

The diagram illustrates the definition of the Wilson loop operator U_α in terms of a phase factor $e^{iq\alpha}$.

On the left, a vertical black line with an upward-pointing arrow is labeled \mathcal{O}_q at the top. A red ellipse encircles the middle of this line, with an arrow indicating a counter-clockwise direction. To the right of this ellipse is the label U_α .

In the center is an equals sign $=$.

On the right, a vertical black line with an upward-pointing arrow is also labeled \mathcal{O}_q at the top. A gray dot is located on this line. To the left of this dot is the phase factor $e^{iq\alpha}$.