

# Contents

Preface	xiii
Lecture 1. Introduction	1
1.1. Simple Lie algebras and Lie groups and their generalizations	1
1.2. Affine Lie algebras	1
1.3. Quantum groups	3
1.4. Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equations	6
1.5. Quantum affine algebras and quantum Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equations	8
1.6. Further generalizations of affine Lie algebras and quantum groups.	11
1.7. Contents of the book	12
Lecture 2. Representations of finite-dimensional and affine Lie algebras	15
2.1. Simple Lie algebras	15
2.2. Cartan matrices of simple Lie algebras	16
2.3. Highest-weight modules over simple Lie algebras and contravariant forms	17
2.4. Finite-dimensional representations and irreducibility of Verma modules	18
2.5. The maximal root, the Coxeter numbers, and the Casimir operator	19
2.6. Affine Lie algebras	20
2.7. Verma modules and Weyl modules for affine Lie algebras	22
2.8. Integrable representations of affine Lie algebras	24
2.9. The Virasoro algebra and its action on $\hat{\mathfrak{g}}$ -modules	25
2.10. Generating functions and currents	26
Lecture 3. Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equations	29
3.1. Classification of intertwining operators	29
3.2. Operator KZ equation	30
3.3. Gauge invariance of the intertwining operators	33
3.4. KZ equations for correlation functions	33
3.5. Consistency and $\mathfrak{g}$ -invariance of the KZ equations	36
3.6. Analyticity of the correlation functions	37
3.7. Correlation functions span the space of solutions of the KZ equations	39
3.8. Trigonometric form of the KZ equations	42
3.9. Consistent systems of differential equations and the classical Yang-Baxter equation	44

Lecture 4. Solutions of the Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equations	49
4.1. The simplest solution of the KZ equations for $\mathfrak{g} = \mathfrak{sl}_2$	49
4.2. Simplest level one solution and Gauss hypergeometric function	51
4.3. Integral formulas for level one solutions	53
4.4. Solutions of the KZ equations for $\mathfrak{sl}_2$ : arbitrary level	56
4.5. Solutions of the KZ equations for a general simple Lie algebra	60
Lecture 5. Free field realization	63
5.1. Fock modules and vertex operators	63
5.2. Matrix elements of products of vertex operators	66
5.3. Interpretation of the rational part of solutions of the KZ equations in terms of creation and annihilation operators.	67
5.4. Factorization of solutions of the KZ equations	69
5.5. Free field realization of Verma modules over $\widehat{\mathfrak{sl}}_2$	69
5.6. Intertwining operators in the free field realization: level zero	73
5.7. Intertwining operators in the free field realization: positive level	75
5.8. Calculation of the correlation functions	77
Lecture 6. Quantum groups	79
6.1. Hopf algebras and their representations	79
6.2. Definition of quantum groups	81
6.3. Quasitriangular structure and braided tensor categories	84
6.4. Quantum Yang-Baxter equation and representations of braid groups	87
6.5. Quantum double construction	88
6.6. Quantum double construction for $\mathcal{U}_q(\mathfrak{g}_e)$	89
6.7. Quantum Casimir element	92
6.8. Intertwining operators and their commutation relations	93
Lecture 7. Local systems and configuration spaces	97
7.1. Local systems	97
7.2. Cohomology and homology with coefficients in local systems	99
7.3. Configuration spaces and Orlik-Solomon algebra	101
7.4. Cohomology of configuration spaces with coefficients in local sys- tems associated with the KZ equations for $\mathfrak{sl}_2$	103
7.5. Gauss-Manin connection	105
7.6. Relative homology	106
7.7. The case of arbitrary $\mathfrak{g}$	110
Lecture 8. Monodromy of Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equations	113
8.1. Monodromy of KZ equations and the braid group	113
8.2. Asymptotics of solutions of the KZ equations	115
8.3. Asymptotics of the correlation functions	118
8.4. Monodromy with respect to an infinite base point	119
8.5. Commutation relations for intertwining operators	122
8.6. Equivalence of categories and Drinfeld-Kohno theorem	124
8.7. Geometric approach to equivalence of categories	127
Lecture 9. Quantum affine algebras	131
9.1. Definition of quantum affine algebras	131
9.2. Evaluation representations of quantum affine algebras	132

9.3. Intertwining operators	135
9.4. Quasitriangular structure in quantum affine algebras	136
9.5. Factorization of the $R$ -matrix	137
9.6. Evaluation representations and $R$ -matrix for $U_q(\widehat{\mathfrak{sl}}_2)$	139
9.7. Quantum currents	144
9.8. Quantum Sugawara construction in degree zero	145
Lecture 10. Quantum Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equations	147
10.1. Operator quantum KZ equation	147
10.2. Quantum correlation functions	150
10.3. Quantum KZ equations for correlation functions	151
10.4. A fundamental set of solutions of the quantum KZ equations	151
10.5. Holonomic systems of difference equations	152
10.6. Analyticity of the fundamental solution of the quantum KZ equations	153
10.7. The noncommutative product formula for the fundamental solution	155
10.8. Classical limit of the quantum KZ equations	155
10.9. Modified quantum KZ equations	156
10.10. Another proof of the quantum KZ equations	157
Lecture 11. Solutions of the quantum Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equations for $\mathfrak{sl}_2$	161
11.1. $q$ -analogues of classical special functions	161
11.2. Jackson integral	163
11.3. The $q$ -hypergeometric function	164
11.4. Some second order difference equations	165
11.5. The simplest solutions of the quantum KZ equations and the $q$ -hypergeometric function	166
11.6. Integral formulas for solutions	168
Lecture 12. Connection matrices for the quantum Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equations and elliptic functions	171
12.1. Linear difference equations for functions of one complex variable	171
12.2. Connection relation for the $q$ -hypergeometric equation	174
12.3. The connection matrix for the quantum KZ equations in the simplest case	175
12.4. The connection matrix and the exchange matrix for intertwining operators	176
Lecture 13. Current developments and future perspectives	179
13.1. KZ equations: quantum versus classical	179
13.2. Monodromy of the KZ equations, tensor categories, and quantum groups	180
13.3. Vertex operator algebras, conformal field theory and their $q$ -deformations	182
13.4. Elliptic KZ equations and special values of the central charge	185
13.5. Double loop algebras and quantum affine algebras	186
13.6. Quantum KZ equations and physical models	187
References	189
Index	197

## Preface

The last twenty years have seen an especially active interaction between mathematics and physics. This interaction has given birth to a number of remarkable new areas of mathematics and has provided powerful new tools in various fields of theoretical physics. This book is devoted to one of those new areas, which deals with mathematical structures of conformal field theory and their  $q$ -deformations. It arose from the course of lectures on the classical and quantum Knizhnik-Zamolodchikov equations, given by one of the authors of this book (I. B. F.) in the Spring of 1992 at Yale University, and inspired by his recent (at that time) joint paper with Nicolai Reshetikhin. The instructor was lucky to find two enthusiastic graduate students and future co-authors, who improved and extended the exposition and later gave related courses at Harvard (P. I. E.) and MIT (A. A. K.).

By that time, all three of us had already been severely afflicted with the “ $q$ -disease”, a dangerous mathematical illness whose earliest victim was Euler, but which was first diagnosed by Richard Askey. Mathematicians working in practically every field, be it algebra, geometry, analysis, differential equations – you name it – are vulnerable to its addictive charm. The first symptom of the  $q$ -disease is that one day you realize that most of the results obtained or acquired during your mathematical life admit a  $q$ -deformation. The second stage is indicated by the idea that the  $q$ -case is much more interesting than the classical one. It was at that stage that we started writing the second part of the book, with the intention to  $q$ -deform all structures of conformal field theory. This turned out to be a difficult task, which has taken five years, and is still not completed. Luckily, during these years the area grew up quite significantly, and we were able to use some of the more recent results and refer the reader to active new developments and promising research problems.

When writing this book, we followed one of the rules we learned from Israel Gelfand: for every new theory, choose the simplest non-trivial example and write down everything explicitly for this example. Therefore, all general constructions and theorems are accompanied by explicit calculations for the Lie algebra  $\mathfrak{sl}_2$ .

We also wanted to put this new area of mathematics into the general perspective of development of representation theory. With this intention we wrote the first and the last lecture, trying to help the reader navigate in the mist of modern representation theory and mathematical physics. The bare scheme of the development of the theory is captured by the diagram at the end of Section 1.6 in the Introduction. Familiar to many mathematicians working in the area, it is closer to alchemical formulas than to mathematics. Nevertheless, it was instrumental in the discovery of some of the structures studied in this book, and it might still be useful again.

This book is written for people who are familiar with the representation theory of simple Lie algebras, but requires no knowledge of physics. It can be used for teaching an advanced one-semester graduate course, though the instructor and the

students should work really hard, as it was in the Spring of 1992 at Yale. The number of lectures exactly corresponds to the number of weeks in one semester at Yale University. Each lecture is assumed to take two and a half hours and can be split into two or three weekly classes depending on the strength and enthusiasm of the participants. Our experience shows that the golden mean is always the best solution. Also the first and the last lectures should not be taken as seriously (for some people as lightly) as the rest of the book, giving the students and the instructor an opportunity to relax.

This theory was created by the efforts of many people, and some results were circulating as “folklore” for a number of years. We tried to give the references in the first lecture and especially in the introduction to each of the consecutive lectures, but we would like to apologize in advance for unintentional omissions.

One of the main purposes of this book was to simplify, extend and provide all the necessary details of the results in the original article [FR]. We hope that in our present exposition we have corrected more misprints and inaccuracies in that paper than we have added new ones.

The credit for the eventual existence of this book rightfully belongs to our editor, Sergei Gelfand, who achieved a seemingly impossible goal of persuading the authors – after a five year delay – to bring this book to a conclusion.

We are grateful for fruitful discussions and useful comments to many people, including M. Finkelberg, D. Kazhdan, A. Matsuo, N. Reshetikhin, O. Schiffman, K. Styrkas, A. Varchenko. We thank the National Science Foundation for partial support of this project, and the American Mathematical Society for its final materialization.