

Background Independence in Doubled Field Theory

Komaba 2010 (Feb.)
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Works in collaboration with Chris Hull
Upcoming paper with C. Hull and Olef Hohm.

Closed Strings on Toroidal backgrounds:

Questions:

- * Field theory on doubled torus?
Momentum + winding. T-duality?
- * Special geometry? Courant brackets?
- * In string theory $G_{ij} + b_{ij} = E_{ij}$
is the natural variable.
How does one write actions?

The full closed string field theory is a double field theory (T. Kugo + B.Z.) but has two shortcomings:

- (1) With infinite # of fields, and nonpolynomial interactions, it is complicated
- (2) It does not (yet!) have manifest background independence.

Thus look for a simpler subset of the theory to learn the lessons of double field theory and background independence.

Closed strings on a torus T^d

$$S = -\frac{1}{4\pi} \int_0^{2\pi} d\sigma \int d\tau \left(\sqrt{-g} g^{\alpha\beta} \partial_\alpha X^i \partial_\beta X^j G_{ij} + \epsilon^{\alpha\beta} \partial_\alpha X^i \partial_\beta X^j B_{ij} \right)$$

$$E_{ij} \equiv G_{ij} + B_{ij} \quad \text{both constant}$$

backgrounds

$$X^i \equiv X^i + 2\pi$$

$$\left(G_{ij} = \frac{R_i^2}{\alpha'} \delta_{ij} \right)$$

$$X^i(\tau, \sigma) = x^i + w^i \sigma + \tau G^{ij} (p_j - B_{jk} w^k) + \dots$$

$$[x^i, p_j] = [\tilde{x}_j, w^i] = i \delta_j^i$$

$$p_i = \frac{1}{i} \frac{\partial}{\partial x^i} = \frac{1}{L} \partial_i$$

$$w^i = \frac{1}{i} \frac{\partial}{\partial \tilde{x}_i} = \frac{1}{i} \tilde{\partial}^i$$

w^i eigenvalues $m^i \in \mathbb{Z}$

p_i eigenvalues $n_i \in \mathbb{Z}$

States of the theory:

$$\sum_{m^l, n_j} \xi_{l_1 \dots l_p, j_1 \dots j_e} (m^l, n_j) \begin{matrix} (\alpha^{l_1} \dots \alpha^{l_p}) \\ (\bar{\alpha}^{j_1} \dots \bar{\alpha}^{j_e}) \end{matrix} \begin{matrix} (c \dots c) (b \dots b) \\ |m^l, n_j\rangle \end{matrix}$$

oscillators

winding + momentum

Natural fields are doubled:

$$\xi_{l_1 \dots l_p, j_1 \dots j_e}(x, \tilde{x}) \equiv \sum_{m^l, n_j} \xi_{l_1 \dots l_p, j_1 \dots j_e}(m, n) e^{i(m^l \tilde{x}_l + n_j x^j)}$$

gauge parameters doubled too!

In string theory, fix the background E_{ij} and consider fluctuations

$$E_{ij} = \bar{E}_{ij} + e_{ij}(x, \tilde{x}) \quad (\text{Tentative})$$

$$g_{ij} + b_{ij} = \bar{G}_{ij} + \bar{B}_{ij} + h_{ij}(x, \tilde{x}) + b_{ij}(x, \tilde{x})$$

Also dilaton field $d(x, \tilde{x})$

$$\sum_{P,W} e_{ij}(P,W) \alpha_{-1}^i \bar{\alpha}_{-1}^j c_1 \bar{c}_1 |P,W\rangle$$

$$+ d(P,W) (c_{-1} c_{+1} - \bar{c}_{-1} \bar{c}_{+1}) |P,W\rangle$$

Focus on this "massless sector" only
but with fully doubled fields

$$N = \bar{N} = 1$$

All string states $|\psi\rangle$

$$(L_0 - \bar{L}_0) |\psi\rangle = 0 \quad \text{Off shell constraint}$$

$$\rightarrow L_0 - \bar{L}_0 = N - \bar{N} - p_L W^L = 0$$

For our states $p_L W^L = 0$,

$$\text{or } p \cdot W = 0$$

$$\text{or } \frac{\partial}{\partial x^i} \frac{\partial}{\partial \bar{x}^i} [\text{fields}(x, \bar{x})] = 0.$$

Unavoidable constraint

$$\partial_\mu \tilde{\partial}^\mu \{ e_{ij}(x, \bar{x}), d(x, \bar{x}) \} = 0$$

The restriction to "massless" doubled fields is a truncation.

It is not a low-energy limit.

Open question if a full gauge invariant field theory exists with those degrees of freedom.

Attempt construction using the information from closed string field theory.

Cubic theory: around E_{ij}

$$\begin{aligned}
 S = \int dx d\tilde{x} & \left[\frac{1}{4} e_{ij} \square e^{ij} + \frac{1}{4} (\bar{D}^j e_{ij})^2 + \frac{1}{4} (D^i e_{ij})^2 \right. \\
 & \quad \left. - 2d D^i \bar{D}^j e_{ij} - 4d \square d \right. \\
 & \quad \left. + \frac{1}{4} e_{ij} \left((D^i e_{kl}) (\bar{D}^j e^{kl}) - D^i e_{kl} \bar{D}^l e^{kj} \right. \right. \\
 & \quad \quad \left. \left. - D^k e^{il} \bar{D}^j e_{kl} \right) \right. \\
 & \quad \left. + \frac{1}{2} d \left((D^i e_{ij})^2 + (\bar{D}^j e_{ij})^2 + \frac{1}{2} (D_k e_{ij})^2 \right. \right. \\
 & \quad \quad \left. \left. + \frac{1}{2} (\bar{D}_k e_{ij})^2 + 2e^{ij} (D_i D^k e_{kj} + \bar{D}_j \bar{D}^k e_{ik}) \right) \right. \\
 & \quad \left. + 4e_{ij} d D^i \bar{D}^j d + 4d^2 \square d + \mathcal{O}(f^4) \right]
 \end{aligned}$$

G^{ij} raises indices

$$e^{lk} = G^{lp} G^{kl} e_{pl}$$

$$\square = D^i D_i = G^{ij} D_i D_j$$

$$D_i \equiv \partial_i - E_{ik} \tilde{\partial}^k$$

$$\bar{D}_i \equiv \partial_i + E_{ki} \tilde{\partial}^k$$

Gauge transformations

$$\delta_\lambda e_{ij} = i\bar{D}_i \lambda_j + \frac{1}{2} [(D_i \lambda^k) e_{kj} - (D^k \lambda_i) e_{kj} + \lambda_k D^k e_{ij}]$$

$$\delta_\lambda d = -\frac{1}{4} D \cdot \lambda + \frac{1}{2} (\lambda \cdot D) d$$

$$\delta_{\bar{\lambda}} e_{ij} = D_i \bar{\lambda}_j + \frac{1}{2} [(\bar{D}_j \lambda^k) e_{ik} - (\bar{D}^k \lambda_j) e_{ik} + \bar{\lambda}_k \bar{D}^k e_{ij}]$$

$$\delta_{\bar{\lambda}} d = -\frac{1}{4} \bar{D} \cdot \bar{\lambda} + \frac{1}{2} (\bar{\lambda} \cdot \bar{D}) d$$

In the products here, one must project to the kernel of $\partial \cdot \tilde{\partial}$

Theory also has $O(D, D)$ symmetry

$$h = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix} \in O(D, D) \text{ if}$$

$$h^t \eta h = \eta \quad \text{with} \quad \eta = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$E \rightarrow E' = h(E) = (aE + b)(cE + d)^{-1}$$

$$X^M = \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{x}_i \\ x^i \end{pmatrix} \rightarrow X'^M = \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{x}'_i \\ x'^i \end{pmatrix} = h \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{x}_i \\ x^i \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\partial^M = \begin{pmatrix} \partial_i \\ \tilde{\partial}^i \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\eta^{MN} = \eta_{MN} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \mathbb{1} \\ \mathbb{1} & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

↑
O(D,D) invariant
metric

$$\partial_M = \eta_{MN} \partial^N = \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{\partial}^i \\ \partial_i \end{pmatrix}$$

Our constraint is $\partial_M \partial^M A = 0$

O(D,D) covariant:

$$\partial_i \tilde{\partial}^i A = 0 \quad \rightarrow \quad \partial'_i \tilde{\partial}'^i A = 0$$

O(D,D) transformations

$$X' = gX$$

$$e_j(x) = M_i^k \bar{M}_j^l e'_{kl}(x')$$

$$d(x) = d'(x')$$

$$M = d^t - E c^t$$

$$\bar{M} = d^t + E^t c^t$$

$$S(E, e_j, d) = S(E', e', d')$$

Options

- * Continue the construction to higher order
- * Extract the lessons so far.

Will do the second!

Will impose a strong $O(D,D)$ invariant constraint (in addition to $\partial_M \partial^M A = 0$) and will finish the higher order construction [Related to work of Siegel]

For A, B , such that $\partial^M \partial_M A = \partial^M \partial_M B = 0$

$$\partial^M \partial_M (AB) = 2 \partial^M A \partial_M B \neq 0, \text{ in general}$$

Assume (**) $\partial^M A \partial_M B = 0$ for any fields A, B

thus all fields and all products in the kernel of $\partial \cdot \tilde{\partial}$.

Claim: for fields that satisfy (**), there is a duality frame (\tilde{x}'_i, x^i) in which fields do not depend on \tilde{x}'_i ($\tilde{\partial}^i \equiv 0$)

This duality frame need not be specified explicitly; the constraint can be imposed without doing so.

The resulting action will have $O(D,D)$ symmetry, will involve x, \tilde{x} , but it is a $O(D,D)$ covariantization of a theory that in some dual frame is not doubled.

The gauge algebra will be novel; Courant brackets (Hull + B.Z)

The action can be made background independent and duality invariant (Hohm, Hull, BZ) to appear

The gauge transformations can now be completed to "all orders"

$$\begin{aligned}
 \delta_\lambda e_{ij} &= D_i \bar{\lambda}_j + \bar{D}_j \lambda_i \\
 &+ \frac{1}{2} (\lambda \cdot D + \bar{\lambda} \cdot \bar{D}) e_{ij} \\
 &+ \frac{1}{2} (D_i \lambda^k - D^k \lambda_i) e_{kj} - e_{ik} \frac{1}{2} (\bar{D}^k \bar{\lambda}_k - \bar{D}_j \bar{\lambda}^k) \\
 &- \frac{1}{4} e_{ik} (D^k \bar{\lambda}^k + \bar{D}^k \lambda^k) e_{lj}
 \end{aligned}$$

Better variables:

$$\xi^i = \frac{1}{2} (\lambda^i + \bar{\lambda}^i) \quad \tilde{\xi}_i = \frac{1}{2} (-E_{ji} \lambda^j + E_{ij} \bar{\lambda}^j)$$

$O(D, D)$ doublet

$$\Sigma^M = \begin{pmatrix} \tilde{\xi}_i \\ \xi^i \end{pmatrix}$$

Trivial gauge parameters

$$\Sigma^M = \begin{pmatrix} \partial \chi \\ \tilde{\partial}^i \chi \end{pmatrix} = \partial^M \chi$$

Algebra of gauge transformations

$$[\delta_{\Sigma_1}, \delta_{\Sigma_2}] = \delta_{[\Sigma_1, \Sigma_2]_C}$$

$$\left([\Sigma_1, \Sigma_2]_C \right)^M = \sum_{[1]}^N \partial_N \Sigma_2^M - \frac{1}{2} \eta^{MN} \eta_{PQ} \sum_{[1]}^P \partial_N \Sigma_2^Q$$

(Also Siegel)

What does this give explicitly

write $\Sigma \equiv \mathcal{E} + \tilde{\mathcal{E}} \quad \mathcal{E}^i(x, \tilde{x}), \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_i(x, \tilde{x})$

$$\begin{aligned}
 [\mathcal{E}_1 + \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1, \mathcal{E}_2 + \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_2] &= [\mathcal{E}_1, \mathcal{E}_2] + \mathcal{L}_{\tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1} \mathcal{E}_2 - \mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{E}_2} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1 \\
 &\quad - \frac{1}{2} d(\tilde{L}_{\tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1} \mathcal{E}_2 + \tilde{L}_{\mathcal{E}_2} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1) \\
 &\quad + [\tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1, \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_2] + \mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{E}_1} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_2 - \mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{E}_2} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1 \\
 &\quad - \frac{1}{2} d(L_{\mathcal{E}_1} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_2 - L_{\mathcal{E}_2} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1)
 \end{aligned}$$

As usual $[\mathcal{E}_1, \mathcal{E}_2]^i = \mathcal{E}_1^k \partial_k \mathcal{E}_2^i$

but now $[\tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1, \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_2]_i \equiv \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1^k \tilde{\partial}^k \mathcal{E}_2^i$

$$\tilde{d}f \equiv (\tilde{\partial}^k f) d\tilde{x}_k$$

Above is a Courant bi-algebroid

Let x^i, \tilde{x}_i denote the frame where there is no winding $\tilde{\partial}^i \equiv 0$. Then

$$\begin{aligned}
 [\mathcal{E}_1 + \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1, \mathcal{E}_2 + \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_2] &= [\mathcal{E}_1, \mathcal{E}_2] \\
 &\quad + \mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{E}_1} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_2 - \mathcal{L}_{\mathcal{E}_2} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1 \\
 &\quad - \frac{1}{2} d(L_{\mathcal{E}_1} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_2 - L_{\mathcal{E}_2} \tilde{\mathcal{E}}_1)
 \end{aligned}$$

This is the well-known Courant bracket of special geometry.

For a theory of a metric g and a KP field b

$$\text{gauge transform.} \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \delta_{\xi + \tilde{\xi}} g = \mathcal{L}_{\xi} g \\ \delta_{\xi + \tilde{\xi}} b = \mathcal{L}_{\xi} b + d\tilde{\xi} \end{array} \right.$$

The gauge algebra is

$$\begin{aligned} [\xi_1 + \tilde{\xi}_1, \xi_2 + \tilde{\xi}_2] &= [\xi_1, \xi_2] \\ &\quad + \mathcal{L}_{\xi_1} \tilde{\xi}_2 - \mathcal{L}_{\xi_2} \tilde{\xi}_1 \\ &\quad - \frac{1}{2} \beta d(\mathcal{L}_{\xi_1} \tilde{\xi}_2 - \mathcal{L}_{\xi_2} \tilde{\xi}_1) \end{aligned}$$

β cannot be fixed. (exact 1-form, ^{trivial / gauge sym})
 \mathbb{T} -duality covariance fixes it
to $\beta=1$! This is the "Courant bracket"

(a bracket with an extra automorphism)

Jacobi identity violated by an exact one-form!

How about the action?

We have an action $S(E_{ij}; e_{ij})$

We did a background independence analysis: let χ_{ij} be a constant

$$\begin{aligned} S(E_{ij} - \chi_{ij}; e_{ij} + \chi_{ij} - \frac{1}{2} (\chi_{i^k}^k e_{kj} + \chi_j^k e_{ik})) \\ = S(E_{ij}; e_{ij}) \end{aligned}$$

$$\delta_x E_{ij} = -\chi_{ij}$$

$$\delta_x e_{ij} = \chi_{ij} - \frac{1}{2} (\chi_{i^k}^k e_{kj} + \chi_j^k e_{ik})$$

Can then verify that

$$\boxed{E_{ij} = E_{ij} + e_{ij} + \frac{1}{2} e_{i^k}^k e_{kj} + \theta(e^3)}$$

is background independent!

$$\delta_x E_{ij} = 0 \quad (\text{up to } \theta(e^3))$$

To all orders

$$E_{ij} = E_{ij} + \left(1 - \frac{1}{2} e\right)^{-1} e_{i^k}^k e_{kj}$$

The action $S(\epsilon, d)$ in terms of E_{ij}

and $D_i = \partial_i - \epsilon_{ik} \tilde{\partial}^k$

$\bar{D}_i = \partial_i + \epsilon_{ki} \tilde{\partial}^k$

that reproduces to $\mathcal{O}(e^3)$ the old action $S(\epsilon; e, d)$ is:

$$S = \int dx d\tilde{x} e^{-2d} \left[-\frac{1}{4} g^{ik} g^{jl} D^p E_{kl} D_p E_{ij} \right. \\ \left. + \frac{1}{4} g^{kl} (D^j E_{ik} D^l E_{jl} + \bar{D}^j E_{ki} \bar{D}^l E_{lj}) \right. \\ \left. + D^i d \bar{D}^j E_{ij} + \bar{D}^i d D^j E_{ji} \right. \\ \left. + 4 D^i d D_i d \right]$$

But can't add terms with 2-derivatives without spoiling this $S(\epsilon, d)$

Claim this is the exact action!!

Gauge invariance:

$$\delta E_{ij} = D_i \tilde{\epsilon}_j - D_j \tilde{\epsilon}_i + \epsilon^M \partial_M E_{ij} \\ + D_i \xi^k E_{kj} + \bar{D}_j \xi^k E_{ik}$$

O(D,D) invariance:

$$h = \begin{pmatrix} a & b \\ c & d \end{pmatrix}; \quad X' = hX$$

$$e'(X') = (a e(X) + b)(c e(X) + d)^{-1}$$

$$d'(X') = d(X)$$

$$S(e', d') = S(e, d)$$

$\tilde{\partial}$ - Expansion: $\delta = \delta^{(0)} + \delta^{(1)}$

$$\delta E_{ij} = \partial_i \tilde{E}_j - \partial_j \tilde{E}_i$$

$$\delta^{(0)} \quad + \quad E^k \partial_k E_{ij} + \partial_k E^k E_{ij} + \partial_j E^k E_{ik}$$

$$\delta^{(1)} \quad + \quad \tilde{E}_k \tilde{\partial}^k E_{ij} - \tilde{\partial}^k \tilde{E}_i E_{kj} - \tilde{\partial}^k \tilde{E}_j E_{ik}$$

$$+ E_{ik} \left(\tilde{\partial}^q E^k - \tilde{\partial}^k E^q \right) E_{qj}$$

\mathcal{L}_E

$\tilde{\mathcal{L}}_{\tilde{E}}$

For the action:

$$S = S^{(0)} + S^{(1)} + S^{(2)}$$

$$S^{(0)} = \int dx d\tilde{x} e^{-2d} \left[-\frac{1}{4} g^{lk} g^{je} g^{pq} \left(\partial_p \epsilon_{kel} \partial_q \epsilon_{ij} \right. \right. \\ \left. \left. - \partial_i \epsilon_{ep} \partial_j \epsilon_{kq} - \partial_i \epsilon_{pe} \partial_j \epsilon_{qk} \right) \right. \\ \left. + 2 \partial^l d \partial^j g_{ij} + 4 \partial^l d \partial_j d \right]$$

After field redefinition and total derivatives: $e^{-2\phi} \sqrt{-g} = e^{-2\phi}$

$$S^{(0)} = \int dx d\tilde{x} e^{-2\phi} \sqrt{g} \left(R + 4(\partial\phi)^2 - \frac{1}{12} H^2 \right) \checkmark \\ = S(\epsilon, d, \partial)$$

Then find that

$$S^{(2)} = S(\epsilon^{-1}, d, \tilde{\partial}) !! \quad h = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \mathbb{1} \\ \mathbb{1} & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$\epsilon' = \epsilon^{-1}, \quad \tilde{x}' = \tilde{x} \\ \tilde{x}' = x$$

$S^{(1)}$ is an "intertwiner"

$$S^{(1)} = \int dx d\tilde{x} e^{-2d} \left[\dots b \tilde{\partial} b \partial b \right. \\ \left. + \dots b \partial d \tilde{\partial} d + \dots \right]$$

Is there a curvature scalar: R $\delta_{\Sigma} R = \sum^M \partial_M R$

$$R(\epsilon, d) = 4 D^2 d + D^i \bar{D}^j \epsilon_{ij} \\ + \dots$$

Is there a background independent $R(\epsilon, d)$ version?

$$S = \int e^{-2d} R(\epsilon, d) \\ = \int e^{-2d} \left[2(\nabla^i D_i d + \bar{\nabla}^i D_i d) \right. \\ \left. + \frac{1}{2} (\nabla^i \bar{D}^j \epsilon_{ij} + \bar{\nabla}^j D^i \epsilon_{ij}) \right. \\ \left. + \frac{1}{4} g^{ij} (D^k \epsilon_{ij} D^l \epsilon_{kl} + \bar{D}^k \epsilon_{je} \bar{D}^l \epsilon_{ik}) \right. \\ \left. - \frac{1}{4} g^{ik} g^{jl} D^p \epsilon_{ij} D_p \epsilon_{kl} \right. \\ \left. - (\bar{D}^j \epsilon_{ij} D^i d + D^j \epsilon_{ji} \bar{D}^i d) - 4 D^i d D_i d \right]$$

Surprising fact: dilaton EOM is

$$R(\epsilon, d) = 0 !!$$

$\nabla_i, \bar{\nabla}_i$ are $O(d,d)$ covariant derivatives

In the familiar action:

$$\int dx e^{-2\phi} \sqrt{g} \left(R + 4(\partial\phi)^2 - \frac{1}{12} H^2 \right) \quad \text{--- (A)}$$

the dilaton EOM is

$$R + 4(\nabla^2\phi - (\partial\phi)^2) - \frac{1}{12} H^2 = 0$$

But in the alternative action

$$\int dx e^{-2\phi} \sqrt{g} \left(R + 4(\nabla^2\phi - (\partial\phi)^2) - \frac{1}{12} H^2 \right)$$

which differs from (A) by a total derivative

dilaton EOM is

$$R + 4(\nabla^2\phi - (\partial\phi)^2) - \frac{1}{12} H^2 = 0$$

So, we have:

$$R(E, \phi) \Big|_{\tilde{\partial}=0} = R + 4(\nabla^2\phi - (\partial\phi)^2) - \frac{1}{12} H^2$$

This is the curvature scalar; the unique $O(D, D)$ invariant generalization of the scalar curvature R .

Open questions

- * Better understanding of the curvature scalar. Is there a Ricci, a Riemann.
- * Compare with Siegel (e_A^M, \dots)
- * Better understanding of connections $O(D,D)$ vs. gauge invariance.
- * Continue the higher order construction without the $\partial^M A \partial_M B = 0$ constraint.