

Obstruction theory for parameterized higher WZW terms

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Motivation

Classical fact: Obstruction to globalizing a form $\omega \in \Omega_{\text{cl}}^{p+2}(\mathbb{R}^n)$ over an n -manifold is existence of $\text{Stab}_{\text{GL}(n)}(\omega)$ -structure.

Example: $\omega \in \Omega^3(\mathbb{R}^7)$ the associative 3-form $\Rightarrow G_2$ -structure.

Questions: What happens as...

- 1.) ...forms are prequantized to Deligne cocycles \mathbf{L} ?
 - 2.) ...base is allowed to be a higher étale stack?
 - A) What are the obstructions to existence of a globalization?
 - B) What is group stack of symmetries of any given globalization?
-

Application:

All Green-Schwarz-type super p -brane sigma-models are controlled by $\mathbf{L}_{\text{WZW}}^{p+2}$ globalized over a super-spacetime;

for the D-branes and for the M5-brane the base is a higher stack modeled on the homotopy fiber of $\mathbf{L}_{\text{WZW}}^{\text{F1}}$, $\mathbf{L}_{\text{WZW}}^{\text{M2}}$, respectively.

- A) Obstruction to global existence:
classical anomalies (was completely open)
- B) Symmetries of given globalization:
BPS charge extended superisometries (was only known rationally)

Blueprint: ordinary geometric prequantization

Consider $\omega := dp_i \wedge dq^i \in \Omega_{\text{cl}}^2(\mathbb{R}^{2n})$ and $\mathbf{L} := p_i \wedge dq^i$, then:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. definite globalization (X, ω^X) : | alm. symplectic structure; |
| 2. definite globalization $(X; \mathbf{L}^X)$: | prequantum line bundle; |
| 3. symmetry group of (X, ω^X) : | symplectomorphism group; |
| 4. symmetry group of (X, \mathbf{L}^X) : | quantomorphism group. |
-

Since \mathbf{L} has automorphisms, where ω does not, quantomorphisms form (central) extension:

$$\bigoplus_{\pi_0(X)} (\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)^{\text{c}} \longrightarrow \text{QuantMorph}(X, \mathbf{L}^X) \longrightarrow \text{HamSympl}(X, \omega^X)$$

On the Lie algebra level this is the Poisson bracket extension:

$$0 \rightarrow H^0(X) \rightarrow \text{pois}(X, \omega^X) \rightarrow \text{HamVect}(X, \omega^X) \rightarrow 0.$$

For (X, ω^X) a symplectic vector space, this is the Heisenberg extension.

Higher differential geometry

Lift classical theory from the category `SmoothMfd` to the homotopy theory \mathbf{H} of simplicial sheaves over smooth manifolds (“smooth ∞ -groupoids”, “higher smooth stacks”).

Theorem (classical+Lurie'12): A_∞ -group stacks are equivalently loopings of pointed connected higher stacks:

$$\mathrm{Grp}(\mathbf{H}) \begin{array}{c} \xleftarrow{\Omega} \\ \xrightarrow[\mathbf{B}]{\simeq} \end{array} \mathbf{H}_{\geq 1}^*$$

Theorem [dcct]: \mathbf{H} is *cohesive*, the derived global section coreflection $\flat := \mathrm{Lconst} \circ \Gamma$ produces moduli stacks of flat G -principal connections for any A_∞ -group stack G .

The double homotopy fiber of the \flat -counit is the higher

Maurer-Cartan form: $G \xrightarrow{\theta_G} \flat_{\mathrm{dR}} \mathbf{B}G$

$$\begin{array}{ccc} & \downarrow & \\ & \flat \mathbf{B}G & \longrightarrow \mathbf{B}G \end{array}$$

Higher prequantization

The Dold-Kan correspondence $DK : \text{Ch}_{\bullet, \geq 0} \xrightarrow{\simeq} \text{Ab}^{\Delta^{\text{op}}} \rightarrow \text{Set}^{\Delta^{\text{op}}}$ includes traditional sheaf hypercohomology into \mathbf{H} .

Write: $\mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma) := \text{DK}((\underline{\mathbb{R}}/\Gamma)[p+1]);$
 $b_{\text{dR}} \mathbf{B}^{p+2} \mathbb{R} := \text{DK}(\Omega^1 \xrightarrow{d} \dots \xrightarrow{d} \Omega_{\text{cl}}^{p+2})$

Proposition [dcct]: Homotopy pullback of MC-form $\theta_{\mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)}$ along the global differential form inclusion

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}} & \longrightarrow & \mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma) \\
 \uparrow \mathbf{L} & & \downarrow \theta_{\mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)} \\
 X & \xrightarrow{\omega} & \Omega_{\text{cl}}^{p+2} \longrightarrow b_{\text{dR}} \mathbf{B}^{p+2} \mathbb{R} \\
 & & \downarrow F_{(-)}
 \end{array}$$

is given by the Deligne complex:

$$\mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}} \simeq \text{DK}[\Gamma \hookrightarrow \Omega^0 \xrightarrow{d} \Omega^1 \xrightarrow{d} \dots \xrightarrow{d} \Omega^{p+1}]$$

Fact: $X \xrightarrow{\mathbf{L}} \mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}}$ has holonomy over closed mfd. Σ :

$$[\Sigma, X] \xrightarrow{[\Sigma, \mathbf{L}]} [\Sigma, \mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}}] \xrightarrow{\text{fiber integration}} \mathbf{B}^{p+1-\dim(\Sigma)}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}}$$

$\xrightarrow{\text{WZW action functional}}$

Infinitesimal symmetries

Theorem [FRS13b]: For $X \in \text{SmthMfd}$, infinitesimal symmetries of (X, \mathbf{L}) form L_∞ -algebra extension of vector fields by the abelian L_∞ -algebra on the de Rham complex, classified by the L_∞ -cocycle given by $\iota_{(-)}\omega$: there is a homotopy fiber sequence

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \Omega^\bullet[\rho] & \longrightarrow & \text{poiss}(X, \mathbf{L}) \\ & & \downarrow \\ & & \text{HamVect}(X, \omega) \xrightarrow{\iota_{(-)}\omega} \Omega^\bullet[\rho + 1] \end{array}$$

Corollary. Under 0-truncation τ_0 (chain homology) this becomes a central extension of Lie algebras

$$0 \longrightarrow H_{\text{dR}}^p(X) \longrightarrow \tau_0 \text{poiss}(X, \mathbf{L}) \longrightarrow \text{HamVect}(X, \omega) \rightarrow 0.$$

Regarding \mathbf{L} as a WZW term, then $\tau_0 \text{poiss}(X, \mathbf{L})$ is the Dickey bracket on Noether currents¹ for target space symmetries of the sigma-model with WZW term \mathbf{L} (compare AGIT'89).

¹With Igor Khavkine.

Finite symmetries

Definition:

- 1.) $\text{conc} : [X, \mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}}] \longrightarrow (\mathbf{B}^p(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma))\text{Conn}(X)$
projection on moduli of vertical differential forms;
 - 2.) $\text{QuantMorph}(X, \mathbf{L}) := \text{Stab}_{\text{Aut}(X)}(\text{conc}(\mathbf{L}))$
homotopy stabilizer group;
 - 3.) $\text{HamSymp}(X, \mathbf{L}) := \text{im}_1(\text{QuantMorph}(X, \mathbf{L}) \rightarrow \text{Aut}(X))$
1-image of quantomorphisms in automorphisms;
 - 4.) $\text{Heis}_G(X, \mathbf{L}) := \rho^* \text{QuantMorph}(X, \mathbf{L})$
its pullback along any G -action $\rho : G \rightarrow \text{Aut}(X)$.
-

Theorem [FRS13a]: There is a homotopy fiber sequence:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} (\mathbf{B}^{p-1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma))\text{FlatConn}(X) & \rightarrow & \text{QuantMorph}(X, \mathbf{L}) \\ & & \downarrow \\ & & \text{HamSymp}(X, \mathbf{L}) \xrightarrow{\text{KS}} \mathbf{B}((\mathbf{B}^{p-1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma))\text{FlatConn}(X)) \end{array}$$

Example: For $p = 0$ this reduces to the traditional Heisenberg-Kostant-Souriau quantomorphism group extension.

Obstruction theory, part I

Theorem [dcct]:

Let G be an A_∞ -group stack
and $\mathbf{L} : G \rightarrow \mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}}$
with $G \hookrightarrow \mathbf{HamSymp}(X, \mathbf{L})$.

Then the obstruction to a definite parameterization of \mathbf{L} over the fibers of a G -principal ∞ -bundle $P \rightarrow X$ [NSS12a] is equivalently:

- 1.) a lift of the structure group through $\mathbf{Heis}_G(X, \mathbf{L}) \rightarrow G$;
 - 2.) a trivialization of $\mathbf{KS}(P)$.
-

Example [FRS13a]: For $G = \text{Spin}$ and $\mathbf{L}_{\text{WZW}}^{\langle -, [-, -] \rangle}$ the traditional WZW term, then

$$\mathbf{Heis}_{\text{Spin}}(\text{Spin}, \mathbf{L}_{\text{WZW}}^{\langle -, [-, -] \rangle}) \simeq \text{String}$$

is the smooth String-2-group, and hence a definite parameterization here is precisely a smooth String-structure.

This gives the geometric interpretation of the cancellation of the Green-Schwarz anomaly due to Distler-Sharpe'07 .

Higher WZW terms

For \mathfrak{g} an L_∞ -algebra and $\mu_{p+2} \in \text{CE}^{p+2}(\mathfrak{g})$ an L_∞ -cocycle, write $\mathbf{B}G \in \mathbf{H}$ for the $(p+2)$ -coskeleton of the simplicial sheaf of flat \mathfrak{g} -valued forms on simplices, parameterized by manifolds U :

$$\mathbf{B}G : (U \in \text{SmoothMfd}) \mapsto \text{cosk}_{p+2}(\Omega_{\text{flat}}^{\bullet}(\underset{\text{vert}}{U} \times \Delta_{\text{smth}}^{\bullet}, \mathfrak{g}))$$

Theorem [FSS10]: μ Lie integrates to $\mathbf{c} : \mathbf{B}G \rightarrow \mathbf{B}^{p+2}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)$

Definition. Denote by

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \tilde{G} & \longrightarrow & G \\ \theta_{\tilde{G}} \downarrow & \text{(pb)} & \downarrow \theta_G \\ \Omega_{\text{flat}}(-, \mathfrak{g}) & \longrightarrow & \mathfrak{b}_{\text{dR}} \mathbf{B}G \end{array}$$

the homotopy

pullback of the MC form on G to globally defined forms.

Theorem [dcct]: $\Omega \mathbf{c}$ underlies a unique prequantization

$$\mathbf{L}_{\text{WZW}}^{\mu} : \tilde{G} \rightarrow \mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}}$$

of $\mu(\theta_{\tilde{G}}) \in \Omega^{p+2}(\tilde{G})$.

This is the higher WZW term of μ .

Higher étale stacks (higher orbifolds)

Let now \mathbf{H} be simplicial sheaves over *formal* manifolds.

Theorem [dcct]: This is *differentially cohesive*, reduction \mathfrak{R} of infinitesimals has a right adjoint \mathfrak{S} (“de Rham stack functor”).

Definition. A morphism is infinitesimally étale $\dashrightarrow_{\text{et}}$ if its \mathfrak{S} -unit is a homotopy pullback square.

Definition. For V an A_∞ -group stack, a V -étale stack is an $X \in \mathbf{H}$ such that there exists a V -cover: $V \leftarrow_{\text{et}} U \dashrightarrow_{\text{et}} X$.

Definition. The *infinitesimal disk bundle* is:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} T_{\text{inf}}X & \xrightarrow{\text{ev}} & X \\ \downarrow p & \text{(pb)} & \downarrow \\ X & \longrightarrow & \mathfrak{S}X \end{array}$$

Theorem [dcct]: 1.) The infinitesimal disk bundle of V trivializes via left translation, with typical fiber the infinitesimal disk \mathbb{D}_e^V ; 2.) the infinitesimal disk bundle of any V -étale stack is locally trivial and associated to a $\text{GL}(V) := \mathbf{Aut}(\mathbb{D}_e^V)$ -principal ∞ -bundle: the *frame bundle* $\text{Fr}(X) \rightarrow X$.

Obstruction theory, part II

Definition: Given $\mathbf{L} : V \rightarrow \mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}}$, a *definite globalization* over a V -étale stack X is $\mathbf{L}^X : X \rightarrow \mathbf{B}^{p+1}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}}$ such that its restriction to infinitesimal disks along $T_{\text{inf}}X \xrightarrow{\text{ev}} X$ is a parameterization (as above) definite on $\mathbf{L}|_{\mathbb{D}_e^V}$.

Corollary [dcct]: An obstruction to definite globalization is $\mathbf{Heis}_{\text{GL}(V)}(\mathbb{D}_e^V, \mathbf{L}|_{\mathbb{D}_e^V})$ -structure, hence trivialization of the **KS**-class of the frame bundle.

Example: For X an \mathbb{R}^{2n} -manifold and $\mathbf{L} = p^i \wedge dq^i$, and for second order infinitesimals, then $\mathbf{Heis}_{\text{GL}(V)}(\mathbf{L}|_{\mathbb{D}_e^V}) \simeq \text{Mp}^c(2n)$ is the Metaplectic^c group.

Example [dcct]²: For V super-Minkowski spacetime and \mathbf{L} the κ -WZW term for the GS super-string, then $\mathbf{Heis}_{\text{Aut}_{\text{grp}}(\mathbb{D}_e^V)}(\mathbf{L}|_{\mathbb{D}_e^V})$ is a $\mathbf{B}(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)$ -extension of the Lorentzian Spin group $\text{Spin}(d-1, 1)$.

²With John Huerta.

Higher supergeometry

Let now \mathbf{H} be
simplicial sheaves
over formal
supermanifolds.

Theorem [dcct]³:

\exists Progression of adjoint
(co-)localizations: \rightarrow
satisfying $\overset{\sim}{\mathfrak{S}} \simeq \mathfrak{S}$.

Proposition [dcct]:

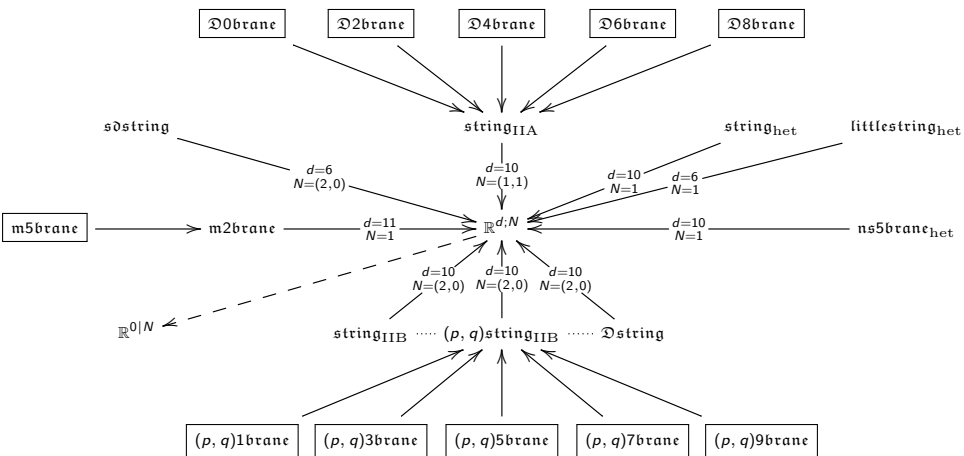
For
 X a V -étale stack,
then
 \tilde{X} is \tilde{V} -étale stack.

	id	\dashv	id
	\vee		\vee
even	\rightrightarrows	\dashv	\rightsquigarrow
	\perp		\perp
bosonic	\rightsquigarrow	\dashv	$\text{loc}_{\mathbb{R}^{0 1}}$
	\vee		\vee
reduced	\mathfrak{R}	\dashv	\mathfrak{S}
	\perp		\perp
étale	\mathfrak{S}	\dashv	$\&$
	\vee		\vee
shape	$\text{loc}_{\mathbb{R}}$	\dashv	b
	\perp		\perp
flat	b	\dashv	$\#$
	\vee		\vee
	\emptyset	\dashv	$*$

³With Dave Carchedi.

Application: GS-WZW terms for super p -branes

Fact Azcárraga-Townsend'89+[FSS13]: The iterative super- L_∞ $b^p\mathbb{R}$ -extensions of the superpoint come from the WZW cocycles μ of all the Green-Schwarz-type super- p -branes sigma-models:



M5-brane on M2-brane extended superspacetime I

Regard super-Minkowski spacetime $\mathbb{R}^{d-1,1|N}$ as a super Lie algebra. Write

$$\mu_{p+2} := \overline{\psi} \Gamma^{a_1 \cdots a_p} \wedge \psi \wedge e_{a_1} \wedge \cdots \wedge e_{a_p} \in \text{CE}(\mathbb{R}^{d-1,1|N}).$$

Proposition D'Auria-Fré 89: The elements $\mu_4, \mu_7 \in \text{CE}(\mathbb{R}^{10,1|32})$ satisfy

$$d\mu_4 = 0, \quad d\mu_7 = \mu_4 \wedge \mu_4.$$

Proposition [FSS13]: The M2-brane extended super Minkowski spacetime with $\text{CE}(\hat{\mathbb{R}}^{10,1|32}) := \text{CE}((\mathbb{R}^{10,1|32}) \otimes \langle h_3 \rangle, dh_3 = -\mu_4)$ is the L_∞ -homotopy fiber of μ_4 and we have

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \hat{\mathbb{R}}^{10,1|32} & \xrightarrow{h_3 \wedge \mu_4 + \frac{1}{15} \mu_7} & b^6 \mathbb{R} \\ \downarrow & & \\ \mathbb{R}^{10,1|32} & \xrightarrow{\mu_4} & b^3 \mathbb{R} \end{array}$$

matching the proposal in BLNPST'97.

M5-brane on M2-brane extended superspacetime II

Theorem [dcct]: For a definite globalization of consecutive WZW terms such as

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \tilde{X} & \xrightarrow{\mathbf{L}_{\text{WZW}}^{\text{M5}}} & \mathbf{B}^6 U(1)_{\text{conn}} \\ \downarrow & & \\ X & \xrightarrow{\mathbf{L}_{\text{WZW}}^{\text{M2}}} & \mathbf{B}^3 U(1)_{\text{conn}} \end{array}$$

\tilde{X} is a $\mathbf{B}^2(\mathbb{R}/\Gamma)_{\text{conn}}$ -bundle over X .

Hence a map $\Sigma \rightarrow \tilde{X}$ is a pair consisting of

1. a sigma-model field $\phi : \Sigma \rightarrow X$;
2. a ϕ -twisted degree-3 Deligne cocycle (twisted 2-gerbe with connection) on Σ .

This is the “tensor multiplet” field content of the M5-brane globalized to a twisted 2-gerbe connection.

M5-brane on M2-brane extended superspacetime III

Proposition above results+ Candiello-Lechner'93: First order integrable definite globalization of \mathbf{L}_{WZW}^{M2} implies super-Lorentzian structure with vanishing supertorsion, this in turn implies the vacuum equations of motion of 11d Einstein gravity., enhances them by cancelling the obstruction to making the M2-brane and M5-brane WZW terms be globally defined.

Proposition [dcct]:

The isometry action on X lifts to an ∞ -action on \tilde{X} .

Corollary: The infinitesimal symmetries of \mathbf{L}_{WZW}^{M5} are an extension of superisometries of spacetime by H^5 of the $K(\mathbb{Z}, 3)$ -bundle underlying \mathbf{L}_{WZW}^{M2} . Running the Serre spectral sequence, rationally this is $H^2(X) \oplus H^5(X)$.

This is the traditional result for the *M-theory super Lie algebra*, the extension of the superisometries by BPS charges for the M2-brane and the M5-brane Sorokin-Townsend'97. The above analysis gives the finite global symmetries involving various (torsion) corrections to this.

M5-brane on M2-brane extended superspacetime - Outlook

Proposition: M5-cocycle descends equivariantly down to super-Minkowski spacetime

$$\begin{array}{ccc}
 \vdots & & \vdots \\
 \Downarrow & & \Downarrow \\
 (dh_3 = -\mu_4) & \hat{\mathbb{R}}^{10,1|32} \xrightarrow{h_3 \wedge g_4 + \frac{1}{15} \mu_7} & b^6 \mathbb{R} \\
 \downarrow & & \downarrow \\
 (dh_3 = g_4 - \mu_4) & \mathbb{R}^{10,1|32} \xrightarrow{h_3 \wedge (g_4 + \mu_4) + \frac{1}{15} \mu_7} & b^6 \mathbb{R} / b^2 \mathbb{R} \\
 & \searrow \mu_4 & \swarrow p_\rho \\
 & & b^3 \mathbb{R}
 \end{array}$$

By [NSS12a] this rational 4-sphere valued cocycle is in degree-7 twisted cohomology, the twist being the degree-4 class of the supergravity C-field.

This structure of the M-theory C-field was conjectured in Sati'13.

M5-brane on M2-brane extended superspacetime - Outlook

All cocycles here are Spin-invariant. Hence we may ask for extending them from super-Minkowski to super-Poincaré $\mathfrak{iso}(\mathbb{R}^{10,1|32})$.

Such extensions are given by shifting h_3 by an \mathfrak{so} -3-cocycle and μ_7 by an \mathfrak{so} -7-cocycle. The only such are $\propto \langle \omega^{\wedge 3} \rangle, \langle \omega^{\wedge 7} \rangle$:

$$\begin{array}{ccc} \mathfrak{iso}(\mathbb{R}^{10,1|32}) & & \\ \uparrow & \searrow & \\ \mathbb{R}^{10,1|32} & \xrightarrow{h_3 \wedge (g_4 + \mu_4) + \frac{1}{15} \mu_7} & b^6 \mathbb{R} / b^2 \mathbb{R} \\ & \nearrow (h_3 + \langle \omega^{\wedge 3} \rangle) \wedge (g_4 + \mu_4) + \frac{1}{15} \mu_7 + \langle \omega^{\wedge 7} \rangle & \end{array}$$

This is then to be globalized not just over X , but over the frame bundle $\text{Fr}(X)$. By the above obstruction theory, the parameterization of the WZW terms for $\langle \omega^{\wedge 3} \rangle$ and $\langle \omega^{\wedge 7} \rangle$ over the Frame bundle imposes String-structure and Fivebrane structure (cancelling the l_8 -one loop term).

Conclusion

- ▶ There is good general abstract theory for prequantized definite globalizations of higher degree forms over higher étale stacks.
- ▶ Higher Lie theory provides prequantization of every L_∞ -cocycle to a higher WZW term.
- ▶ Applying this to the bouquet of cocycles emanating from the superpoint yields super-orbifolds equipped with Lorentzian structure solving the vacuum Einstein equations of 11-dimensional supergravity and equipped with the classical anomaly cancellation that makes the M2-brane and M5-brane sigma models globally well-defined. The group stack of symmetries of these structures encodes various torsion corrections to the BPS charge extension of the superisometries.

The restriction to *vacuum* solutions (vanishing gravitino and C-field strength) could be circumvented by intervening by hand, but it is maybe noteworthy that these are the solutions relevant for realistic phenomenology (e.g. [Acharya'02](#), [Acharya'12](#)).

Thank you!

For more details see course notes at

ncatlab.org/schreiber/show/Structure+Theory+for+Higher+WZW+Terms



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