### Continuum limits of integrable lattice equations

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1 Introduction: integrability and commuting flows

# Liouville-Arnold integrability

A Hamiltonian system with Hamilton function  $H : \mathbb{R}^{2N} \to \mathbb{R}$  is Liouville-Arnold integrable if there exist N functionally independent Hamilton functions  $H = H_1, H_2, \ldots, H_N$  such that  $\{H_i, H_j\} = 0$ .

- each  $H_i$  is a conserved quantity for all flows.
- the flows commute:

The equations  $\frac{d}{dt_i}z = \{H_i, z\}$  have simultaneous solutions  $z(t_1, \ldots, t_N)$ .

Solutions defined on multi-time  $\mathbb{R}^N$  with coordinates  $(t_1, \ldots, t_N)$ .

# Integrable PDEs

Infinite degrees of freedom

 $\rightarrow$  infinite hierarchy of commuting flows required for integrability.

Often constructed by a recursion operator, which in turn is often obtained form a bi-Hamiltonian structure.

### Discrete counterpart of commuting flows

• Commuting maps 
$$F_i: Q \to Q$$
,

$$F_i \circ F_j = F_j \circ F_i$$

Often, the  $F_i$  only differ by a parameter:

$$F_i(z) = G(z, \lambda_i)$$

Multidimensional consistency:

There exists simultaneous solutions  $z : \mathbb{N}^N \to Q$  to

$$z(k_1,\ldots,k_j+1,\ldots,k_N)=F_j(z(k_1,\ldots,k_j,\ldots,k_N))$$

The parameters  $\lambda_i$  can be associated to the directions of the lattice  $\mathbb{N}^N$ 

### Integrable quad equations

 $\mathcal{Q}(U, U_1, U_2, U_{12}, \lambda_1, \lambda_2) = 0$ 

Subscripts of U denote lattice shifts,  $\lambda_1,\lambda_2$  are parameters.

Invariant under symmetries of the square, affine in each of  $U, U_1, U_2, U_{12}$ .

Integrability for systems quad equations: Multi-dimensional consistency of

 $\mathcal{Q}(U, U_i, U_j, U_{ij}, \lambda_i, \lambda_j) = 0,$ 

i.e. the three ways of calculating  $U_{\rm 123}$  give the same result.

Classification (under some extra assumptions) by Adler, Bobenko and Suris (ABS List).

Example: lattice potential KdV:  $(U - U_{12})(U_1 - U_2) - \lambda_1 + \lambda_2 = 0$ 



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# Continuum limits

Naive continuum limits often destroy the dynamics

# Continuum limits

#### Naive continuum limits often destroy the dynamics

### Magic ingredient 1: Miwa shifts

Skew embedding of the mesh  $\mathbb{Z}^N$  into multi-time  $\mathbb{R}^N$ Discrete U is a sampling of the continuous u:

$$U = U(\mathbf{n}) = u(t_1, t_2, \dots, t_N),$$
  

$$U_i = U(\mathbf{n} + \boldsymbol{\epsilon}_i) = u\left(t_1 - 2\lambda_i, t_2 + 2\frac{\lambda_i^2}{2}, \dots, t_N + 2(-1)^N \frac{\lambda_i^N}{N}\right)$$

[Miwa. On Hirota's difference equations. Proceedings of the Japan Academy A. 1982]

#### Example: IpKdV

$$(U - U_{12})(U_2 - U_1) = \lambda_1^2 - \lambda_2^2$$
  

$$\Rightarrow 4(\lambda_1 + \lambda_2)u_{t_1}(\lambda_1 - \lambda_2)u_{t_1} + \mathcal{O}(\lambda_i^3) = \lambda_1^2 - \lambda_2^2$$
  

$$\Rightarrow u_{t_1}^2 = \frac{1}{4} \qquad \qquad \rightarrow \text{ODE in } t_1 \text{ instead of PDE}$$

## Continuum limit of H1 (lattice potential KdV)

### Magic ingredient 2: a smart transformation

In the case of lpKdV, the transformation  $U(m, n) \mapsto U(m, n) + m\lambda_1 + n\lambda_2$ , followed by  $\lambda_i \mapsto \lambda_i^{-1}$  yields

$$\left(rac{1}{\lambda_1}+rac{1}{\lambda_2}+\mathit{U}_{1,2}-\mathit{U}
ight)\left(rac{1}{\lambda_2}-rac{1}{\lambda_1}+\mathit{U}_2-\mathit{U}_1
ight)=rac{1}{\lambda_2^2}-rac{1}{\lambda_1^2}$$

We get cancellation of leading order terms in  $\lambda_1,\,\lambda_2$  of this equation when using the Miwa shifts

$$U_i = U(\mathbf{n} + \mathbf{e}_i) = u\left(t_1 - 2\lambda_i, t_2 + 2\frac{\lambda_i^2}{2}, \dots, t_n + 2(-1)^n \frac{\lambda_i^N}{N}\right).$$

 $\Rightarrow$  The first nonvanishing term involves derivatives w.r.t.  $t_2$  as well as  $t_1$ .  $\Rightarrow$  We get PDEs

Commutativity of the PDEs follows from multidimensional consistency of the quad equation.

# Continuum limit of H1 (lattice potential KdV)

Series expansion

$${f Q} {f u}$$
ad Equation  $o \sum_{i,j} {4\over ij} \, f_{i,j}[u] \, \lambda_1^i \lambda_2^j = 0,$ 

where  $f_{j,i} = -f_{i,j}$  and the factor  $\frac{4}{ij}$  is chosen to normalize the  $f_{0,j}$ .

First row of coefficients:

.

$$\begin{split} f_{0,1} &= -u_{t_2}, \\ f_{0,2} &= -3u_{t_1}^2 - u_{t_1t_1t_1} - \frac{3}{2}u_{t_1t_2} + u_{t_3}, \\ f_{0,3} &= 8u_{t_1}u_{t_1t_1} + 4u_{t_1}u_{t_2} + \frac{4}{3}u_{t_1t_1t_1t_1} - \frac{4}{3}u_{t_1t_3} - u_{t_2t_2} - u_{t_4}, \\ f_{0,4} &= -5u_{t_1t_1}^2 - \frac{20}{3}u_{t_1}u_{t_1t_1t_1} + 10u_{t_1}u_{t_1t_2} + 5u_{t_1t_1}u_{t_2} - \frac{5}{4}u_{t_2}^2 - \frac{10}{3}u_{t_1}u_{t_3} \\ &- u_{t_1t_1t_1t_1t_1} + \frac{5}{3}u_{t_1t_1t_1t_2} + \frac{5}{4}u_{t_1t_2t_2} - \frac{5}{4}u_{t_1t_4} - \frac{5}{3}u_{t_2t_3} + u_{t_5}, \end{split}$$

### Continuum limit of H1 (lattice potential KdV)

Setting each  $f_{ij}$  equal to zero, we find

$$u_{t_2} = 0,$$
  

$$u_{t_3} = 3u_{t_1}^2 + u_{t_1t_1t_1}$$
  

$$u_{t_4} = 0,$$
  

$$u_{t_5} = 10u_{t_1}^3 + 5u_{t_1t_1}^2 + 10u_{t_1}u_{t_1t_1t_1} + u_{t_1t_1t_1t_1},$$
  
...

 $\hookrightarrow \mathsf{pKdV} \text{ hierarchy}$ 

Whole hierarchy from single quad equation using Miwa correspondence

$$U_i = U(\mathbf{n} + \mathbf{e}_i) = u\left(t_1 - 2\lambda_i, t_2 + 2\frac{\lambda_i^2}{2}, \dots, t_n + 2(-1)^n \frac{\lambda_i^N}{N}\right)$$

Multidimensional consistency  $\leftrightarrow$  commuting PDEs

[Equivalent continuum limit for lpKdV already by Wiersma and Capel in 1987]

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# Variational analogue of $\{H_i, H_j\} = 0$

Integrable systems come in families: finite (for ODEs) or infinite (for PDEs) hierarchies of commuting equations.

In addition, on the Hamiltonian side, integrability is characterized by  $\{H_i, H_j\} = 0.$ 

What about the Lagrangian side?

# Variational analogue of $\{H_i, H_j\} = 0$

Integrable systems come in families: finite (for ODEs) or infinite (for PDEs) hierarchies of commuting equations.

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What about the Lagrangian side?

Pluri-Lagrangian principle / Lagrangian multiform principle

Combine the Lagrange functions  $L_i[u]$  into a Lagrangian 1-form

$$\mathcal{L}[u] = \sum_{i} L_{i}[u] \,\mathrm{d}t_{i}.$$

Look for dynamical variables  $u(t_1, \ldots, t_N)$  such that the action

$$S_{\Gamma} = \int_{\Gamma} \mathcal{L}[u]$$

is critical w.r.t. variations of u, simultaneously over every curve  $\Gamma$  in multi-time  $\mathbb{R}^N$ 

# Multi-time Euler-Lagrange equations

Consider a Lagrangian one-form  $\mathcal{L} = \sum_{i} L_{i}[u] dt_{i}$ 

#### Lemma

If the action  $\int_{S} \mathcal{L}$  is critical on all stepped curves S in  $\mathbb{R}^{N}$ , then it is critical on all smooth curves.

Variations are local, so it is sufficient to look at a general L-shaped curve  $S = S_i \cup S_j$ .



Multi-time Euler-Lagrange equations

$$\begin{split} \delta \int_{\mathcal{S}_{i}} L_{i} \, \mathrm{d}t_{i} &= \int_{\mathcal{S}_{i}} \sum_{I} \frac{\partial L_{i}}{\partial u_{I}} \delta u_{I} \, \mathrm{d}t_{i} \\ &= \int_{\mathcal{S}_{i}} \sum_{I \not\ni t_{i}} \sum_{\alpha = 0}^{\infty} \frac{\partial L_{i}}{\partial u_{It_{i}^{\alpha}}} \delta u_{It_{i}^{\alpha}} \, \mathrm{d}t_{i} \\ &= \int_{\mathcal{S}_{i}} \sum_{I \not\ni t_{i}} \frac{\delta_{i} L_{i}}{\delta u_{I}} \delta u_{I} \, \mathrm{d}t_{i} + \sum_{I} \frac{\delta_{i} L_{i}}{\delta u_{It_{i}}} \delta u_{I} \Big|_{p}, \end{split} \qquad \underbrace{ \begin{array}{c} t_{j} \\ & \underbrace{S_{j}} \\ & \underbrace{S_{j}} \\ & \underbrace{S_{j}} \\ & \underbrace{S_{i}} \\ &$$

where I denotes a multi-index, and

$$\frac{\delta_i L_i}{\delta u_l} = \sum_{\alpha=0}^{\infty} (-1)^{\alpha} \frac{\mathrm{d}^{\alpha}}{\mathrm{d}t_i^{\alpha}} \frac{\partial L_i}{\partial u_{lt_i^{\alpha}}} = \frac{\partial L_i}{\partial u_l} - \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}t_i} \frac{\partial L_i}{\partial u_{lt_i}} + \frac{\mathrm{d}^2}{\mathrm{d}t_i^2} \frac{\partial L_i}{\partial u_{lt_i^2}} - \dots$$

Multi-time Euler-Lagrange equations for curves,  $\mathcal{L} = \sum_{i} L_{i}[u] dt_{i}$ 

$$\frac{\delta_i L_i}{\delta u_I} = 0 \qquad \forall I \not\ni t_i \qquad \text{and} \qquad \frac{\delta_i L_i}{\delta u_{It_i}} = \frac{\delta_j L_j}{\delta u_{It_j}} \qquad \forall I,$$

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### Example: Kepler Problem

The classical Lagrangian of a particle in the gravitational potential

$$L_1[q] = rac{1}{2} |q_{t_1}|^2 + rac{1}{|q|}$$

can be combined with

$$L_2[q] = q_{t_1} \cdot q_{t_2} + (q_{t_1} \times q) \cdot \mathbf{e},$$

(e a fixed vector) into a pluri-Lagrangian 1-form

 $L_1\,\mathrm{d} t_1+L_2\,\mathrm{d} t_2.$ 

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 $L_1\,\mathrm{d} t_1+L_2\,\mathrm{d} t_2.$ 

Multi-time Euler-Lagrange equations:

$$rac{\delta_1 L_1}{\delta q} = 0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad q_{t_1 t_1} = -rac{q}{|q|^3} \qquad (\text{Keplerian motion})$$
  
 $rac{\delta_2 L_2}{\delta q_{t_1}} = 0 \quad \Rightarrow \quad q_{t_2} = e \times q \qquad (\text{Rotation})$ 

# Pluri-Lagrangian principle for 2-dimensional PDEs

Given a 2-form

$$\mathcal{L} = \sum_{i,j} L_{ij}[u] \,\mathrm{d}t_i \wedge \mathrm{d}t_j,$$

find a field  $u : \mathbb{R}^N \to \mathbb{C}$ , such that  $\int_{\Gamma} \mathcal{L}$  is critical on all smooth 2-surfaces  $\Gamma$  in multi-time  $\mathbb{R}^N$ , w.r.t. variations of u.



Example: KdV hierarchy, where  $t_1 = x$  is the shared space coordinate,  $t_i$  time for *i*-th flow. (Details to follow.)

# Multi-time EL equations

Consider a Lagrangian 2-form  $\mathcal{L} = \sum_{i,j} L_{ij}[u] dt_i \wedge dt_j$ .

Every smooth surface can be approximated arbitrarily well by stepped surfaces. Hence it is sufficient to require criticality on stepped surfaces, or just on their elementary corners.





#### Where

$$\frac{\delta_{ij}L_{ij}}{\delta u_I} = \sum_{\alpha=0}^{\infty} \sum_{\beta=0}^{\infty} (-1)^{\alpha+\beta} \frac{\mathrm{d}^{\alpha}}{\mathrm{d}t_i^{\alpha}} \frac{\mathrm{d}^{\beta}}{\mathrm{d}t_j^{\beta}} \frac{\partial L_{ij}}{\partial u_{It_i^{\alpha}t_j^{\beta}}}$$

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### Example: Potential KdV hierarchy

Identify  $t_1 = x$  and consider the 2-form  $\sum_{i < j} L_{ij} dt_i \wedge dt_j$  with

$$\begin{split} \mathcal{L}_{12} &= \frac{1}{2} u_{x} u_{t_{2}} - \frac{1}{2} u_{x} u_{xxx} - u_{x}^{3}, \\ \mathcal{L}_{13} &= \frac{1}{2} u_{x} u_{t_{3}} - \frac{1}{2} u_{xxx}^{2} + 5 u_{x} u_{xx}^{2} - \frac{5}{2} u_{x}^{4}. \\ \mathcal{L}_{23} &= u_{x}^{5} - \frac{15}{2} u_{x}^{2} u_{xx}^{2} + 10 u_{x}^{3} u_{xxx} - 5 u_{x}^{3} u_{t_{2}} + \frac{7}{2} u_{xx}^{2} u_{xxx} + 3 u_{x} u_{xxx}^{2} \\ &- 6 u_{x} u_{xx} u_{xxxx} + \frac{3}{2} u_{x}^{2} u_{xxxx} + 10 u_{x} u_{xx} u_{xt_{2}} - \frac{5}{2} u_{xx}^{2} u_{t_{2}} - 5 u_{x} u_{xxx} u_{t_{2}} \\ &+ \frac{3}{2} u_{x}^{2} u_{t_{3}} - \frac{1}{2} u_{xxxx}^{2} + \frac{1}{2} u_{xxxx} u_{xxxx} - u_{xxx} u_{xxt_{2}} + \frac{1}{2} u_{x} u_{xxt_{3}} \\ &+ u_{xxxx} u_{xt_{2}} - \frac{1}{2} u_{xx} u_{xt_{3}} - \frac{1}{2} u_{xxxx} u_{t_{2}} + \frac{1}{2} u_{xxx} u_{t_{3}} \end{split}$$

### Example: Potential KdV hierarchy

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The classical EL equations yield

 $u_{xt_2} = \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}x}(3u_x^2 + u_{xxx})$  and  $u_{xt_3} = \frac{\mathrm{d}}{\mathrm{d}x}(10u_x^3 + 5u_{xx}^2 + 10u_xu_{xxx} + u_{xxxxx}).$ 

The multi-time EL equations yield

 $u_{t_2} = 3u_x^2 + u_{xxx}$  and  $u_{t_3} = 10u_x^3 + 5u_{xx}^2 + 10u_xu_{xxx} + u_{xxxxx}$ .

The pluri-Lagrangian structure produces evolutionary equations!

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# Pluri-Lagrangian structure for quad equations

For some discrete 2-form

$$\mathcal{L}(\Box_{ij}) = \mathcal{L}(U, U_i, U_j, U_{ij}, \lambda_i, \lambda_j),$$

the action  $\sum_{\Box \in \Gamma} \mathcal{L}(\Box)$  is critical on all 2-surfaces  $\Gamma$  in  $\mathbb{N}^N$  simultaneously.



To derive Euler-Lagrange equations: vary U at each point individually.  $\hookrightarrow$  It is sufficient to consider corners of an elementary cube.

[Lobb, Nijhoff. 2009]

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# Continuum limit of the Lagrangian for H1

### Lagrangian for (IpKdV)

$$\begin{split} L(\Box) &= \frac{1}{2} \left( U - U_{i,j} - \lambda_i^{-1} - \lambda_j^{-1} \right) \left( U_i - U_j + \lambda_i^{-1} - \lambda_j^{-1} \right) \\ &+ \left( \lambda_i^{-2} - \lambda_j^{-2} \right) \log \left( 1 + \frac{U_i - U_j}{\lambda_i^{-1} - \lambda_j^{-1}} \right). \end{split}$$

A well-chosen representative among many equivalent Lagrangians.

Continuum limit procedure:

Miwa correspondence:

$$U = U(\mathbf{n}) = u(t_1, t_2, \dots, t_n),$$
  

$$U_i = U(\mathbf{n} + \mathbf{e}_i) = u\left(t_1 - 2\lambda_i, t_2 + 2\frac{\lambda_i^2}{2}, \dots, t_n + 2(-1)^n \frac{\lambda_i^N}{N}\right)$$

- Series expansion
- Euler-Maclaurin formula

Coefficients (after some post-limit simplifications)

$$\begin{split} \mathcal{L}_{1,2} &= \frac{1}{2} u_1 u_2 & \mathcal{L}_{1,3} = -u_1^3 + \frac{1}{2} u_{11}^2 + \frac{1}{2} u_1 u_3 \\ \mathcal{L}_{1,4} &= \frac{1}{2} u_1 u_4 & \mathcal{L}_{1,5} = -\frac{5}{2} u_1^4 + 5 u_1 u_{11}^2 - \frac{1}{2} u_{111}^2 + \frac{1}{2} u_1 u_5 \\ \mathcal{L}_{2,3} &= -3 u_1^2 u_2 + u_{11} u_{12} - u_{111} u_2 + \frac{1}{2} u_2 u_3 \\ \mathcal{L}_{2,4} &= \frac{1}{2} u_2 u_4 \\ \mathcal{L}_{2,5} &= -10 u_1^3 u_2 + 10 u_1 u_{11} u_{12} - 5 u_{11}^2 u_2 - 10 u_1 u_{111} u_2 - u_{111} u_{112} + \frac{1}{2} u_2 u_5 \\ \mathcal{L}_{3,4} &= -u_{11} u_{14} + \frac{1}{2} u_3 u_4 \\ \mathcal{L}_{3,5} &= 18 u_1^5 + 30 u_1^3 u_{111} - 10 u_1^3 u_3 + 6 u_{11}^2 u_{111} + 8 u_1 u_{111}^2 - 6 u_1 u_{11} u_{111} + \frac{1}{2} u_3 u_4 \\ \mathcal{L}_{4,5} &= -10 u_1^3 u_4 + 10 u_1 u_{11} u_{13} - 5 u_{11}^2 u_3 - 10 u_1 u_{111} u_3 - \frac{1}{2} u_{111}^2 + \frac{1}{2} u_3 u_5 \\ \mathcal{L}_{4,5} &= -10 u_1^3 u_4 + 10 u_1 u_{11} u_{14} - 5 u_{11}^2 u_4 - 10 u_1 u_{111} u_4 - u_{111} u_{114} + \frac{1}{2} u_4 u_5 \\ \end{split}$$

Coefficients (after some post-limit simplifications)

$$\begin{split} \mathcal{L}_{1,2} &= \frac{1}{2} u_1 u_2 & \mathcal{L}_{1,3} = -u_1^3 + \frac{1}{2} u_{11}^2 + \frac{1}{2} u_1 u_3 \\ \mathcal{L}_{1,4} &= \frac{1}{2} u_1 u_4 & \mathcal{L}_{1,5} = -\frac{5}{2} u_1^4 + 5 u_1 u_{11}^2 - \frac{1}{2} u_{111}^2 + \frac{1}{2} u_1 u_5 \\ \mathcal{L}_{2,3} &= -3 u_1^2 u_2 + u_{11} u_{12} - u_{111} u_2 + \frac{1}{2} u_2 u_3 \\ \mathcal{L}_{2,4} &= \frac{1}{2} u_2 u_4 \\ \mathcal{L}_{2,5} &= -10 u_1^3 u_2 + 10 u_1 u_{11} u_{12} - 5 u_{11}^2 u_2 - 10 u_1 u_{111} u_2 - u_{111} u_{112} + \frac{1}{2} u_2 u_5 \\ \mathcal{L}_{3,4} &= -u_{11} u_{14} + \frac{1}{2} u_3 u_4 \\ \mathcal{L}_{3,5} &= 18 u_1^5 + 30 u_1^3 u_{111} - 10 u_1^3 u_3 + 6 u_{11}^2 u_{111} + 8 u_1 u_{111}^2 - 6 u_1 u_{111} u_{111} + 3 u_1^2 u_{1111} + 10 u_1 u_{111} u_{13} - 5 u_{11}^2 u_3 - 10 u_1 u_{111} u_3 - \frac{1}{2} u_{111}^2 + u_{111} u_{111} u_{111} + 10 u_1 u_{111} u_{13} - 5 u_{11}^2 u_3 - 10 u_1 u_{111} u_3 + \frac{1}{2} u_3 u_5 \\ \mathcal{L}_{4,5} &= -10 u_1^3 u_4 + 10 u_1 u_{11} u_{14} - 5 u_{11}^2 u_4 - 10 u_1 u_{111} u_4 - u_{111} u_{114} + u_{1111} u_{14} - u_{1111} u_{14} + \frac{1}{2} u_4 u_5 \\ \end{split}$$

## Continuum limits of ABS equations

 $Q1_{\delta=0} \rightarrow v_3 = v_{111} - \frac{3v_{11}^2}{2v_1}$ Schwarzian KdV Q1<sub> $\delta=1$ </sub>  $\rightarrow$   $v_3 = v_{111} - \frac{3}{2} \frac{v_{11}^2 - \frac{1}{4}}{v_4}$ Q2  $\rightarrow$   $v_3 = v_{111} - \frac{3}{2} \frac{v_{11}^2 - \frac{1}{4}}{v_4} - \frac{3}{2} \frac{v_1^3}{v_4^2}$  $Q3_{\delta=0} \quad \rightarrow \quad v_3 = v_{111} - \frac{3}{2} \frac{v_{11}^2 - \frac{1}{4}}{v_4} + \frac{1}{2} v_1^3$  $Q3_{\delta=1} \rightarrow v_3 = v_{111} - \frac{3}{2} \frac{v_{11}^2 - \frac{1}{4}}{v_1} + \frac{1}{2} v_1^3 - \frac{3}{2} \frac{v_1^3}{\sin(v_1)^2}$ Q4  $\rightarrow$   $v_3 = v_{111} - \frac{3}{2} \frac{v_{11} - \frac{1}{4}}{v_1} - \frac{3}{2} \wp(2v) v_1^3$ Krichever-Novikov H1  $\rightarrow$   $v_3 = v_{111} + 3v_1^2$ Potential KdV  $\mathsf{H3}_{\delta=0} \quad \rightarrow \quad \mathsf{v}_3 = \mathsf{v}_{111} + \frac{1}{2} \mathsf{v}_1^3$ Potential mKdV All with their hierarchies and with a pluri-Lagrangian structure.

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## Conclusions

- Integrable continuum limits can be performed in a partially algorithmic way
  - Leading order cancellation needs to be obtained by hand
  - All the rest is guaranteed by Miwa shifts
- One multi-dimensionally consistent quad equation leads to an infinite hierarchy of PDEs.
  - One integrable PDE carries less information than one quad equation.
  - Is this why integrable discretization is difficult?
- No Hamiltonian structure for lattice equations.
  - ► Variational structures apply to both discrete and continuous equations.
  - Pluri-Lagrangian structures as a framework for studying discretization and continuum limit.

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Thank you for your attention!

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