Twisting cochains and twisted complexes

Simplicial methods in complex-analytic geometry

Tim Hosgood

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Université d'Aix-Marseille
https://thosgood.github.io

Plan

History

Twisting cochains (OTT)

- The bicomplex
- The total complex
- Maurer-Cartan

Twisted complexes (BK)

- Pretriangulated vs. triangulated
- Generalisation of twisting cochains

Other fun things

History

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- John C Moore. “Differential homological algebra”. In: *Actes du Congres International des Mathématiciens* 1 (1970), pp. 335–339.

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- Domingo Toledo and Yue Lin L Tong. “A parametrix for δ and Riemann-Roch in Čech theory”. In: *Topology* 15.4 (1976), pp. 273–301.
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- Nigel R O’Brian, Domingo Toledo, and Yue Lin L Tong. “The Trace Map and Characteristic Classes for Coherent Sheaves”. In: *American Journal of Mathematics* 103.2 (1981), pp. 225–252.

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- A I Bondal and M M Kapranov. "Enhanced Triangulated Categories". In: *Math. USSR Sbornik* 70.1 (1991), pp. 1–15.
- Giovanni Faonte. *Simplicial nerve of an A-infinity category*. 2015. arXiv: 1312.2127 [math.AT].

Twisting cochains (OTT)

Nice spaces

Definition (Stein spaces)

A complex-analytic[1] manifold Y is said to be *Stein* if it is

1. *holomorphically convex*; and
2. *holomorphically separable*.

[1]analytic = $\mathcal{O}_Y$ is holomorphic functions, Y has the $\mathbb{C}^n$-induced topology; algebraic = $\mathcal{O}_Y$ is algebraic functions, Y has the Zariski topology.
[2]*Locally finite*, *Stein*, and *trivialising* (for the bundles in question).

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Throughout, X is a complex-analytic manifold with a nice[2] cover $\mathcal{U} = \{U_\alpha\}_{\alpha\in I}$.

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Endomorphisms of bounded-graded modules

Let $V = \{V_\alpha^\bullet\}$ be a collection of *bounded-graded* $\mathcal{O}_{U_\alpha}$*-modules*:

$$V_\alpha^\bullet = \bigoplus_{q \in \mathbb{N}} V_\alpha^q \quad \text{such that } V_\alpha^q \text{ is zero for all but finitely many } q.$$

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Definition (Endomorphisms)

The collection of *degree-q endomorphisms* $\mathrm{End}^q(V)$ *of* V is, over each $U_{\alpha_0\ldots\alpha_p}$, given by

$$\mathrm{End}^q(V)|U_{\alpha_0\ldots\alpha_p} = \bigoplus_{i\in\mathbb{Z}} \mathrm{Hom}\big(V_{\alpha_p}^i|U_{\alpha_0\ldots\alpha_p}, V_{\alpha_0}^{i+q}|U_{\alpha_0\ldots\alpha_p}\big).$$

Source and target

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We discuss this later.

Definition (Deleted Čech complex)

Define the chain complex $(\hat{\mathscr{C}}^\bullet(\mathcal{U}, \mathrm{End}^\circ(V)), \hat{\delta})$ by

$$\hat{\mathscr{C}}^p\big(\mathcal{U}, \mathrm{End}^q(V)\big) = \bigoplus_{(\alpha_0,\ldots,\alpha_p)} \mathrm{End}^q(V)|U_{\alpha_0\ldots\alpha_p}$$

(where $\mathrm{End}^q(V)|U_{\alpha_0\ldots\alpha_p} = 0$ if $U_{\alpha_0\ldots\alpha_p} = \varnothing$) with the ***deleted Čech differential***

$$\hat{\delta}\colon \hat{\mathscr{C}}^p\big(\mathcal{U}, \mathrm{End}^q(V)\big) \to \hat{\mathscr{C}}^{p+1}\big(\mathcal{U}, \mathrm{End}^q(V)\big)$$

$$(\hat{\delta}c)_{\alpha_0\ldots\alpha_{p+1}} = \sum_{i=1}^{p}(-1)^i c_{\alpha_0\ldots\widehat{\alpha_i}\ldots\alpha_{p+1}}.$$

A notational note

We use $\hat{\mathscr{C}}$ and $\hat{\delta}$ for the *deleted* Čech objects and $\check{\mathscr{C}}$ and $\check{\delta}$ for the ‘full’ Čech objects.

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- We could define the same complex for an arbitrary bounded graded vector bundle, i.e.

$$\hat{\mathscr{C}}^p(\mathcal{U}, V^q) = \bigoplus_{(\alpha_0, \dots, \alpha_p)} V^q_{\alpha_0}$$

  but where the deleted Čech differential only omits the *first* index (but includes the $(p+1)$th).

A brief interlude on bundles

A holomorphic vector bundle E on X is described exactly by its *transition maps* $g_{\alpha\beta} \in \mathrm{GL}(n, \mathbb{C})$, which describe the change in trivialisation from over U_β to over U_α.

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Note that these are maps from $E|U_{\alpha_p}$ to $E|U_{\alpha_0}$ in the specific case where $p = 1$.

Rewriting the cocycle condition

Thinking of $g_{\alpha\beta}$ as an element of $\hat{\mathscr{C}}^1(\mathcal{U}, E)$, we see that

$$(\hat{\delta} g)_{\alpha\beta\gamma} = -g_{\alpha\gamma}$$
$$(g \cdot g)_{\alpha\beta\gamma} = g_{\alpha\beta} g_{\beta\gamma}.$$

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This means that we can rewrite the cocycle condition as

$$\hat{\delta}g + g \cdot g = 0,$$

which looks like the *Maurer-Cartan equation* (an observation to which we will later return).

Twisting cochains

Definition (Twisting cochains)

A *(holomorphic) twisting cochain over V* is a formal sum

$$\mathrm{a} = \bigoplus_{k\in\mathbb{N}} \mathrm{a}^{k,1-k}$$

where $\mathrm{a}^{k,1-k} \in \hat{\mathscr{C}}^k(\mathcal{U}, \mathrm{End}^{1-k}(V))$ such that

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2. $\mathrm{a}_{\alpha\alpha}^{1,0} = \mathrm{id}$.

The invertibility condition "should" really be weakened by asking only that $\mathrm{a}_{\alpha\alpha}^{1,0}$ be *homotopic* to the identity.

Twisting cochains (cont.)

Warning

The multiplication is **not** simply component-wise: it is given by taking all possible combinations, i.e.

$$(\mathrm{a} \cdot \mathrm{b})^{p,s} = \bigoplus_{\substack{q+q'=p \\ t+t'=s}} \mathrm{a}^{q,t} \cdot \mathrm{b}^{q',t'}.$$

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- If V has a differential then a is an element of total degree 1.
- We haven't said *when* twisting cochains exist, but under pretty mild assumptions they always do (by an inductive construction).

Unpacking the definition

$(k=0) \rightsquigarrow$ $\mathrm{a}_\alpha^{0,1} \cdot \mathrm{a}_\alpha^{0,1} = 0$, which tells us that $\mathrm{a}_\alpha^{0,1}$ is a *differential on $V_\alpha^\bullet$.*

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$(k=1) \rightsquigarrow$ $\mathrm{a}_\alpha^{0,1} \cdot \mathrm{a}_{\alpha\beta}^{1,0} = \mathrm{a}_{\alpha\beta}^{1,0} \cdot \mathrm{a}_\beta^{0,1}$, which tells us that we have a *chain map of chain complexes*

$$\mathrm{a}_{\alpha\beta}^{1,0} \colon \left(V_\beta^\bullet|U_{\alpha\beta}, \mathrm{a}_\beta^{0,1}\right) \to \left(V_\alpha^\bullet|U_{\alpha\beta}, \mathrm{a}_\alpha^{0,1}\right)$$

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$$\mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\alpha\beta} \colon (V^\bullet_\beta | U_{\alpha\beta}, \mathrm{a}^{0,1}_{\beta}) \to (V^\bullet_\alpha | U_{\alpha\beta}, \mathrm{a}^{0,1}_{\alpha})$$

$(k=2) \rightsquigarrow$ $-\mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\alpha\gamma} + \mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\alpha\beta} \cdot \mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\beta\gamma} = \mathrm{a}^{0,1}_{\alpha} \cdot \mathrm{a}^{2,-1}_{\alpha\beta\gamma} + \mathrm{a}^{2,-1}_{\alpha\beta\gamma} \cdot \mathrm{a}^{0,1}_{\gamma}$, which says that $\mathrm{a}^{2,-1}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$ witnesses a *chain homotopy* between $\mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\alpha\gamma}$ and $\mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\alpha\beta} \cdot \mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\beta\gamma}$. On $\alpha\beta\alpha$ and $\beta\alpha\beta$ this tells us that $\mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\alpha\beta}$ and $\mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\beta\alpha}$ are *chain homotopic inverses*, i.e. *quasi-isomorphism*.

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Extra-curricular

By taking (internal) homology we obtain something strict: a complex of *coherent sheaves* $\mathrm{H}^\bullet(\mathfrak{a})$. This is because quasi-isomorphisms become strict isomorphisms in homology.

We can use this fact to construct twisting cochains that resolve coherent sheaves by taking *local* resolutions by vector bundles.

The total differential

Lemma

For any $\mathrm{a} \in \mathrm{Tot}^1\hat{\mathscr{C}}^\bullet(\mathcal{U}, \mathrm{End}^\circ(V))$*, the map*

$$\begin{aligned} \mathrm{D}_\mathrm{a} \colon \mathrm{Tot}^r\hat{\mathscr{C}}^\bullet(\mathcal{U}, V^\circ) &\to \mathrm{Tot}^{r+1}\hat{\mathscr{C}}^\bullet(\mathcal{U}, V^\circ) \\ c &\mapsto \hat{\delta}c + c \cdot \mathrm{a} \end{aligned}$$

defines a differential (i.e. squares to zero) if and only if a *is a twisting cochain.*

Proof.

(Tedious) definition chasing. □

The total differential (cont.)

We can actually define twisting cochains in a different way using this lemma (but we won't do so today).

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But this approach lets us think of a twisting cochain as a *first-order perturbation of the deleted Čech differential*.

Example

Look at the most trivial example: let V be an *ungraded* vector bundle, and $\mathrm{a} = \mathrm{a}^{0,1} + \mathrm{a}^{1,0}$, where $\mathrm{a}^{0,1}_{\alpha} = \mathrm{id}_{V_\alpha}$, and the $\mathrm{a}^{1,0}$ are the transition maps. Then

$$(\mathrm{D}_{\mathrm{a}} c)_{\alpha_0 \ldots \alpha_{p+1}} = \mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\alpha_0 \alpha_1} c_{\alpha_1 \ldots \alpha_{p+1}} + \sum_{i=1}^{p+1} (-1)^i c_{\alpha_0 \ldots \widehat{\alpha}_i \ldots \alpha_{p+1}}.$$

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Note that we couldn't use the full Čech differential on $\hat{\mathscr{C}}^\bullet(\mathcal{U}, V^\circ)$ because everything has to lie over U_{α_0}, but this total differential solves that problem — recall that $\mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\alpha_0\alpha_1}$ is a (quasi-)isomorphism.

Examples

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A spectral-sequence argument shows that, in fact, D_a here really is 'the same as' the full Čech differential.

Example

Now look at a slightly-less trivial example: let $V^\bullet$ consist of *complexes* $(V^\bullet_\alpha, \mathrm{d}_\alpha)$ of vector bundles, and $\mathrm{a} = \mathrm{a}^{0,1} + \mathrm{a}^{1,0}$, where $\mathrm{a}^{0,1}_\alpha = \mathrm{d}_\alpha$, and the $\mathrm{a}^{1,0}$ are the transition maps. Then

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\begin{aligned}
(\mathrm{D}_{\mathrm{a}} c)_{\alpha_0 \ldots \alpha_{p+1}} = (-1)^p \mathrm{a}^{0,1}_{\alpha_0} c_{\alpha_0 \ldots \alpha_p} &+ \mathrm{a}^{1,0}_{\alpha_0 \alpha_1} c_{\alpha_1 \ldots \alpha_{p+1}} \\
&+ \sum_{i=1}^{p+1} (-1)^i c_{\alpha_0 \ldots \widehat{\alpha}_i \ldots \alpha_{p+1}}.
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Identifying the second and third terms with the full Čech differential, as above, gives the usual total differential of the Čech bicomplex:

$$\mathrm{D}_\mathrm{a} = \check{\delta} \pm \mathrm{d}_V.$$

Why this emphasis on the first index?

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- Transition maps naturally go from α_p to α_0.
- We want to be able to compare local things, and we need to pull everything back to lie over the same open set in order to do so.

The Maurer-Cartan equation

Subject	Equation	Interpretation
Differential geometry	$F_{\nabla} = \mathrm{d}A + A \cdot A$	curvature of a Koszul connection[3]
Gauge theory	$\Omega = \mathrm{d}A + \frac{1}{2}[A \wedge A]$	curvature of a principal connection
Deformation theory	$\partial a + \frac{1}{2}[a, a]$	deformations of f.d. associative k-algebras with unit[4]

[3] Here be Christoffel symbols.

[4] There is the beautiful fact (that we won't explain at all) that $\mathrm{MC}(A \otimes \mathfrak{g}) \simeq \mathrm{Hom}_{\mathsf{dg-alg}}(\mathrm{CE}(\mathfrak{g}), A)$.

Flatness

Motto

Solutions to (i.e. zeros of) the Maurer-Cartan equation are always (in some sense) *flat objects*.

Twisted complexes (BK)

Other fun things