking terms of

$$\begin{split} I_n &\sim -4S_1 \sum_{k \ge 0} K_k \Gamma(n + \frac{35}{12} - k) \\ &+ 2S_1 \sum_{k \ge 0} (3G_k + 2J_k) \Gamma(n - \frac{25}{12} - k) \left(\frac{21265}{4608} \psi(n - \frac{25}{12} - k) + d_1\right) \\ &- 4S_3 \sum_{k \ge 0} F_k(-1)^{n-k} \Gamma(n - \frac{35}{12} - k) \left(\frac{21265}{4608} \psi(n - \frac{35}{12} - k) + f_1\right) \\ &- 8S_3 \sum_{k \ge 0} C_k(-1)^{n-k} \Gamma(n - \frac{95}{12} - k) Q(n - \frac{95}{12} - k), \\ Q(z) &= \left(\frac{21265}{4608}\right)^2 \left(\psi^2(z) + \psi'(z)\right) + 2c_1 \left(\frac{21265}{4608}\right) \psi(z) + c_2, \\ c_1 &= -41.031956764302710583921068101545509453704897898188 \dots \\ c_2/c_1^2 &= 1.0002016472131992595822805380838324188011572304276 \dots \end{split}$$

We believe that **6 constants suffice** for the complete description of resurgence.

Conjecture: The **trans-series** and its **resurgence** take the forms $\frac{|m/2| + (m-2i)/3|}{|m/2| + (m-2i)/3|}$

$$\begin{split} g(x) &= \sum_{m=0}^{\infty} \left(x^{-\frac{35}{12}} e^{-\frac{1}{x}} \right)^m \sum_{i=0}^{[m/2]} \sum_{j=0}^{\lfloor (m-2i)/3 \rfloor} \sigma_1^{m-2i-3j} \widehat{\sigma}_2^i \widehat{\sigma}_3^j x^{5(i+j)} \sum_{n\geq 0} a_{i,j}^{(m)}(n) x^n, \\ \widehat{\sigma}_2 &= \sigma_2 + \frac{21265}{2304} \sigma_1^2 \log(x), \quad \widehat{\sigma}_3 = \sigma_3 + \frac{21265}{2304} \sigma_1^3 \log(x), \\ a_{i,j}^{(m)}(n) &\sim -(s+1) S_1 \sum_{k\geq 0} a_{i,j}^{(m+1)}(k) \Gamma(n + \frac{35}{12} - k) \\ &+ S_1 \sum_{k\geq 0} \left(4(i+1) a_{i+1,j}^{(m+1)}(k) + 6(j+1) a_{i,j+1}^{(m+1)}(k) \right) \Gamma(n - \frac{25}{12} - k) \left(\frac{21265}{4608} \psi(n - \frac{25}{12} - k) + d_1 \right) \\ &+ \frac{1}{4} S_3 \sum_{k\geq 0} \left(4(s+1) a_{i-1,j}^{(m-1)}(k) + 6(j+1) a_{i-2,j+1}^{(m-1)}(k) \right) (-1)^{n-k} \Gamma(n + \frac{25}{12} - k) \\ &- 2(s-2i-1) S_3 \sum_{k\geq 0} a_{i,j}^{(m-1)}(k) (-1)^{n-k} \Gamma(n - \frac{35}{12} - k) \left(\frac{21265}{4608} \psi(n - \frac{35}{12} - k) + f_1 \right) \\ &- S_3 \sum_{k\geq 0} \left(8(i+1) a_{i+1,j}^{(m-1)}(k) + 6(j+1) a_{i,j+1}^{(m-1)}(k) \right) (-1)^{n-k} \Gamma(n - \frac{95}{12} - k) Q(n - \frac{95}{12} - k) \\ &- (f_1 - c_1) S_3 \sum_{k\geq 0} \left(2(i+1) a_{i+1,j-1}^{(m-1)}(k) + 6(i+j) a_{i,j}^{(m-1)}(k) \right) (-1)^{n-k} \Gamma(n - \frac{35}{12} - k), \\ &\text{ with } s = m - 2i - 3j \text{ and } Q(z) = \left(\frac{21265}{4608} \right)^2 \left(\psi^2(z) + \psi'(z) \right) + 2c_1 \left(\frac{21265}{4608} \psi(z) + c_2. \right) \end{split}$$

Comments and conclusions

- 1. The conjecture exhibits 17 resurgent terms, all of which have been intensively tested at high precision, for all actions $m \leq 8$.
- 2. The 6 Stokes constants have been determined to better than 1000 digits.
- 3. Excellent **freeware**, from **Pari-GP** in Bordeaux, was vital to this enterprise.
- 4. First and second **derivatives** of Γ and **suppressions** by $1/n^{5/6}$ make Richardson acceleration infeasible. I used systematic **matrix inversion**.
- 5. The presence of **logarithms** in trans-series has been ascribed to **resonant actions**. Michael Borinsky and I find this **misleading**. We showed that a closely analogous **second-order** problem is both resonant and **log-free**.
- 6. We have been guided by helpful advice from **Gerald Dunne** and encouraged by the programme and workshops on *Applicable Resurgent Asymptotics* hosted by the **Isaac Newton Institute** in Cambridge.
- 7. For physicists who wonder, as I did, why one might consider **imaginary** coupling, I remark that the idea goes back 70 years, to **Freeman Dyson**, who was a notable inquirer into both mathematics and quantum field theory.