

GEOMETRY AND STRING THEORY SEMINAR: SPRING 2019

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1. ANOMALIES AND EXTENDED CONFORMAL MANIFOLDS: 1/23/19

These are Arun’s prepared notes for his talk, on the paper “Anomalies of duality groups and extended conformal manifolds” [STY18] by Seiberg, Tachikawa, and Yonekura.

1.1. Generalities on anomalies. As we’ve seen previously in this seminar, if you ask four people what an anomaly in QFT is, you’ll probably get four different answers. Here are some of them.

- An anomaly means the action isn’t invariant under the gauge group.
- An anomaly is an obstruction to coupling the theory to a background G -symmetry, or to gauging such a symmetry.
- An anomaly is realized in the nonvanishing of an anomaly polynomial.
- An anomaly as a *relative field theory* as advocated by Freed-Teleman [FT14]: within the framework of functorial QFT, consider an invertible $(n + 1)$ -dimensional QFT $\alpha: \mathbf{Bord}_n \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$; a QFT relative to α is a morphism $Z: \mathbf{1} \rightarrow \tau_{\leq n} \alpha$ (i.e., truncate α). The upshot is that the partition function of on a closed n -manifold X isn’t a number, but rather an element of the line $\alpha(X)$, and so on.
- Building on this is the idea that every quantum field theory has an anomaly, and if the anomaly is trivial, trivializing it is data that manifests in choices in studying the theory.

Seiberg, Tachikawa, and Yonekura introduce another perspective! But fortunately they relate it to most of the perspectives above. The idea is to consider a QFT with a parameter space \mathcal{M} , or a family of QFTs over \mathcal{M} . For example, you might have a parameter in a space $\widehat{\mathcal{M}}$ acted on by a group G , and then $\mathcal{M} = \widehat{\mathcal{M}}/G$. Fixing a spacetime manifold X , one expects the partition function to be a function on \mathcal{M} , but for an anomalous theory, this doesn’t quite work (e.g. if the partition function as a function on $\widehat{\mathcal{M}}$ isn’t G -invariant).

One way to fix this is to consider a space \mathcal{F} of counterterms; the total space \mathcal{N} will then be a fiber bundle over \mathcal{M} with fiber \mathcal{F} . If constructed correctly, the partition function is then a function on \mathcal{N} , and the anomaly manifests in the fact that $\mathcal{N} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$ isn’t the trivial \mathcal{F} -bundle, and the function doesn’t descend to \mathcal{M} . Alternatively, one can descend it as a section of a line bundle on \mathcal{M} rather than a function.

The point is: these perspectives are all related. Today, we’ll follow Seiberg-Tachikawa-Yonekura as they discuss an $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -anomaly on 4D Maxwell theory from several of these perspectives.

1.2. An anomalous $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -symmetry in 4D Maxwell theory. Now, we'll study these ideas as applied specifically to Maxwell theory in dimension 4. Throughout, we will restrict to spin 4-manifolds; everything still works when generalized to oriented manifolds, but the details are more complicated. Consult Seiberg-Tachikawa-Yonekura to learn what changes.

Maxwell theory is pure 4D U_1 gauge theory. The action on a 4-manifold X is

$$(1.1) \quad S = \frac{1}{g^2} \int_X F \wedge \star F + \frac{i\theta}{8\pi^2} \int_X F \wedge F,$$

where F is the curvature of the U_1 gauge field. Here g and θ are real-valued parameters, though θ is 2π -periodic. In dimension 4 only, we can rewrite this in terms of the self-dual and anti-self-dual pieces of F :

$$(1.2) \quad S = \frac{i\bar{\tau}}{4\pi} \int_X \|F_+\|^2 - \frac{i\tau}{4\pi} \int_X \|F_-\|^2,$$

where

$$(1.3) \quad \tau := \frac{\theta}{2\pi} + \frac{4\pi i}{g^2}.$$

That is, our single parameter τ is valued in \mathbb{H} , the upper half-plane.

1.2.1. The anomaly as variance under a symmetry. Now $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z}) = \langle S, T \mid S^4 = 1, (ST)^3 = S^2 \rangle$ acts on \mathbb{H} by $S\tau = -1/\tau$ and $T\tau = \tau + 1$. We'd like to quotient by this action and obtain a parameter space $\mathcal{M} := \mathbb{H}/\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$. This action has stabilizer, though: at $\tau = i$, the stabilizer is $\mathbb{Z}/2$, and at $e^{i\pi/3}$, it's $\mathbb{Z}/3$. Thus it's helpful to think of \mathcal{M} as the quotient *stack*, which means just that we remember the $\mathbb{Z}/2$ at i and the $\mathbb{Z}/3$ at $e^{i\pi/3}$.¹

TODO: picture of the stack.

However, the action (1.2) is not invariant: Witten [Wit95] uses physics arguments to show that

$$(1.4a) \quad Z_{T \cdot \tau}(X) = Z_\tau(X)$$

$$(1.4b) \quad Z_{S \cdot \tau}(X) = \tau^u \bar{\tau}^v Z_\tau(X),$$

where $u = (1/4)(\chi(X) + \sigma(X))$ and $v = (1/4)(\chi(X) - \sigma(X))$.

Remark 1.5. Because Maxwell theory is a free QFT, making the argument rigorous is probably easier than for general QFTs (this does not mean “easy”!). ◀

In other words, the theory is anomalous for this $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -action: on \mathcal{M} , the partition function isn't a well-defined function.

One might attempt to remedy this by throwing counterterms into the action. Our two options are the signature and the Euler characteristic, so such a counterterm would look like

$$(1.6) \quad f(\tau, \bar{\tau})\chi(X) + g(\tau, \bar{\tau})\sigma(X).²$$

This does not save us: consider $\tau = e^{i\pi/3}$, which has a $\mathbb{Z}/3$ stabilizer generated by ST^{-1} . This acts on the partition function by $e^{i\pi\sigma(X)/3}$, but does not change the counterterm (1.6), so this factor cannot be canceled. This is a nice application of the stacky perspective on \mathcal{M} .

However, a counterterm can simplify the anomaly. Letting $\eta: \mathbb{H} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ be the Dedekind η -function, $f(\tau, \bar{\tau}) := \mathrm{Re} \log \eta(\tau)$ and $g(\tau, \bar{\tau}) := i \mathrm{Im} \log \eta(\tau)$. The new partition function satisfies

$$(1.7) \quad Z'_\tau(X) = \eta(\tau)^{-(\chi(X) + \sigma(X))/2} \eta(-\bar{\tau})^{-(\chi(X) - \sigma(X))/2} Z_\tau(X),$$

and it transforms under the $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -action as $Z'_{T \cdot \tau}(X) = Z'_\tau(X)$ and $Z'_{S \cdot \tau}(X) = \exp(-i\pi\sigma(X)/3) Z'_\tau(X)$.

This is the first description of this anomaly, as expressing how the partition function changes under $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$. It involves the signature, which is a “gravitational” term (meaning an invariant of the underlying manifold), and $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$, so it's a mixed anomaly. There could also be a pure $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ anomaly, but to investigate it one should couple the theory to a background principal $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -bundle, which the paper doesn't do.

¹Really this is the quotient stack $\mathbb{H}/\mathrm{PSL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$; the reason we're using all of $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ is that its center will act nontrivially later.

²The notation $(\tau, \bar{\tau})$ indicates these functions need not be holomorphic.

1.2.2. *Extending the parameter space.* Next we'll describe a fiber bundle $\mathcal{N} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$ such that the partition function is a function on \mathcal{N} , and interpret it as a section of a line bundle over \mathcal{M} .

The gravitational term $\theta_{\text{grav}} \in S^1 = \mathbb{R}/2\pi\mathbb{Z}$; we'll consider an extended space of parameters, namely $\mathbb{H} \times S^1$, and define an action of $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ on both of them in a way which gets rid of the anomaly.

Definition 1.8. The character group of $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ is cyclic of order 12: given a $k \in \mathbb{Z}/12$, define the character $\chi_k: \text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z}) \rightarrow \text{U}_1$ by $\chi_k(S) := e^{-i\pi k/2}$ and $\chi_k(T) := e^{-i\pi k/6}$.

Of course, one should check these satisfy the relations of $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$, hence actually define a character. We'll single out χ_8 : on T it's 1 and on S it's $e^{2i\pi/3}$, which looks a lot like the anomaly we saw above.

Now define the $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -action on $\mathbb{H} \times S^1$ by

$$(1.9) \quad g \cdot (\tau, \theta_{\text{grav}}) := (g \cdot \tau, \chi_8(g) \cdot \theta_{\text{grav}})$$

(where U_1 acts on S^1 by the standard representation). The partition function is

$$(1.10) \quad Z'_{\tau, \theta_{\text{grav}}}(X) = Z'_\tau(X) e^{i\theta_{\text{grav}} \sigma / 16},$$

so if $g \in \text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$,

$$(1.11) \quad Z'_{g \cdot (\tau, \theta_{\text{grav}})}(X) = Z'_{(\tau, \theta_{\text{grav}})}(X);$$

the factors of $e^{i\pi/3}$ and $e^{2i\pi/3}$ cancel out. The partition function is invariant, so descends to a function on the *extended conformal manifold* $\mathcal{N} := (\mathbb{H} \times S^1)/\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$, which is an S^1 -bundle over \mathcal{M} . This is a key idea of their paper: the partition function of an anomalous theory is only a function on this extended parameter space \mathcal{N} .

An alternative perspective is to use a line bundle to encode a twist. A function on \mathcal{N} is a section of the trivial line bundle. We can ask whether it descends to \mathcal{M} , not necessarily as a function, but as a section of a line bundle. This is governed by *descent data*: rotating the S^1 defines a U_1 -action on \mathcal{N} whose quotient is \mathcal{M} . Then, an equivariant line bundle L' on \mathcal{N} descends to a line bundle L on \mathcal{M} (nonequivariant – in taking the quotient we've “used up” the equivariance), and an equivariant section of L' descends to a section of L .

So let's give the trivial line bundle $\mathbb{C} \rightarrow \mathcal{N}$ a nontrivial U_1 -action: given $(\tau, \theta_{\text{grav}}, w)$ with $(\tau, \theta_{\text{grav}}) \in \mathcal{N}$ and $w \in \mathbb{C}_{(\tau, \theta_{\text{grav}})}$, and given a $z \in \text{U}_1$, define

$$(1.12) \quad z \cdot (\tau, \theta_{\text{grav}}, w) := \left(\tau, z \cdot \theta_{\text{grav}}, \exp\left(\frac{\sigma(X)}{16}\right) zw \right).$$

This defines an equivariant line bundle $L' \rightarrow \mathcal{N}$ such that a function Z on \mathcal{N} such that $Z(\tau, z \cdot \theta_{\text{grav}}) = e^{\sigma(X)/16} Z(\tau, \theta_{\text{grav}})$, such as the partition function, is an equivariant section of this line bundle. Descending, we obtain a nonequivariant line bundle $L \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$, and the partition function is a section.

Ok, so which line bundle do we get? We know the U_1 -equivariant line bundle on \mathcal{N} that we began with, hence a $\text{U}_1 \times \text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -bundle on $\mathbb{H} \times S^1$, and then we can quotient by U_1 to obtain an $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -equivariant line bundle on \mathbb{H} , then quotient by $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ to get back $L \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$. The point is, passing through $\mathbb{H} \rightarrow \mathbb{H}/\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ may be easier to think about, and we can compare to known line bundles.

Definition 1.13. The *Hodge bundle* $L_H \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$ is the quotient of the $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -equivariant line bundle $L'_H \rightarrow \mathbb{H}$ which is nonequivariantly trivial and whose $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -action is defined by $g \cdot (\tau, z) = (g \cdot \tau, \chi_1(g) \cdot z)$.

The 12th tensor power of L_H is trivial, ultimately because the abelianization of $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ is $\mathbb{Z}/12$.

If you run this argument, you get that the line bundle L arising from Maxwell theory on X is $L_H^{\otimes(\sigma/2)}$. The intuition is that we have $\exp(\sigma/16)$ in the U_1 -action, and $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ acts on U_1 by eight times the generator, giving us $\sigma/2$.

1.2.3. *Anomaly polynomials.* Seiberg-Tachikawa-Yonekura also discuss anomaly polynomials. In general, suppose we have a family of $2k$ -dimensional manifolds $\mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$, and write the fiber at $m \in \mathcal{M}$ as X_m .³ The partition function $Z(X_m)$ is a section of a line bundle $L \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$. The goal of the anomaly polynomial is to determine L , or equivalently its first Chern class. Therefore the anomaly polynomial $\mathbb{A}_{2k+2} \in H^{2k+2}(\mathcal{X})$ is defined to satisfy

$$(1.14) \quad c_1(L) = \int_{X_m} \mathbb{A}_{2k+2},$$

³Despite the similar notation, this time X is varying and the QFT is constant; previously, it was the other way around.

here denoting integration along the fiber, the pushforward map $H^*(\mathcal{X}) \rightarrow H^{*-2k}(\mathcal{M})$.⁴

Seiberg-Tachikawa-Yonekura compute \mathbb{A}_6 for Maxwell theory in an interesting way: they realize it as the dimensional reduction of a 6D theory Z_6 along a torus T . This theory also has an anomaly polynomial $\mathbb{A}_8 \in H^8(T \times \mathcal{X})$, and integrating over the fibers $T \times X_m$ produces $c_1(L)$ again.

Therefore we can compute $c_1(L)$ in two ways: first integrating along the fiber of $T \times \mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathcal{X}$, then $\mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$ as above, or by first integrating along the fiber of $T \times \mathcal{X} \rightarrow T \times \mathcal{M}$, then $T \times \mathcal{M} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$.

Since I don't have a whole lot of time, and because I didn't fully understand the arguments in this section, I'm going to skip over the computations, which is unfortunate, because they look mathematically interesting. The summary is that knowing the 6D anomaly polynomial, and knowing the anomaly polynomial of the 2D theory $Z_6(- \times X_m)$, allows one to pin down the anomaly polynomial of the 4D theory in terms of the central charge of the 2D theory. In the case of Maxwell theory, the central charge is $c = \sigma(X)$, and using arguments from 2D CFT that I could not follow, the corresponding line bundle $L \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$ is $L_H^{c/2}$, which agrees with what we saw above.

1.2.4. *Relative field theory.* This is the most topological perspective on anomalies, so I love it.

So with that in mind, we expect Z to really be a QFT relative to an invertible TFT α in dimension 5, and with the same background fields. That is, the symmetry type is

- spin 5-manifolds, since we began with spin 4-manifolds; together with
- an $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -bundle, since we're considering an $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ symmetry: even though we didn't couple to a background $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -bundle, this $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -symmetry still appears in the anomaly.

The anomaly theory α is topological, because it is a finite-order, unitary invertible field theory.⁵ Therefore it cannot see τ , θ , or θ_{grav} , so this is the entire symmetry type; moreover, its partition function is a bordism invariant, an element of

$$(1.15) \quad \mathrm{Hom}(\Omega_5^{\mathrm{Spin}}(BSL_2(\mathbb{Z})), U_1).$$

Seiberg-Tachikawa-Yonekura [STY18] show this is abstractly isomorphic to $\mathbb{Z}/36$, but they don't produce an isomorphism, so it's difficult to get one's hands on this.

TODO: their results

Here are some other things we can say about the computation of α .

- (1) First, we can only expect to know the answer modulo “pure $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ ” theories; let's discuss what that means. The action of α can include terms which are characteristic classes for $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -bundles as well as “gravitational” terms which depend on the underlying manifold itself. A theory whose action has no gravitational terms is called a pure $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -theory.

We haven't studied Maxwell theory coupled to a background principal $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -bundle, so we're not going to be able to distinguish any of the pure $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -theories. However, these are a subgroup of the group of all 5D invertible TFTs with symmetry type $\mathrm{Spin} \times \mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$, so we can ask whether we can identify the anomaly in the quotient.

Seiberg-Tachikawa-Yonekura show that the pure $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ theories form a $\mathbb{Z}/6$ inside this $\mathbb{Z}/36$. They make this argument using the Atiyah-Hirzebruch spectral sequence

$$(1.16) \quad E_{p,q}^2 = H_p(BSL_2(\mathbb{Z}); \Omega_q^{\mathrm{Spin}}(\mathrm{pt})) \implies \Omega_{p+q}^{\mathrm{Spin}}(BSL_2(\mathbb{Z})).$$

The pure $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -theories are those on the line $q = 0$, so they only see the homology of $BSL_2(\mathbb{Z})$ and not the spin bordism groups. The argument that $E_{5,0}^\infty = \mathbb{Z}/6$ is a fun but elaborate spectral sequence proof, chaining together three instances of the Atiyah-Hirzebruch spectral sequence and playing them off of each other.

Let A denote the quotient of $\mathrm{Hom}(\Omega_5^{\mathrm{Spin}}(BSL_2(\mathbb{Z})), U_1)$ by the pure $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -theories, so that $A \cong \mathbb{Z}/6$. We've seen that when we don't couple to principal $\mathrm{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -bundles, the anomaly has order 3; this means it has order 3 in A .

- (2) If we had an explicit description of the elements of $\mathrm{Hom}(\Omega_5^{\mathrm{Spin}}(BSL_2(\mathbb{Z})), U_1)$, we could do more, using the anomaly TFT to determine information about the line bundle $L \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$. The idea of a QFT relative to some invertible TFT α is that the partition function of X is an element of the line $\alpha(X)$;

⁴To do this, we need the relative tangent bundle of the map $\mathcal{X} \rightarrow \mathcal{M}$ to be oriented.

⁵This is a quite nontrivial theorem of Freed-Hopkins [FH16].

applying this to the family of theories Z_τ in \mathcal{M} , $\alpha(X)$ defines a line bundle over \mathcal{M} , and the partition function is a section of this line bundle.

At $\tau = e^{i\pi/3}$, we have a $\mathbb{Z}/3$ -symmetry on L_τ which we've determined just by studying Maxwell theory, and we can compare this with another $\mathbb{Z}/3$ -symmetry on $\alpha(X)$ that can be determined just by studying α , and these must match, which could help determine α in general.

More explicitly, consider $\tau = e^{i\pi/3} \in \mathcal{M}$ with its $\mathbb{Z}/3$ stabilizer; this is a $\text{pt}/(\mathbb{Z}/3)$. A strong form of $\mathbb{Z}/3$ symmetry is being able to extend to a family over this space, so let's try to do this. Take a spin 4-manifold X and the trivial $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -bundle $P_{\text{triv}} \rightarrow X$ and extend to (X, P) over $\text{pt}/(\mathbb{Z}/3)$, where the monodromy of P around an $a \in \mathbb{Z}/3 \subset \text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ is right multiplication by a^{-1} on $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$. We can then evaluate α on this family of manifolds, to produce a line bundle over $\text{pt}/\mathbb{Z}/3$ (namely, a line with a $\mathbb{Z}/3$ -action), and we can compare this with the fiber of L over $e^{i\pi/3}$ with its $\mathbb{Z}/3$ -action. These should be isomorphic, and given a concrete description of these invertible TFTs, one could use this to learn more information about the anomaly of Maxwell theory even though we haven't coupled to $\text{SL}_2(\mathbb{Z})$ -bundles. We can also do this with the $\mathbb{Z}/2$ stabilizer at $\tau = i$.

2. INTEGRABILITY AND 4D GAUGE THEORY I: 1/30/19

Today, Sebastian spoke about work of Costello-Witten-Yamazaki [CWY17, CWY18] on integrability and gauge theory. Next week's talk will continue this story, with calculations supporting the ideas presented today.

Integrability is roughly the same thing as being exactly solvable. Across a wide variety of mathematical disciplines (knot theory, differential equations, statistical mechanics, ...), this is understood to mean satisfying the *Yang-Baxter equation*. There's a nice, very readable paper of Perk-Au-Yang [PAY06] which explains this unifying perspective.

Consider some particles in a 2D system, with quantum numbers in some vector space V with basis $\{e_i\}$, and suppose there's a "spectral parameter" $z \in \mathbb{C}$. Consider some particles participating in a collision as in Figure 1: the incoming particles have quantum numbers i and j , and spectral parameters z_1 and z_2 , and the outgoing particles have quantum numbers k and ℓ . This defines a map $R(z_1, z_2): V \otimes V \rightarrow V \otimes V$; assume $R(z_1, z_2)$ only depends on $z_1 - z_2$.

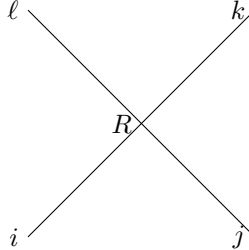


FIGURE 1. The definition of the R -matrix.

The Yang-Baxter equation encodes the ability to move a line behind such a picture. We'll use the notation $z_{ij} := z_i - z_j$, and $R_{ij}: V^{\otimes 3} \rightarrow V^{\otimes 3}$ to act by R on the i and j^{th} copies of V and by the identity on the remaining copy. Then the Yang-Baxter equation (YBE) is

$$(2.1) \quad R_{23}(z_{23})R_{13}(z_{13})R_{12}(z_{12}) = R_{12}(z_{12})R_{13}(z_{13})R_{23}(z_{23}).$$

The picture is in Figure 2.

One in addition often asks for solutions to satisfy *unitarity*, i.e. $R_{12}(z_{12})R_{21}(z_{21}) = \text{id}$. The string diagram perspective is that one can separate two strands which cross twice. Unitary solutions to the Yang-Baxter equation are still too complicated to classify, so people usually introduce more structure.

Another variant is the *quasi-classical Yang-Baxter equation*: one introduces another complex parameter \hbar , and near $\hbar = 0$, we ask

$$(2.2) \quad R_{\hbar}(z) = \mathbf{1} + \hbar r(z) + O(\hbar^2),$$

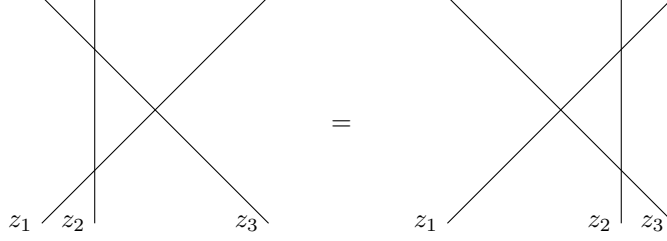


FIGURE 2. The string diagram version of the Yang-Baxter equation.

where $r(z)$ is the *classical R-matrix*, which up to $O(\hbar^2)$ satisfies the *classical Yang-Baxter equation*

$$(2.3) \quad [r_{12}(z_{12}), r_{13}(z_{13}) + r_{23}(z_{23})] + [r_{13}(z_{13}), r_{23}(z_{23})] = 0.$$

Belavin-Drinfeld [BD82] classified solutions associated to a complex Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} associated to a real Lie group G . In this case $r(z) \in \mathfrak{g} \otimes \mathfrak{g}$. Choosing a basis $\mathfrak{g} = \langle t^a \rangle$, we can write

$$(2.4) \quad r(z) = \sum_{a,b} r_{a,b}(z) t^a \otimes t^b,$$

where $\det(r_{a,b}) \neq 0$. The poles of $r(z)$ span a lattice Γ of rank ≤ 2 , and three situations emerge.

- If Γ is rank 0, this is the *rational* setting, and we think of solutions as representations of a *Yangian*. In this case $\mathbb{C}/\Gamma = \mathbb{C}$.
- If Γ is rank 1, this is the *trigonometric* setting, and solutions are representations of a *quantum affine algebra*. $\mathbb{C}/\Gamma \cong \mathbb{C}^\times$.
- If Γ is rank 2, this is the *elliptic* setting, and solutions are representations of an *elliptic algebra*. The quotient is an elliptic curve.

The goal of Costello-Witten-Yamazaki is to relate this story to 4D gauge theory. So let's consider 4D gauge theory on $\mathbb{R}^2 \times \mathbb{C}$, with coordinates (x, y, z, \bar{z}) , and fields

$$(2.5) \quad A = A_x dx + A_y dy + A_{\bar{z}} d\bar{z}.$$

In particular, each A_i is not required to be holomorphic in z . On our Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} , choose an invariant nondegenerate quadratic form, such as the Killing form, and let t_a be an orthonormal basis.

The action is

$$(2.6) \quad S = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_{\mathbb{R}^2 \times \mathbb{C}} dz \wedge CS(A) = -\frac{1}{2\pi} \int z \operatorname{tr}(F \wedge F),$$

where the Chern-Simons term is

$$(2.7) \quad CS(A) := \operatorname{tr} \left(A \wedge dA + \frac{2}{3} A^3 \right).$$

The diffeomorphism group of \mathbb{R}^2 preserves this action, where the action is by

$$(2.8) \quad A_i \mapsto g^{-1} A_i g + g^{-1} \partial_i g,$$

where $i = x, y, \bar{z}$.

The classical equations of motion are $F_{xy} = 0$ and $F_{x\bar{z}} = F_{y\bar{z}} = 0$, meaning solutions are a flat bundle over \mathbb{R}^2 and vary holomorphically in \mathbb{C} . Therefore all gauge-invariant quantities coming from A must vanish. Correlation functions look like

$$(2.9) \quad \langle \mathcal{O} \rangle = \frac{\int \mathcal{D}A \mathcal{O} \exp(iS/\hbar)}{\int \mathcal{D}A \exp(iS/\hbar)}.$$

If the length is \hbar , the theory is not renormalizable by power counting, though all possible counterterms vanish by the equations of motion. Therefore one can quantize using perturbation theory, and the quantum theory is IR free.

Remark 2.10. This theory has a framing anomaly, similarly to ordinary Chern-Simons theory. We're not going to worry much about this today, though we'll learn more about it next week. \blacktriangleleft

So now we can formulate this QFT on curved manifolds $\Sigma \times C$, where Σ is a topological surface and C is a Riemann surface. Choose a closed holomorphic 1-form ω ;⁶ the action is

$$(2.11) \quad S = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int \omega \wedge CS(A).$$

We want to study this with perturbation theory; the action depends on ω/\hbar . This causes a problem: zeros of ω correspond to poles of \hbar . At least we can understand poles of ω as zeros of \hbar , and they spend some time on this. Therefore let's assume ω has no zeros.

Knowledge of the genus of C allows us to use the Riemann-Roch theorem. Since ω has no zeros, this tells us

$$(2.12) \quad -\#\text{poles} = 2g(C) - 2.$$

This cuts down the possibilities pretty drastically. There are only a few options (up to rescaling, etc.):

- $C = \mathbb{C}$ with $\omega = dz$, so there's a double pole at infinity; this is the rational case.
- $C = \mathbb{C}^\times$ with $\omega = dz/z$, so there are simple poles at 0 and ∞ ; this is the trigonometric case.
- C is an elliptic curve with $\omega = dz$, and there are no poles; this is the elliptic case.

These correspond to the three cases we mentioned earlier.

Remark 2.13. It's no coincidence we get an abelian group in all three cases: since ω has no zeros, we can invert it and get a vector field, and that vector field generates the group action. \blacktriangleleft

The framing anomaly puts constraints on Σ ; it must be 2-framed, so it must be a torus.⁷

The equations of motion tell us there are no local observables, so the easiest operators to look at are Wilson lines. Choose a loop $K \subset \Sigma \times C$ and a G -representation ρ ; then the Wilson line operator is

$$(2.14) \quad W_\rho(K) = \text{tr}_\rho P \exp \left(\oint_K A_i dx^i \right).$$

That is, we get a group element g by walking around K using the connection A , and then compute the trace of $\rho(g)$. However, since A had no dz term, we can't parallel transport in the z -direction, which means K must be a loop solely in Σ , with a fixed value z_0 in C .

Actually, we can do something different, using a representation $\hat{\rho}$ of the Lie algebra

$$(2.15) \quad \mathfrak{g}[[z]] = \bigoplus_{n \geq 0} \mathfrak{g} \otimes \mathbb{C} \cdot z^n.$$

(More generally, we could use $\mathfrak{g}[[z - z_0]]$.) If \mathfrak{g} is spanned by t_a , then $\mathfrak{g}[[z]]$ is spanned by $t_{a,n}(z) := t_a z^n$, which you can think of as “matrices.” Write

$$(2.16) \quad [t_{a,n}(z), t_{b,m}(z)] = f_{ab}^c t_{c,m+n}.$$

We'd like finite-dimensional representations with $t_{a,n} = 0$ for $n > n_0$. For example, if $n_0 = 2$, this tells us that $[t_{a,1}, t_{b,1}] = 0$, $\{t_{a,0}\}$ span \mathfrak{g} , and $[t_{a,0}, t_{b,1}] = f_{ab}^c t_{c,1}$ means that we just get the adjoint representation of \mathfrak{g} .

Because of the IR freeness of the theory, the fields must vanish at infinity, and this allows one to understand the holonomy itself, rather than just its trace, as a meaningful observable.

How does this relate to the Yang-Baxter equations? Looking back at Figure 2, we want this diagram to mean a triple of Wilson lines labeled in representations. When you move one across the others, the $\text{Diff}(\mathbb{R}^2)$ -symmetry is broken at the middle, but we still expect the Yang-Baxter equation, and the unitary equation, to be true, since these can be at different heights (so we can really move one behind the others).

3. INTEGRABILITY AND 4D GAUGE THEORY II: 2/6/19

Today, Ivan spoke, continuing the story of the work of Costello-Witten-Yamazaki [CWY17, CWY18] on how solutions of the Yang-Baxter equation arise from a 4D gauge theory.

Last time, we considered a system of particles in 2D spacetime, with a vector space V of internal states and a spectral parameter $z \in \mathbb{C}$. Particle-particle interactions are governed by the R -matrix $R(z_1, z_2) \in \text{End}(V_1 \otimes V_2)$, and we asked for it to satisfy the Yang-Baxter equation (2.1), which you can think of in terms of the picture Figure 2.

⁶Or meromorphic if you want to work on compact manifolds.

⁷This is different from standard Chern-Simons theory, which imposes a weaker constraint.

People don't really solve just the Yang-Baxter equation without introducing more structure. For example, one can let the R -matrices depend holomorphically on another parameter \hbar , in which case we want to satisfy the quasi-classical Yang-Baxter equation (2.2). Working in a fixed semisimple Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} , the solutions fall into three kinds: rational, trigonometric, and elliptic, corresponding to representations of a Yangian $Y_\hbar(\mathfrak{g})$, a quantum group $U_{q,\hbar}(\mathfrak{g})$, or an elliptic algebra $E_{\tau,q,\hbar}(\mathfrak{g})$, respectively.

We will relate this to a 4D gauge theory on $M := \Sigma \times C$, where Σ is an oriented smooth surface and C is a Riemann surface. The gauge group G is a semisimple complex Lie group. We took for fields the partial G -connections $A = A_x dx + A_y dy + A_{\bar{z}} d\bar{z}$; $g \in G$ acts on A_i by $gA_i g^{-1} + g\partial_i g^{-1}$ for $i = x, y, \bar{z}$.

The action (2.6) can be generalized by replacing dz with a meromorphic closed 1-form with no zeros. This constrains C by Riemann-Roch to either \mathbb{C} , \mathbb{C}^\times , or an elliptic curve, corresponding respectively to the rational, trigonometric, and elliptic situations.

The next question is: how does the R -matrix arise in this theory? The answer is to look at Wilson lines $K \subset \Sigma \times \{z\}$; these correspond in the Yang-Baxter picture to worldlines labeled by $z \in \mathbb{C}$. This still doesn't explain why there's an R -matrix. The answer is that the theory we're looking at is IR-free, so there's a local picture, obtained by a scaling limit in Σ . In this case, the R -matrix picture (two-particle interactions) looks a lot like Feynman diagrams for the perturbation theory in this scaling limit.

Now, let $C = \mathbb{C}$, $\omega = dz$, and $\Sigma = \mathbb{R}^2$ (so we're in the rational setting). Our goal is to compute the $O(\hbar)$ contribution to the R -matrix. It turns out the angle of the two worldlines doesn't matter.

Remark 3.1. The theory does have a framing anomaly, and higher-order terms in \hbar do have an angle dependence expressed in terms of this anomaly. But just for first-order it's OK. \blacktriangleleft

We end up getting

$$(3.2) \quad \hbar t_{a,p} \otimes t_{b,p'} \int dx dy' P^{ab}(x - x', y - y', z - z', \bar{z} - \bar{z}'),$$

where $\{t_a\}$ is an orthonormal basis for \mathfrak{g} with respect to the Killing form, $t_{a,n} := t_a z^n \in \mathfrak{g}[[z]]$, and P denotes the propagator for the free theory. Then the equations of motion are fairly simple:

$$(3.3a) \quad dz \wedge F_A = 0$$

$$(3.3b) \quad F_{xy} = F_{x\bar{z}} = F_{y\bar{z}} = 0,$$

and the linearized equations of motion are even simpler:

$$(3.4) \quad dz \wedge dA = 0.$$

Fix the gauge

$$(3.5) \quad \partial_X A_x + \partial_y A_y + 4\partial_z A_{\bar{z}} = 0.$$

In this case the propagator P satisfies

$$(3.6) \quad \frac{i}{2\pi} dz \wedge dP = \delta^4(x, y, z, \bar{z}) \mathbf{1}$$

$$(3.7) \quad (\partial_x i u_x + \partial_y i y + \partial_z i \partial_{\bar{z}}) P = 0.$$

Therefore

$$(3.8) \quad P^{ab}(x, y, z, \bar{z}) = \frac{\delta^{ab}}{2\pi} \frac{x dy \wedge d\bar{z} y d\bar{z} \wedge dx + z \bar{z} dx \wedge dy}{(x^2 + y^2 + z \bar{z})^2}.$$

Plugging this into (3.2), we get for the $O(\hbar)$ contribution

$$(3.9) \quad (3.2) = \hbar t_{a,p} \otimes t_{b,p'} \int dx dy \frac{\delta^{ab} 2\bar{z}_1 - \bar{z}_2}{(x^2 + y^2 + |z_1 - z_2|^2)^2}$$

$$(3.10) \quad = \frac{\hbar (\sum_a t_{a,p} \otimes t_{a,p'})}{z_1 - z_2}$$

$$(3.11) \quad = \frac{\hbar C_{p,p'}}{z_1 - z_2}.$$

That is,

$$(3.12) \quad R_\hbar(z_1 - z_2) = \mathbf{1} + \frac{\hbar C_{p,p'}}{z_1 - z_2} + O(\hbar^2),$$

which recovers what we expect in the rational setting.

This is related to the Yangian, in that if V_1 and V_2 are representations of the Yangian, then $R_{\hbar}(z) = \text{End}(V_1 \otimes V_2)$ should be an intertwiner. We can interpret this using OPEs of Wilson lines. Consider two Wilson lines K, K_ε supported on $\Sigma \times \{0\}$ and $\Sigma \times \{\varepsilon\}$. Letting $\varepsilon \rightarrow 0$, one has

$$(3.13) \quad \lim_{\varepsilon \rightarrow 0} \widetilde{W}_\rho(K_\varepsilon) \otimes \widetilde{W}_{\rho'}(K_\varepsilon) = \widetilde{W}_{\rho \otimes \rho'}(K) - \hbar t_{a,p} \otimes t_{b,p'} f_{abc} \int dx m \partial_z A_x^C(x, y, 0, 0) + O(\hbar^2).$$

Last time, we said tht if $\widehat{\rho}$ is a representation of $\mathfrak{g}[[z]]$ with $\widehat{\rho}(z^n t_a) = t_{a,n}$, then

$$(3.14) \quad \widetilde{W}_{\widehat{\rho}}(K) = P \exp \left(\oint_K \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{\partial}{\partial z^n} A_i^c(x, y, 0, 0) t_{c,n} dx^i \right).$$

Therefore it seems that the fused Wilson line is associated to a $\mathfrak{g}[[z]]$ -representation with

$$(3.15) \quad \begin{aligned} t_{a,0} &= t_{a,p} \otimes 1 + 1 \otimes t_{a,p'} \\ t_{c,1} &= -\hbar t_{a,p} \otimes t_{b,p'} f_{abc}. \end{aligned}$$

But this is actually not true: there are further identities that don't hold. On $\mathfrak{g}[[z]]$, $[t_{a,1}, t_{b,2}] = f_{abc} t_{c,2}$ plus the Jacobi identity imply that $f_{\mu\nu a} [t_{a,1}, t_{b,1}]$ is equal to a cyclic permutation of $\mu\nu a$ in this. But instead, their sum is $Q_{\mu\nu b}(t_{a,0})$, which is nonzero. The answer is that the fused Wilson line is associated to a representation of a one-parameter deformation of $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g}[[z]])$.

4. FROM GAUSSIAN MEASURES TO FACTORIZATION ALGEBRAS: 2/13/19

Today Charlie spoke about the second chapter of Costello-Gwilliam [?], with the goal of motivating (pre)factorization algebras via Gaussian integrals on finite-dimensional vector spaces.

Let $Q: \mathbb{R}^n \times \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be a positive-definite bilinear form and $p: \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be a polynomial function. We're interested in computing the expectation value

$$(4.1) \quad \langle p \rangle := \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} p(x) \exp \left(-\frac{1}{2} Q(x, x) \right) d^n x.$$

We're going to try to compute this without having to evaluate any integrals!

Definition 4.2. We will use $\text{Vect}(\mathbb{R}^n)$ to denote the space of vector fields on \mathbb{R}^n whose component functions are polynomials and $P(\mathbb{R}^n)$ to denote the space of polynomial functions on \mathbb{R}^n .

Definition 4.3. Given a polynomial vector field v on \mathbb{R}^n , its *divergence* $\text{Div } v \in P(\mathbb{R}^n)$ is defined to act on a volume form ω by $(\text{Div } V)\omega = \mathcal{L}_v \omega = dt_v \omega$ (this last equality follows from Cartan's magic formula).

Here are a few important facts about the divergence.

Lemma 4.4.

- (1) For any polynomial vector field v and volume form ω , $\int (\text{Div } v) \omega = 0$.
- (2)

$$\begin{aligned} (\text{Div } v) \omega &= \nabla \left(\exp \left(-\frac{1}{2} Q(x, x) \right) v \right) dx^n \\ &= \left(v \exp \left(-\frac{1}{2} Q(x, x) \right) + \nabla \cdot v \exp \left(-\frac{1}{2} Q(x, x) \right) \right) dx^n \\ &= (-Q(v, x) + \nabla \cdot v) \omega. \end{aligned}$$

- (3) $P(\mathbb{R}^n)/\text{Im}(\text{Div})$ is one-dimensional, and we have a canonical identification with \mathbb{R} provided by integration.

The last piece is particularly crucial: the quotient is still one-dimensional in a certain infinite-dimensional setting, where we'll use an identification with \mathbb{R} as a definition of integration.

Now we'll apply this to physics. Consider the free scalar quantum field theory on a Riemannian manifold (M, g) , which is spacetime. The space of fields is $C^\infty(M)$, and the action is

$$(4.5) \quad S(\phi) := \frac{1}{2} \int_M \phi (\Delta_g + m^2) \phi d\text{vol}_g,$$

where m is the mass of the theory and Δ_g is the Laplacian. We would like to define correlation functions

$$(4.6) \quad \langle \phi(x_1) \cdots \phi(x_n) \rangle \text{ “} := \text{”} \int_{C^\infty(M)} \phi(x_1) \cdots \phi(x_n) e^{-S(\phi)} d\phi,$$

but of course the measure $d\phi$ doesn't exist on most M .

Our strategy to abrogate this is to put the observables into a chain complex: for an open $U \subset M$, take

$$(4.7) \quad \text{Obs}^{-3}(U) \longrightarrow \text{Obs}^{-2}(U) \longrightarrow \text{Vect}(C^\infty(U)) \xrightarrow{\text{Div}} P(C^\infty(U)).$$

We would like this to have the following properties:

- (1) H^0 of this complex should be the space of physically distinguishable observables on U , and
- (2) if U_1 and U_2 are disjoint open subsets of an open $V \subset X$, an observable on U_1 and an observable on U_2 should together define an observable on V , and this should define a map $H^0(\text{Obs}^*(U_1)) \otimes H^0(\text{Obs}^*(U_2)) \rightarrow H^0(\text{Obs}^*(V))$.

To make this into real math, we have to define $P(C^\infty(U))$, $\text{Vect}(C^\infty(U))$, and Div .

Definition 4.8. Given an $F \in C_c^\infty(U^n)$, define a function $F: C^\infty(U) \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ by

$$(4.9) \quad \phi \mapsto \int_{U^n} F(x_1, \dots, x_n) \phi(x_1) \cdots \phi(x_n) d\text{vol}^n.$$

The symmetric group S_n acts on these functions by permuting the n inputs. We then define $P(C^\infty(U))$ as

$$(4.10) \quad P(C^\infty(U)) := \bigoplus_{n=0}^{\infty} C_c^\infty(U^n)_{S_n}.$$

Definition 4.11. An $F \in C_c^\infty(U^{n+1})$ defines a vector field on U^n by the rule

$$(4.12) \quad \phi \mapsto \int_{U^n} F(x_1, \dots, x_{n+1}) \phi(x_1) \cdots \phi(x_n) d\text{vol}^n.$$

(Precisely, this is a rule for differentiating functions into one-forms, which is specified by a vector field.) The symmetric group again acts, and we define $\text{Vect}(C^\infty(U))$ by

$$(4.13) \quad \text{Vect}(C^\infty(U)) := \bigoplus_{n=0}^{\infty} C_c^\infty(U^{n+1})_{S_n}.$$

Defining the divergence is a little trickier.

Definition 4.14. Let $X \in \text{Vect}(C^\infty(U))$ be homogeneous, i.e. a homogeneous element in the direct sum (4.13), and suppose $\deg(X) = n$. Then we define

$$(4.15) \quad \text{Div}(X) := -(\Delta_{g,n+1} + m^2)X(x_1, \dots, x_{n+1}) + \sum_{i=1}^n \int_U X(x_1, \dots, x_i, \dots, x_n, X_i) d\text{vol},$$

and extend to inhomogeneous elements by linearity.

Now we have some structure.

- Given $P \in P(C^\infty(U))$ and $X \in \text{Vect}(C^\infty(U))$, we can multiply them to obtain another vector field.
- Given $P \in P(C^\infty(U))$, if $U \subset V$, we can extend by 0 to obtain $\epsilon_0(P) \in P(C^\infty(V))$.

Lemma 4.16. Let $P \in P(C^\infty(U))$ and $X \in \text{Vect}(C^\infty(U))$. Then $\text{Div}(PX) = P \text{Div} X + X(P)$.

Now we've got everything we need to make (4.7) make sense. Given $U_1, U_2 \subset V$ all opens in M , there is a map

$$(4.17) \quad \begin{aligned} \tilde{m}_V^{U_1, U_2}: P(C^\infty(U_1)) \otimes P(C^\infty(U_2)) &\longrightarrow P(C^\infty(V)) \\ P_1 \otimes P_2 &\longmapsto \epsilon_0(P_1) \cdot \epsilon_0(P_2). \end{aligned}$$

Lemma 4.18. The map $\tilde{m}_V^{U_1, U_2}$ descends to a map $m_V^{U_1, U_2}: H^0(\text{Obs}^*(U_1)) \otimes H^0(\text{Obs}^*(U_2)) \rightarrow H^0(\text{Obs}^*(V))$ if and only if U_1 and U_2 are disjoint.

Proof. Let $P_W := P(C^\infty(W))$ and consider the diagram

$$(4.19) \quad \begin{array}{ccccc} (\mathrm{Im}(\mathrm{Div}_{U_1}) \otimes P_{U_2}) \oplus (P_{U_1} \otimes \mathrm{Im}(\mathrm{Div}_{U_2})) & \hookrightarrow & P_{U_1} \otimes P_{U_2} & \longrightarrow & H^0(\mathrm{Obs}^*(U_1)) \otimes H^0(\mathrm{Obs}^*(U_2)) \\ & & \downarrow \tilde{m}_V^{U_1, U_2} & & \\ \mathrm{Im}(\mathrm{Div}_V) & \longrightarrow & P_V & \longrightarrow & H^0(\mathrm{Obs}^*(V)). \end{array}$$

We would like to move the vertical arrow from the second column to the third column. Since the rows are exact, it suffices to show that $\tilde{m}_V^{U_1, U_2}$ applied to anything coming from the upper left is zero in cohomology. Well, if $P \in P_{U_1}$ and $X \in \mathrm{Vect}(C^\infty(U_2))$, then using Lemma 4.16,

$$(4.20) \quad P \mathrm{Div}(X) = \mathrm{Div}_V(PX) + X(P).$$

U_1 and U_2 are disjoint iff $X(P)$ vanishes for all X and all P , and in this case, $P \mathrm{Div}(X) \in \mathrm{Im}(\mathrm{Div}_V)$, so when we pass to $H^0(\mathrm{Obs}^*(V))$ along the bottom row, it's zero by exactness. The case when $P \in P_{U_2}$ and $X \in \mathrm{Vect}(C^\infty(U_1))$ is the same. \square

With the remaining time, let's talk a bit about the classical limit. In this case we consider $e^{-S/\hbar}$; to say this more explicitly,

$$(4.21) \quad \mathrm{Div}_\hbar(X) := -\frac{1}{\hbar}(\Delta_{g, n+1} + m^2)X + \nabla \cdot X.$$

The limit of the image of Div_\hbar as $\hbar \rightarrow 0$ is the ideal in $P(C^\infty(U))$ generated by linear functionals, and therefore $\mathrm{Obs}^0(U)$ becomes functions on the critical locus of the Euler-Lagrange equations. The upshot is that multiplication is commutative, so we don't just get a prefactorization algebra, but in fact have a commutative one.

5. CLASSICAL FREE SCALAR FIELD THEORY: 2/20/19

Today, Mario spoke about chapter 2, with a perspective rooted a little more in physics. The goal is to discuss how some of the formalism from last week can be used to recover some physics statements about free theories.

Let's recall some facts about classical field theory on a Riemannian manifold (M, g) . There is some action S , which is a function on smooth functions on M , typically expressed as an integral of a Lagrangian density:

$$(5.1) \quad S(\phi) = \int_M \mathrm{dvol} \mathcal{L}(\phi).$$

This functional is minimized when ϕ satisfies the *Euler-Lagrange equations*

$$(5.2) \quad \partial_\mu \frac{\delta \mathcal{L}}{\delta \partial_\mu \phi} - \frac{\delta \mathcal{L}}{\delta \phi} = 0.$$

The *classical observables* are the functions on the space of solutions to the Euler-Lagrange equations (the critical locus of S).

In quantum field theory, observables are no longer functions, but are instead operators Φ which act on the Hilbert space. Speaking precisely, these are operator-valued distributions. For example, we could choose a $U \subset M$ and a smooth function f supported in U ; then we define

$$(5.3) \quad \Phi(f) := \int_M \mathrm{dvol} f(x) \Phi(x).$$

Now let's discuss why we want the divergence operator and the other tools from last time. Strictly speaking, you cannot observe $\Phi(f)$, but instead its expectation values on states $\langle \Phi(f_1) \cdots \Phi(f_n) \rangle$. Heuristically, this is defined via the path integral

$$(5.4) \quad \langle \Phi(f_1) \cdots \Phi(f_n) \rangle := \frac{\int \mathcal{D}\phi \langle f_1 \Phi \rangle \cdots \langle f_n \Phi \rangle e^{-S/\hbar}}{\int \mathcal{D}\phi e^{-S/\hbar}}.$$

However, this is not a rigorous definition; the motivation for what we did last week is to be able to replace (5.4) with something mathematical.

Recall that we defined $H^0(\text{Obs}^*(U))$ for $U \subset M$, the observables of a (free) quantum field theory, to be the polynomial functions on $C^\infty(U)$ modulo the image of the divergence operator Div_μ , where μ is a measure. Specifically, Div_μ is a map $\text{Vect}(\mathbb{R}^n) \rightarrow P(\mathbb{R}^n)$ which, given a vector v , returns $\mathcal{L}_v(\mu) = d(i_v \mu)$.

If you're in the image of Div_μ , then you have zero expectation value: following directly from the definition,

$$(5.5) \quad \int \text{Div}_\mu(v) d\mu = 0.$$

Therefore observables whose difference is in $\text{Im}(\text{Div}_\mu)$ can't be distinguished by observations, which is why we mod out by this space.

Recall that $P(C^\infty(U))$ is the direct sum over $n \geq 0$ of $C_c^\infty(U^n)_{S_n}$, where S_n acts by permuting the indices. If P is given by $f_1, \dots, f_n \in \text{Sym}^n(C_c^\infty(U))$, we can evaluate P on Φ by

$$(5.6) \quad P(\Phi) = \int d\text{vol} f_1 \Phi \cdots \int d\text{vol} f_n \Phi.$$

Last time, we also define $\text{Vect}_c(C^\infty(U))$ in a similar way, but this time we take the direct sum of $C^\infty(U^{n+1})_{S_n}$. Then $\text{Div}_\mu: \text{Vect}_c(C^\infty(U)) \rightarrow P(C^\infty(U))$ by

$$(5.7) \quad \text{Div}_\mu \left(f_1 \cdots f_n \frac{\partial}{\partial \phi} \right) = -f_1 \cdots f_n \frac{\partial S}{\partial \phi} + \sum_i f_1 \cdots \widehat{f_i} \cdots f_n \int d\text{vol} f_i \cdot \phi.$$

Here the notation $\widehat{f_i}$ means that f_i is missing from the product.

If for example $S(\phi) = (1/2) \int d\text{vol} \Phi(\Delta + m^2)\Phi$ is the action for the free scalar field theory with mass m , then

$$(5.8) \quad \frac{\partial S}{\partial \Phi}(\Phi) = (\Delta + m^2)\Phi.$$

Now, we can recover Wick's theorem by looking at the cokernel of the divergence operator. Specifically, let $G(x, y): U \times U \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be the Green's function for $\Delta_x + m^2$, i.e.

$$(5.9) \quad (\Delta_x + m^2)G(x, y) = \delta(x - y),$$

and given functions f_1 and f_2 , let $\widetilde{\Phi} := \int dy G(x, y) f_2(y)$. Then

$$(5.10) \quad \text{Div} \left(f \frac{\partial}{\partial \widetilde{\Phi}} \right) = -f_1(\Delta + m^2)\widetilde{\Phi} + \int dx f_1(x) \widetilde{\Phi}(x)$$

$$(5.11) \quad = -f_1 \cdot f_2 + \int dx dy f_1(x) G(x - y) f_2(y),$$

which implies that

$$(5.12) \quad \langle \Phi(f_1) \Phi(f_2) \rangle = \int dx dy f_1(x) G(x, y) f_2(y).$$

Here $\frac{\partial}{\partial \widetilde{\Phi}}(\widetilde{f}) = \int d\text{vol} \widetilde{\Phi} \widetilde{f}$. And the conclusion is, the two-point correlation functions are exactly what we want them to be, which is a special case of Wick's theorem. And more generally, if we have four functions f_1, f_2, f_3, f_4 , then letting $\widetilde{\Phi} := \int dy G(x, y) f_4(y)$, we have the general case of Wick's theorem:

$$(5.13) \quad \text{Div} \left(f_1 f_2 f_3 \frac{\partial}{\partial \widetilde{\Phi}} \right) = -f_1 f_2 f_3 f_4 + f_1 f_2 \int dx f_3(x) G(x, y) f_4(x) + \cdots$$

As we discussed last time, we do not have a map $H^0(\text{Obs}^*(V)) \otimes H^0(\text{Obs}^*(V)) \rightarrow H^0(\text{Obs}^*(V))$, which is saying that we don't quite have an algebra; instead, we can pair observables together iff they live on disjoint opens. This leads to the definition of a prefactorization algebra.

6. PREFACTORIZATION ALGEBRAS AND SOME EXAMPLES: 2/27/19

Today, Ivan spoke about the definition of prefactorization algebras and some examples, including their relationship to associative algebras over \mathbb{R} , and how to build a prefactorization algebra out of the universal enveloping algebra of a Lie algebra.

Definition 6.1. Let M be a topological space and \mathbf{C} be a category. A *precosheaf* on M valued in \mathbf{C} is a covariant functor $\mathcal{F}: \mathbf{Top}(M) \rightarrow \mathbf{C}$, where $\mathbf{Top}(M)$ denotes the category whose objects are open subsets of M and whose morphisms are given by inclusions.

Definition 6.2. Let M be a topological space and $(\mathbf{C}, \otimes, 1)$ be a symmetric monoidal category. A *prefactorization algebra* (PFA) over M valued in \mathbf{C} is a precosheaf $\mathcal{F}: \mathbf{Top}(M) \rightarrow \mathbf{C}$ together with, for every finite ordered set $\mathfrak{U} := \{U_1, \dots, U_n\}$ of disjoint opens contained in an open $V \subset M$, a *structure map*

$$(6.3) \quad s_{\mathfrak{U}}: \mathcal{F}(U_1) \otimes \dots \otimes \mathcal{F}(U_n) \longrightarrow \mathcal{F}(V).$$

We require these maps to be compatible with the symmetric monoidal structure in the following sense: if $\tau: \mathcal{F}(U) \otimes \mathcal{F}(V) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(V) \otimes \mathcal{F}(U)$ is the symmetrizer,⁸ and $U, V \subset M$ are disjoint, we require the diagram

$$(6.4) \quad \begin{array}{ccc} \mathcal{F}(U) \otimes \mathcal{F}(V) & \xrightarrow{\tau} & \mathcal{F}(V) \otimes \mathcal{F}(U) \\ & \searrow s_{\{U,V\}} & \swarrow s_{\{V,U\}} \\ & \mathcal{F}(U \amalg V) & \end{array}$$

to commute.

Example 6.5. Let $\mathbf{C} = \mathbf{Vect}^{\text{fd}}$ denote the category of finite-dimensional vector spaces, M be any topological space, and \mathcal{F} be any precosheaf. (In particular, you might take M to be a smooth manifold and $\mathcal{F}(U) = C_c^\infty(U)$, which is covariant via extension by zero.) Then, $\text{Sym}^* \mathcal{F}$ has the structure of a prefactorization algebra: given disjoint $U_1, \dots, U_n \subset V$, the maps $\mathcal{F}(U_i) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(V)$ together define a map $\mathcal{F}(U_1) \oplus \dots \oplus \mathcal{F}(U_n) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(V)$. Since Sym^* sends direct sums to tensor products, we have a map

$$(6.6) \quad \text{Sym}^* \left(\bigoplus_{i=1}^n \mathcal{F}(U_i) \right) \cong \bigotimes_{i=1}^n \text{Sym}^* \mathcal{F}(U_i) \longrightarrow \mathcal{F}(V).$$

and this is compatible with the tensor product on $\mathbf{Vect}^{\text{fd}}$. The reason we can't use all vector spaces is because then we might have to worry about completions, etc. \blacktriangleleft

Example 6.7. Let A be a unital associative k -algebra; we will use it to define a prefactorization algebra A^{fact} over \mathbb{R} (meaning \mathbb{R} is the space M) valued in k -algebras. Namely, for any interval I , let $A^{\text{fact}}(I) := A$, and let $A^{\text{fact}}(\emptyset) = k$. If I is a disjoint union of n intervals, we assign to it $A^{\otimes n}$. Then the structure map $A^{\text{fact}}(U) \otimes A^{\text{fact}}(V) \rightarrow A^{\text{fact}}(U \amalg V)$ is the identity map $A^{\otimes 2} \rightarrow A^{\otimes 2}$, and the higher-order structure maps are similar. \blacktriangleleft

Definition 6.8. A factorization algebra over \mathbb{R} is *locally constant* if **TODO**: I missed this.

Proposition 6.9. A factorization algebra \mathcal{F} over \mathbb{R} is locally constant iff it's isomorphic to A^{fact} , where $A = \mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R})$.

TODO: I missed the proof.

But the most important example is that if \mathfrak{g} is a Lie algebra, its universal enveloping algebra $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$ defines a prefactorization algebra over \mathbb{R} . This is a particular case of a general construction, the factorization envelope of a sheaf of Lie algebras, which will be the observables of free theories, and will also appear in other places (Kac-Moody vertex algebras, and, in volume 2 of Costello-Gwilliam, Noether's theorem in QFT). In our case, we take the constant \mathfrak{g} -valued sheaf over \mathbb{R} . In general, one can build a prefactorization algebra on \mathbb{R} from any dg Lie algebra, and using just a Lie algebra one obtains the locally constant prefactorization algebra associated to $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$.

Definition 6.10. A *dg Lie algebra* (dg stands for “differential graded”) is data of a cochain complex (L^\bullet, d_L) and a Lie bracket $[-, -]: L^\bullet \times L^\bullet \rightarrow L^\bullet$ making L^\bullet into a graded Lie algebra, subject to the *graded Jacobi identity*

$$(6.11) \quad d_L[X, Y] = [d_L X, Y] + (-1)^{|X|} [X, d_L Y]$$

for all homogeneous elements X and Y of L^\bullet .

⁸The *symmetrizer*, a natural isomorphism $\tau: X \otimes Y \rightarrow Y \otimes X$ for all objects X and Y , is part of the data of a symmetric monoidal category.

For example, if \mathfrak{g} is any Lie algebra and $n \in \mathbb{Z}$, there's a dg Lie algebra $\mathfrak{g}[n]$ which is just \mathfrak{g} living in degree n and 0 in other degrees, with $d_{\mathfrak{g}[n]} = 0$. There are plenty of other examples.

Definition 6.12. Associated to any dg Lie algebra $(L^\bullet, d_L, [-, -])$ is a double complex called the *Chevalley-Eilenberg complex* $C_\bullet(L^\bullet)$. As a vector space, it's $\text{Sym}^*(L[1])$, i.e. in degree k it's $\text{Sym}^k(L[1])$. For example, if \mathfrak{g} is a Lie algebra, then $\text{Sym}(\mathfrak{g}[1]) = \Lambda^*\mathfrak{g}$. Then, there are two differentials: d_L induced from the differential on $L[1]$, and $d_{[-, -]}$ defined by

$$(6.13) \quad d_{[-, -]}(X^1 \cdots X^n) := \sum_{1 \leq i \leq j \leq n} (-1)^i [X^i, X^j] \cdot X^1 \cdots \widehat{X}^i \cdots X^j \cdots X^n.$$

where as usual \widehat{X}^i means leaving X^i out of the sum.

If we let $\widetilde{C}^{-k, i}(L) := (C_k(L))_i$, then d_L is a map $\widetilde{C}^{\bullet, \bullet} \rightarrow \widetilde{C}^{\bullet, \bullet+1}$ and $d_{[-, -]}$ is a map $\widetilde{C}^{\bullet, \bullet} \rightarrow \widetilde{C}^{\bullet+1, \bullet}$.

We're interested in the *totalization* of this double complex, which is the chain complex

$$(6.14) \quad \left(T^\bullet(L) := \bigoplus_{i+j=\bullet} \widetilde{C}^{i, j}(L), d_P + d_{[-, -]} \right).$$

You can check that this differential squares to zero:

$$(6.15) \quad (d_L + d_{[-, -]})^2 = \underbrace{d_L^2}_{=0} + \underbrace{d_L d_{[-, -]} + d_{[-, -]} d_L}_{=0 \text{ by (6.11)}} + \underbrace{d_{[-, -]}^2}_{=0}.$$

The cohomology of this complex is called *Lie algebra cohomology*; if that's what you're after in the end, you can define it faster (if more abstractly) as some derived functor.

Example 6.16. Let \mathfrak{g} be a Lie algebra and $U \subset \mathbb{R}$ be an open set. Then $\Omega_c^\bullet(U) \otimes \mathfrak{g}$ the compactly supported \mathfrak{g} -valued forms, has the structure of a dg Lie algebra, where the differential is the de Rham differential and the bracket is

$$(6.17) \quad [\alpha \otimes A, \beta \otimes B] := \alpha \wedge \beta \otimes [A, B]. \quad \triangleleft$$

Theorem 6.18. Let \mathfrak{g} be a Lie algebra and for any open $U \subset \mathbb{R}$, let $\mathfrak{g}^\mathbb{R}(U) := \Omega_c^\bullet(U) \otimes \mathfrak{g}$. Let \mathcal{H} denote the presheaf $\mathcal{H}(U) := H^*(T^\bullet(\mathfrak{g}^\mathbb{R}(U)), d_{\text{dR}} + d_{[-, -]})$. Then \mathcal{H} is a locally constant prefactorization algebra modeled on $\mathcal{H}(\mathbb{R}) = \mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$.

Proof sketch. If $i: U \hookrightarrow V$ is an inclusion of one interval into another, then the induced map $\Omega_c^\bullet(U) \otimes \mathfrak{g} \rightarrow \Omega_c^\bullet(V) \otimes \mathfrak{g}$ is a *quasi-isomorphism* of dg Lie algebras, meaning that it's a dg Lie algebra homomorphism which is an isomorphism on cohomology (of the complex, not necessarily Lie algebra cohomology). Therefore \mathcal{H} is locally constant.

Therefore it suffices to identify $\mathcal{H}(\mathbb{R}) = H^*(C_\bullet(\mathfrak{g}^\mathbb{R}(\mathbb{R})))$. The map $\Omega_c^\bullet(\mathbb{R}) \otimes \mathfrak{g} \rightarrow H_c^*(\mathbb{R}) \otimes \mathfrak{g}$ is a quasi-isomorphism of dg Lie algebras, so we have the following identifications of vector spaces:

$$H^*(C_\bullet(\mathfrak{g}^\mathbb{R}(\mathbb{R}))) \cong H^*(C_\bullet(H_c^*(\mathbb{R}) \otimes \mathfrak{g})) \cong T^\bullet(H_c^*(\mathbb{R}) \otimes \mathfrak{g}).$$

You can check that the double complex is concentrated in degree zero, so this is

$$\begin{aligned} &= T^0(H_c^*(\mathbb{R}) \otimes \mathfrak{g}) \\ &= \text{Sym}^*(H_c^1(\mathbb{R}) \otimes \mathfrak{g}) = \text{Sym}^* \mathfrak{g}. \end{aligned}$$

Finally, we have to address the algebra structure. There are identifications

$$(6.19a) \quad T^0(\mathfrak{g}^\mathbb{R}(U)) = \text{Sym}^*(\Omega_c^1(U) \otimes \mathfrak{g})$$

$$(6.19b) \quad T^{-1}(\mathfrak{g}^\mathbb{R}(U)) = (\Omega_c^0(U) \otimes \mathfrak{g}) \cdot \text{Sym}^*(\Omega_c^1(U) \otimes \mathfrak{g})$$

$$(6.19c) \quad T^{-2}(\mathfrak{g}^\mathbb{R}(U)) = (\Lambda^2 \Omega_c^0(U) \otimes \mathfrak{g}) \cdot \text{Sym}^*(\Omega_c^1(U) \otimes \mathfrak{g})$$

and so on. Let $\epsilon \in \Omega_c^1(\mathbb{R})$ have total integral 1; then we get a map $\Phi: \mathfrak{g} \rightarrow \mathcal{H}(\mathbb{R})$ sending $X \mapsto [\epsilon \otimes X]$. We want to show that $\Phi([X, Y]) = [\Phi(X), \Phi(Y)]$, which would imply the vector space map $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g}) = \text{Sym} \mathfrak{g} \rightarrow \mathcal{H}(\mathbb{R})$ is an algebra isomorphism, via the universal property of $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$.

Write $\epsilon = f_0 dx$, where f_0 is supported in $(-\delta, \delta)$, and let $f_t(x) = f_0(x - t)$. Then

$$(6.20a) \quad \Phi(X)\Phi(Y) = [\epsilon \otimes X] \cdot [\epsilon \otimes Y] = [f_0(x) dx \otimes X] \cdot [f_1(x) dx \otimes Y],$$

as long as $\delta < 1/2$, and similarly

$$(6.20b) \quad \Phi(Y)\Phi(X) = [f_{-1}(x) dx \otimes Y] \cdot [f_0(x) dx \otimes X].$$

Since $\int_{\mathbb{R}} (f_{-1} - f_1) dx = 0$, there's an $h \in \Omega_c^0(\mathbb{R})$ such that h is 1 on (δ, δ) and $dh = (f_{-1} - f_1) dx$. (Explicitly, h is an antiderivative of $f_{-1} - f_1$.) Then

$$(6.21a)$$

$$(d_L + d_{[-,]})((f_0 dx \otimes X) \cdot (h \otimes Y)) = (f_0 dx \otimes X)(dh \otimes Y) + f_0 h dx \otimes [X, Y]$$

$$(6.21b) \quad = (f_0 dx \otimes X)(f_{-1} dx \otimes Y) - (f_0 dx \otimes X)(f_1 dx \otimes Y) + f_0 dx \otimes [X, Y].$$

The first two terms are the same in homology, and the last term is $[\epsilon \otimes [X, Y]]$. \square

7. MORE EXAMPLES OF PREFACTORIZATION ALGEBRAS: 3/6/19

“If you have any questions, I answered them before you came.”

Today, Andy spoke about chapter 3 of Costello-Gwilliam.

Recall from last time that if A is a unital associative \mathbb{C} -algebra, we can build from it a locally constant prefactorization algebra \mathcal{F}_A over the real line. This assigns \mathbb{C} , as a commutative algebra, to the empty set, and to every interval $I \subset \mathbb{R}$, assigns the vector space A . This is also an algebra, of course, and we'll be able to see that structure from \mathcal{F}_A . Finally, $\mathcal{F}_A(\mathbb{R}) = A$. That \mathcal{F}_A is locally constant means all inclusions of intervals are isomorphisms – and in this case they're just the identity. We can recover the algebra structure on A from the factorization product: if I_1 and I_2 are intervals, let J be an interval containing I ; then we have a product

$$(7.1) \quad A \otimes A = \mathcal{F}_A(I_1) \otimes \mathcal{F}_A(I_2) \longrightarrow \mathcal{F}_A(I_1 \amalg I_2) \longrightarrow \mathcal{F}_A(J) = A,$$

and this is the multiplication map.

Conversely, if \mathcal{F} is a locally constant prefactorization algebra over \mathbb{R} , it's isomorphic to \mathcal{F}_A for $A := \mathcal{F}(\mathbb{R})$.

We also have a little more structure: the inclusion $\emptyset \rightarrow I$ induces a map $\mathbb{C} \rightarrow A$, and the various axioms imply this sends 1 to the identity of A .

Example 7.2. Our next example is a variant of this. Let A and A' be unital associative algebras over \mathbb{C} and M be a pointed (A, A') -bimodule (meaning it comes with a distinguished element, which could be zero). We will use this to build a “piecewise locally constant” prefactorization algebra $\mathcal{F}_{A, M, A'}$ over \mathbb{R} , with a *defect* at $0 \in \mathbb{R}$.

Now we have three kinds of intervals: intervals contained in $\mathbb{R}_{<0}$, which we'll denote I_{left} ; intervals contained in $\mathbb{R}_{>0}$, which we'll denote I_{right} ; and intervals containing zero, which we'll denote I_{mid} . We have $\mathcal{F}_{A, M, A'}(\emptyset) = \mathbb{C}$ again, and then assign

$$(7.3) \quad \begin{aligned} \mathcal{F}_{A, M, A'}(I_{\text{left}}) &:= A \\ \mathcal{F}_{A, M, A'}(I_{\text{right}}) &:= A' \\ \mathcal{F}_{A, M, A'}(I_{\text{mid}}) &= M. \end{aligned}$$

The factorization product for two intervals of the form I_{left} or I_{right} is exactly as it was in the previous example. For $I_{\text{left}} \amalg I_{\text{mid}}$, we produce the action of A on M , and for $I_{\text{mid}} \amalg I_{\text{right}}$, we get the action of A' on M . The inclusions $\emptyset \hookrightarrow I_{\text{left}}$ or $\emptyset \hookrightarrow I_{\text{right}}$ pick out the identity elements of A , resp. A' , and the inclusion $\emptyset \hookrightarrow I_{\text{mid}}$ picks out the distinguished element of M . \blacktriangleleft

Example 7.4. This example is more reminiscent of quantum mechanics. Given a finite-dimensional complex vector space V and a Hermitian operator $H: V \rightarrow V$ called the *Hamiltonian*, together with two vectors $\psi_i \in V$ and $\psi_o \in \bar{V}$, we can obtain a prefactorization algebra on the interval $[0, T]$.

Let $A := \text{End } V$. We then make the following assignments:

- $\mathcal{F}((a, b)) = A$,
- $\mathcal{F}([0, a)) = V$,
- $\mathcal{F}((b, T]) = \bar{V}$, and
- $\mathcal{F}([0, T]) = \mathbb{C}$.

The factorization product is time evolution by the Hamiltonian: if $a < b < c < d$, the factorization product $\mathcal{F}((a, b)) \otimes \mathcal{F}((c, d)) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(a, d)$ is identified with the map $A \otimes A \rightarrow A$ sending

$$(7.5) \quad \mathcal{O}_1 \otimes \mathcal{O}_2 \mapsto \mathcal{O}_1 e^{iH(c-b)} \mathcal{O}_2.$$

The map $\mathcal{F}(\emptyset) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}((a, b))$ sends 1 to $e^{iH(b-a)}$, and the map $\mathcal{F}(\emptyset) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}([0, a])$ sends 1 to $e^{iH a} \psi_i$.

We can also see expectation values: the map

$$(7.6a) \quad \mathcal{F}([0, a] \cup (b, T]) \longrightarrow \mathcal{F}([0, T])$$

is identified with the map $V \otimes \bar{V} \rightarrow \mathbb{C}$ sending

$$(7.6b) \quad \psi_1 \otimes \psi_2 \mapsto \langle \psi_2, e^{iH(b-a)} \psi_1 \rangle.$$

So in some sense, everything in $[0, a]$ and $(b, T]$ is accounted for by the states you picked, and the factorization algebra handles time evolution in between. \blacktriangleleft

Remark 7.7. You can make a variant of the above example on all of \mathbb{R} without needing the boundary conditions. This is a locally constant prefactorization algebra, and the isomorphism with \mathcal{F}_A involves writing down isomorphisms that intertwine time evolution by the Hamiltonian.

This might be a little weird, because locally constant factorization algebras are in a sense, topological, and there's no dynamics. The reason we had dynamics in this example is that the isomorphism destroys the information about the Hamiltonian. If you ask for more structure, namely equivariance under the group of translations, then the Hamiltonian can be recovered from the abstract isomorphism type of the factorization algebra. \blacktriangleleft

We want more examples, and hence will study *factorization envelopes*, which are a way to product many more examples. The input data will be a fine sheaf \mathcal{L} of dg Lie algebras over a manifold M . Here, “fine” is a technical term whose upshot is that partitions of unit exist and/or it's possible to make sense of compactly supported sections; this implies higher cohomology vanishes. Theorem 6.18 from last time is a special case, where we fixed a dg Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} and let $\mathcal{L}(U) := \mathfrak{g} \otimes \Omega_M^*(U)$.

Now, we can build a cosheaf \mathcal{L}_c of dg Lie algebras over M whose value on an open $U \subset M$ is $C_c^\infty(U)$. Taking the Chevalley-Eilenberg cochains produces another cosheaf $C_\bullet \mathcal{L}_c$ of dg Lie algebras:

$$(7.8) \quad (C_\bullet \mathcal{L}_c)(U) = C_\bullet(\mathcal{L}_c(U)) = \text{Sym}^\bullet(\mathcal{L}_c(U)[1]),$$

with a differential. Be aware that $\mathcal{L}_c(U)$ is an infinite-dimensional space, so taking its symmetric algebra involves delving into some functional-analytic details; consult the book for details.

Anyways, $C_\bullet \mathcal{L}_c$ is a prefactorization algebra valued in cochain complexes. You can therefore take cohomology, and obtain a locally constant prefactorization algebra $H^*(C_\bullet \mathcal{L}_c)$ on M .

Example 7.9. If $M = \mathbb{R}$ and $\mathcal{L}(U) = \mathfrak{g} \otimes \Omega_M^*(U)$, then the locally constant prefactorization algebra $H^*(C_\bullet \mathcal{L}_c)$ can be identified with \mathcal{F}_A above, where A is the universal enveloping algebra $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$.

The physical interpretation of $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$ is the algebra of Noether charges in quantum mechanics with \mathfrak{g} -symmetry. \blacktriangleleft

Example 7.10. If $M = \mathbb{R}^n$, then this is equivalent to the structure of an E_n -algebra in vector spaces. This is an algebra over the little n -discs operad, which roughly means that for every arrangement of k D^n s inside D^n , we get an operation $A^{\otimes k} \rightarrow A$.

As n increases, this gets more and more commutative. For example, E_n -objects in categories are: monoidal for $n = 1$, braided monoidal for $n = 2$, and symmetric monoidal for $n \geq 3$. In vector spaces, it's less elaborate: an associative algebra for $n = 1$ and a commutative algebra for $n = 2$. If we had an extra differential, perhaps coming from supersymmetry, then we'd land in E_n -algebras in cochain complexes, and there we get a new structure for each n .

Possibly this has the interpretation as the algebra of currents in an n -dimensional quantum field theory with \mathfrak{g} -symmetry. \blacktriangleleft

In later chapters, we'll also see a slight generalization called *twisted factorization envelopes*. Let $\widetilde{\mathcal{L}}_c$ be a one-dimensional extension of \mathcal{L}_c , fitting into a short exact sequence

$$(7.11) \quad 0 \longrightarrow \mathbb{C}[k] \longrightarrow \widetilde{\mathcal{L}}_c \longrightarrow \mathcal{L}_c \longrightarrow 0,$$

where $\mathbb{C}[k]$ denotes the constant cosheaf valued in \mathbb{C} , shifted by k . We can then run the same construction for $\widetilde{\mathcal{L}}_c$, and obtain a prefactorization algebra again, but this time we get a little extra structure: it's a prefactorization algebra in modules for the algebra $\mathbb{C}[c]$, where $\deg c = -k - 1$.

Example 7.12. Now, let \mathfrak{g} be a Lie algebra and Σ be a Riemann surface, and let $\mathcal{L} := \mathfrak{g} \otimes \Omega_\Sigma^{0,\bullet}$, so the differential is $\bar{\partial}$. Fix an invariant bilinear pairing $\langle -, - \rangle$ on \mathfrak{g} . Then we can define a one-dimensional central extension of \mathcal{L}_c by

$$(7.13) \quad [\alpha \otimes X, \beta \otimes Y] := \alpha \wedge \beta \otimes [X, Y] + \int_\Sigma (\alpha \wedge \partial \beta) \langle X, Y \rangle c,$$

where c is the generator of $\mathbb{C}[k]$ (since (7.11) splits as vector spaces). We call $H^*(C_\bullet \widetilde{\mathcal{L}}_c)$ the *Kac-Moody prefactorization algebra* over Σ ; c will be the level, and $k = -1$. Later on, we'll prove that one can recover the Kac-Moody vertex algebra from this structure, akin to how we recovered $\mathcal{U}(\mathfrak{g})$ in Example 7.9. ◀

There's also a version of this over higher-dimensional complex manifolds, which appear in topologically twisted supersymmetric gauge theories.

There's also an equivariant notion of a prefactorization algebra over a manifold with a G -action. For every $g \in G$, we have an isomorphism $\sigma_g: \mathcal{F}(U) \rightarrow \mathcal{F}(gU)$, and we'd like for this to be compatible with the \mathfrak{g} -action of derivations. This recovers some things we know in physics, e.g. that the Poincaré algebra acts on spaces of observables.

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