

New life in quadratic theories of gravity

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Work in collaboration with
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elusi**o**es

in**o**visiblesPlus

Motivation

General Relativity successful low energy theory

$$S_{EH} = \frac{1}{2\kappa^2} \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} R \quad \kappa = \sqrt{8\pi G}$$

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When we try to make a quantum formulation of the theory several problems appear

Motivation

In usual QFT, causality is defined as

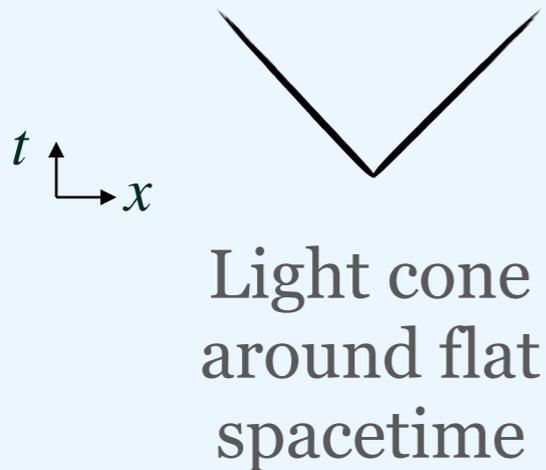
$$[\phi(x), \phi(y)] = 0, \quad (x - y)^2 < 0$$

Spacelike
separations

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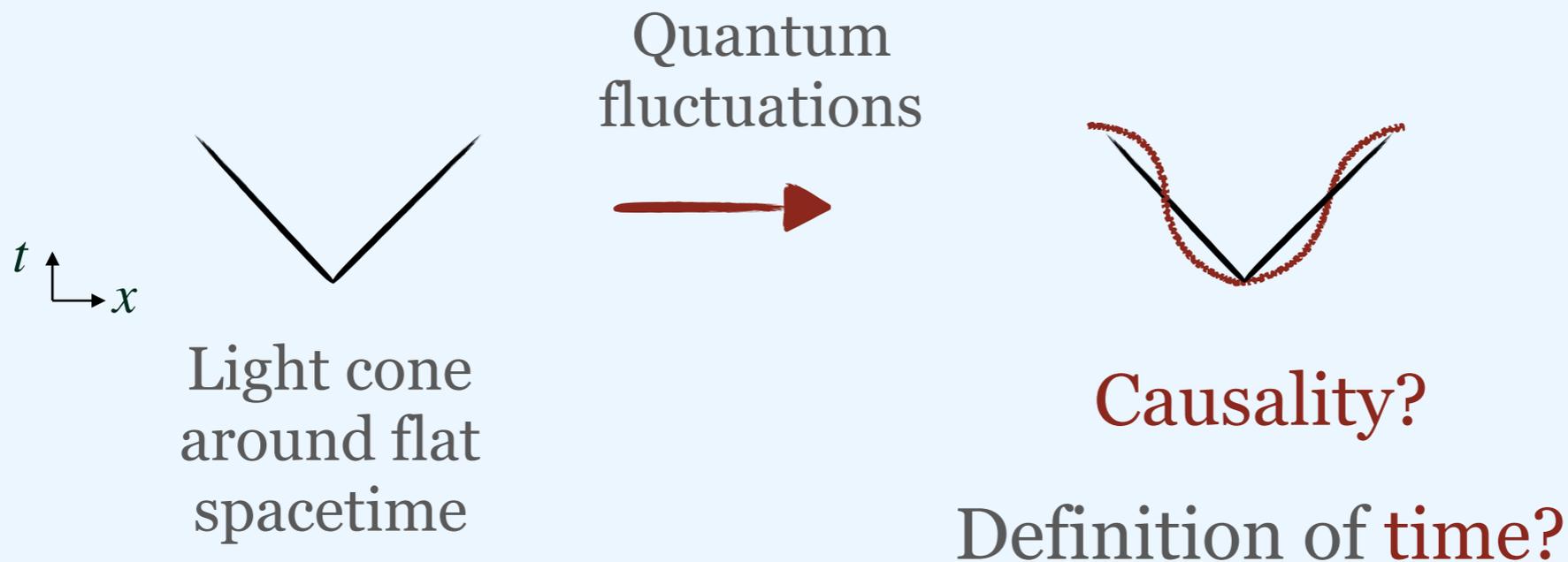
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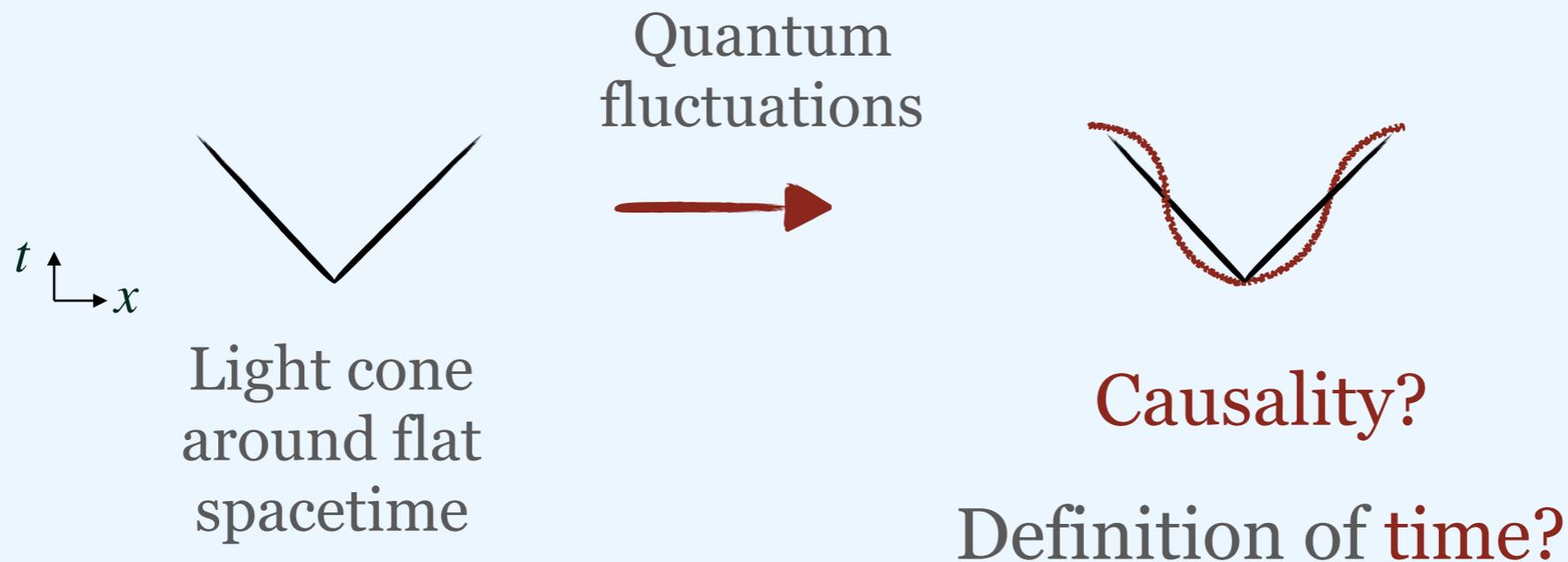
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Motivation

In usual QFT, causality is ensured if

$$[\phi(x), \phi(y)] = 0, \quad (x - y)^2 < 0$$



Does a fundamental QFT exist for the gravitational interaction?

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It could be that at **high energies** the metric is not the fundamental quantity in a quantum theory of gravity

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At low energies, **effective description** in terms of spacetime variables

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Even if we do not know anything about the **non-perturbative** part, we can do a **perturbative analysis**

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→ At low energies, **effective description** in terms of spacetime variables

Even if we do not know anything about the **non-perturbative** part, we can do a **perturbative analysis**

→ **Background field method**

B. De Witt (1967)

Metric perturbations around fixed background

't Hooft and Veltman (1974)

Motivation

Around a fixed background spacetime we can use the usual QFT formalism and study the theory in the perturbation limit

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Perturbatively, GR \longrightarrow Non renormalizable

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Gravitational coupling is **dimensionful** $[G] = -2$

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$$R + R^2 + R^3 + \dots$$

One-loop Two-loop

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One-loop Two-loop

Pure gravity non renormalizable at **two loops** Goroff and Sagnotti (1985)

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What about **quadratic** theories of gravity? $S_Q \sim \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} R^2$

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Closest analogy to a YM theory of gravity

$$R_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} = \partial_\rho \Gamma^\mu_{\nu\sigma} - \partial_\sigma \Gamma^\mu_{\nu\rho} + \Gamma^\mu_{\lambda\rho} \Gamma^\lambda_{\nu\sigma} - \Gamma^\mu_{\lambda\sigma} \Gamma^\lambda_{\nu\rho} \quad \text{Field strength}$$

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CONS

Propagators falling as $\sim \frac{1}{p^4}$

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Källén-Lehmann spectral representation

$$\Delta(p) = \int_0^\infty d\mu^2 \rho(\mu^2) \frac{1}{p^2 - \mu^2 + i\epsilon} \quad \rho(\mu^2) \geq 0$$

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$$\frac{1}{p^4 - m^4} = \frac{1}{p^2 - m^2} - \frac{1}{p^2 + m^2}$$

Ghost and/or tachyons

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Unitarity is lost

Motivation

What about **quadratic theories** treated in **first order** formalism?

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First order  metric and connection independents

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→ Still room for unitarity

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$$R_{\nu\rho\sigma}^{\mu} \sim \nabla_{\nu}\Gamma_{\rho\sigma}^{\mu}$$

A single derivative in
the curvature

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Possible **UV completion** of GR?

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Possible **UV completion** of GR?

A. Salvio and A. Strumia (2014)

M. B. Einhorn and T. Jones (2017)

J. F. Donoghue and G. Menezes (2018)

Motivation

Lee-Wick type of mechanisms

T. D. Lee and G. C. Wick (1969)



Able to fix unitarity diagram by
diagram

Nevertheless, this mechanism cannot be implemented into
the path integral formalism

D. G. Boulware and D. Gross (1969)

Outline

- **First order** formalism vs. **Second order** formalism
- First order **quadratic gravity**
- Physical content of the **connection**
- The **coupling to matter** in first order formalism
- Summary and Outlook

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First order formalism vs. Second order formalism

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First order vs Second order

Let us take the simple case of the EH action

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$$g_{\mu\nu}$$

$$\Gamma_{\nu\rho}^{\mu}$$

First order vs Second order

Let us take the simple case of the EH action

SO

$g_{\mu\nu}$

$\Gamma_{\nu\rho}^{\mu}$

Fixed relation

$$\Gamma_{\nu\rho}^{\mu} = \frac{1}{2} g^{\mu\lambda} \left(\partial_{\nu} g_{\lambda\rho} + \partial_{\rho} g_{\lambda\nu} - \partial_{\lambda} g_{\nu\rho} \right)$$

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$$\delta S_{SO} = \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} \left(-R^{\mu\nu} + \frac{1}{2} R g^{\mu\nu} \right) \delta g_{\mu\nu} \quad \underline{\text{Einstein's field equation}}$$

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Independent fields

First order vs Second order

Let us take the simple case of the EH action

FO $g_{\mu\nu}$ $\Gamma_{\nu\rho}^{\mu}$ Independent fields

$$\Gamma_{\nu\rho}^{\mu} = \left\{ \begin{matrix} \mu \\ \nu \quad \rho \end{matrix} \right\} + K_{\nu\rho}^{\mu} + L_{\nu\rho}^{\mu}$$

Levi-Civita
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Contorsion tensor

$$\frac{1}{2}g^{\rho\sigma} \left(T_{\mu\sigma\nu} + T_{\nu\sigma\mu} - T_{\mu\nu\sigma} \right)$$

First order vs Second order

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<div style="border: 1px solid green; border-radius: 50%; width: 40px; height: 40px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center; margin: 0 auto;">FO</div>	$g_{\mu\nu}$	$\Gamma_{\nu\rho}^{\mu}$	<u>Independent fields</u>
$\Gamma_{\nu\rho}^{\mu} = \left\{ \begin{matrix} \mu \\ \nu \ \rho \end{matrix} \right\}$	$+$	$K_{\nu\rho}^{\mu}$	$+$
Levi-Civita connection	Contorsion tensor	$\frac{1}{2}g^{\rho\sigma} (T_{\mu\sigma\nu} + T_{\nu\sigma\mu} - T_{\mu\nu\sigma})$	Related to non-metricity $Q_{\mu\nu\rho} = \nabla_{\mu}g_{\nu\rho}$

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$$g_{\mu\nu} \quad \Gamma_{\nu\rho}^{\mu}$$

For the EH action SO and FO **classically**
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Palatini

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The equivalence also holds at one loop order J. Anero and RS (2017)

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First order quadratic gravity

Let us focus on the features of FO quadratic theories

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The **Riemann tensor** does not enjoy the **usual symmetries**

$$\text{LC} \quad R_{[\mu\nu]\rho\sigma} \quad R_{\mu\nu[\rho\sigma]} \quad R_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} = R_{\rho\sigma\mu\nu}$$

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Let us focus on the features of FO quadratic theories

The **Riemann tensor** does not enjoy the **usual symmetries**

Two different traces of the Riemann tensor

$$R^+[\Gamma]_{\nu\sigma} = g^{\mu\rho} R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma}$$

$$R^-[\Gamma]_{\mu\sigma} = g^{\nu\rho} R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma}$$

$$\mathcal{R}[\Gamma]_{\rho\sigma} = g^{\mu\nu} R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma}$$

$$\mathcal{R}_{\mu\nu} = R_{\mu\nu}^+ - R_{\nu\mu}^-$$

$$R^+ = g^{\mu\nu} R_{\mu\nu}^+ = -g^{\mu\nu} R_{\mu\nu}^- = -R^-$$

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$$R_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma}, R_{\mu\nu}^+, R_{\mu\nu}^-, R$$

First order quadratic gravity

The most general first order quadratic action reads

$$S_{FOQ} = \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} \sum_{I=1}^{I=12} g_I O^I$$

$$O_I = R_{\nu\rho\sigma}^{\mu} (D_I)_{\mu\mu'}^{\nu\rho\sigma\nu'\rho'\sigma'} R_{\nu'\rho'\sigma'}^{\mu'}$$

D_I : Function of metrics and deltas

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D_I : Function of metrics and deltas

The theory is **Weyl invariant**

$$g_{\mu\nu} \longrightarrow \Omega^2(x) g_{\mu\nu}$$

$$\Gamma_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda} \longrightarrow \Gamma_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda}$$

$$O_I \longrightarrow \Omega^{-4} O_I$$

$$\sqrt{-g} \longrightarrow \Omega^4 \sqrt{-g}$$

First order quadratic gravity

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$$\downarrow \langle \phi \rangle = v$$

The spontaneous breaking of the symmetry generates an EH term

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I. Shapiro and S. D. Odintsov (1986)

S. L. Adler (1988)

P. G. Ferreira, T. Hill and G. Ross (2018)

Dominates in the IR

First order quadratic gravity

More general connections are allowed

First order quadratic gravity

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$$\Delta H_{\mu\nu} = H_{\mu\nu}^{SO} - H_{\mu\nu}^{FO} = -\frac{1}{2} \nabla_{\lambda} K^{\lambda}_{(\mu\nu)} + \frac{1}{4} g_{\lambda\mu} \nabla^{\rho} K^{\lambda}_{(\rho\nu)} + \frac{1}{4} g_{\lambda\nu} \nabla^{\rho} K^{\lambda}_{(\rho\mu)}$$

$$H_{\mu\nu} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{-g}} \frac{\delta S}{\delta g^{\mu\nu}}$$

$$K^{\lambda}_{\mu\nu} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{-g}} \frac{\delta S}{\delta \Gamma^{\mu\nu}_{\lambda}}$$

M. Borunda, B. Jansen and M. Bastero-Gil (2008)

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Bigger solution space, **where does gravitation live?**

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Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

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Our aim is to find a **complete basis of spin projectors** so that we can decompose the three index tensor $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$ in its propagating spin pieces.

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Our aim is to find a **complete basis of spin projectors** so that we can decompose the three index tensor $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$ in its propagating spin pieces.

As we will see, a **proliferation of spins** occurs. It is crucial to check that we do not have **ghosts** encoded in those propagating spin components.

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

We take the EH action and expand the metric around flat space

$$g_{\mu\nu} = \eta_{\mu\nu} + \kappa h_{\mu\nu}$$

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$$S = \frac{1}{2} \int d^4x h^{\mu\nu} K_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma}^{EH} h^{\rho\sigma}$$

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Interaction between two index tensors

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We want to decompose a two index symmetric tensor in its spin components

Spin projectors



Four index operators that project onto a certain spin

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

To project into the different components we have

$$k^\mu = \delta_0^\mu$$

In the rest frame

$$\theta_{\mu\nu} = \eta_{\mu\nu} - \frac{k_\mu k_\nu}{k^2}$$

$$\omega_{\mu\nu} = \frac{k_\mu k_\nu}{k^2}$$

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To project into the different components we have

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$$\theta_{\mu\nu} = \eta_{\mu\nu} - \frac{k_\mu k_\nu}{k^2} \longrightarrow \text{Projects onto spatial indices}$$

$$\omega_{\mu\nu} = \frac{k_\mu k_\nu}{k^2} \longrightarrow \text{Projects onto time indices}$$

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Projects onto spatial indices

$$\omega_{\mu\nu} = \frac{k_\mu k_\nu}{k^2}$$



Projects onto time indices

Barnes-Rivers Projectors

$$s = 2 : \quad h_{ij}^T \equiv h_{ij} - \frac{1}{3}h\delta_{ij}$$

$$s = 1 : \quad h_{0i}$$

$$s = 0 : \quad h_{00}$$

$$s = 0 : \quad h \equiv \delta^{ij}h_{ij}$$

Barnes (1963) Rivers (1964)

P. Van Nieuwehuizen (1973)

Different spin
representations $SO(3)$

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

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$$k^\mu = \delta_0^\mu \quad \theta_{\mu\nu} = \eta_{\mu\nu} - \frac{k_\mu k_\nu}{k^2} \quad \longrightarrow \quad \text{Projects onto spatial indices}$$

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Barnes-Rivers Projectors

$$s = 2 : \quad h_{ij}^T \equiv h_{ij} - \frac{1}{3}h\delta_{ij} \quad \rightarrow \quad (P_2)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} \equiv \frac{1}{2} \left(\theta_\mu^\rho \theta_\nu^\sigma + \theta_\mu^\sigma \theta_\nu^\rho \right) - \frac{1}{3} \theta_{\mu\nu} \theta^{\rho\sigma}$$

$$s = 1 : \quad h_{0i} \quad \rightarrow \quad (P_1)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} \equiv \frac{1}{2} \left(\theta_\mu^\rho \omega_\nu^\sigma + \theta_\mu^\sigma \omega_\nu^\rho + \theta_\nu^\rho \omega_\mu^\sigma + \theta_\nu^\sigma \omega_\mu^\rho \right)$$

$$s = 0 : \quad h_{00} \quad \rightarrow \quad (P_0^w)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} \equiv \omega_{\mu\nu} \omega^{\rho\sigma}$$

$$s = 0 : \quad h \equiv \delta^{ij} h_{ij} \quad \rightarrow \quad (P_0^s)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} \equiv \frac{1}{3} \theta_{\mu\nu} \theta^{\rho\sigma}$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

These projectors add up to the identity

$$(P_2)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} + (P_1)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} + (P_0^w)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} + (P_0^s)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} = I_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma}$$

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We are interested in forming a basis of four index projectors

→ 5 independent monomials with this symmetry

$$M_1 \equiv k_\mu k_\nu k_\rho k_\sigma$$

$$M_2 \equiv k_\mu k_\nu \eta_{\rho\sigma}$$

$$M_3 \equiv k_\mu k_\sigma \eta_{\nu\rho}$$

$$M_4 \equiv \eta_{\mu\nu} \eta_{\rho\sigma}$$

$$M_5 \equiv \eta_{\mu\rho} \eta_{\nu\sigma}$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

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$$M_5 \equiv \eta_{\mu\rho} \eta_{\nu\sigma}$$

One extra operator
in the basis

$$(P_0^\times)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{3}} \left(\omega_{\mu\nu} \theta^{\rho\sigma} + \theta_{\mu\nu} \omega^{\rho\sigma} \right)$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

These projectors add up to the identity

$$(P_2)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} + (P_1)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} + (P_0^w)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} + (P_0^s)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} = I_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma}$$

Strategy

Take
$$K_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} = \sum_i c_i P_{i\mu\nu\rho\sigma}$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

These projectors add up to the identity

$$(P_2)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} + (P_1)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} + (P_0^w)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} + (P_0^s)_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} = I_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma}$$

Strategy

Take
$$K_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} = \sum_i c_i P_{i\mu\nu\rho\sigma}$$

Divide the quadratic piece in the different spin components

$$h^{\mu\nu} \left(\sum_i c_i P_{i\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \right) h^{\rho\sigma} = \sum_i h_i^{\mu\nu} \square h_{\mu\nu}^i$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

So now we can decompose any four index operator into the spin projectors

$$S_{EH+gf} = \frac{1}{2} \int d^4x -\frac{1}{4} h^{\mu\nu} \left(P_2 + P_1 - \frac{1}{2} P_0^s + \frac{1}{2} P_0^w - \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} P^\times \right)_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \square h^{\rho\sigma}$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

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Inverting the operator we get the propagator and the free energy

D. Dicus and S. Willenbrock (1969)

$$W [T_{(1)}, T_{(2)}] = \int d^4x T_{(1)}^{\mu\nu} \Delta_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} T_{(2)}^{\rho\sigma} = \int d^4x \left(T_{(1)}^{\mu\nu} \left(P_2 - \frac{1}{2} P_0^s \right)_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} T_{(2)}^{\rho\sigma} \right)$$

Interaction between
external sources

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

So now we can decompose any four index operator into the spin projectors

$$S_{EH+gf} = \frac{1}{2} \int d^4x -\frac{1}{4} h^{\mu\nu} \left(P_2 + P_1 - \frac{1}{2} P_0^s + \frac{1}{2} P_0^w - \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} P^\times \right)_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \square h^{\rho\sigma}$$

Inverting the operator we get the propagator and the free energy

D. Dicus and S. Willenbrock (2004)

$$W [T_{(1)}, T_{(2)}] = \int d^4x T_{(1)}^{\mu\nu} \Delta_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} T_{(2)}^{\rho\sigma} = \int d^4x \left(T_{(1)}^{\mu\nu} \left(P_2 \ominus \frac{1}{2} P_0^s \right)_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} T_{(2)}^{\rho\sigma} \right)$$

Positive definite

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

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On-shell
asymptotic states



A single spin 2
field propagates

$$h_{\mu\nu}^{TT}$$

Graviton

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

So now we can decompose any four index operator into the spin projectors

$$S_{EH+gf} = \frac{1}{2} \int d^4x -\frac{1}{4} h^{\mu\nu} \left(P_2 + P_1 - \frac{1}{2} P_0^s + \frac{1}{2} P_0^w - \frac{\sqrt{3}}{2} P^\times \right)_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \square h^{\rho\sigma}$$

Summary

Spin-2 and Spin-0 components mediating the interaction between external sources (off-shell)

Spin-2 massless unique asymptotic state
Graviton

Physical content of $A_{\mu\nu\lambda}$

We are working with **symmetric connections**

$$A_{\mu\nu\lambda} \in \mathcal{A} \equiv T_x \otimes \text{Sym}(T_x \otimes T_x)$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

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$$\begin{array}{c}
 40 \\
 \text{independent} \\
 \text{components}
 \end{array}
 \begin{array}{c}
 \square \square \otimes \square \\
 \otimes
 \end{array}
 =
 \begin{array}{c}
 \square \square \\
 \oplus \\
 \square
 \end{array}
 \oplus
 \begin{array}{c}
 \square \square \square \\
 \text{Totally} \\
 \text{Symmetric} \\
 \text{part}
 \end{array}$$

Hook part

$$\{2,0\} \otimes \{1\} = \{3,0\} \oplus \{2,1\}$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

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 \square \square \\
 \square
 \end{array} \oplus \begin{array}{c}
 \square \square \square \\
 \square
 \end{array} \\
 \text{Hook part} \qquad \text{Totally} \\
 \qquad \qquad \qquad \text{Symmetric} \\
 \qquad \qquad \qquad \text{part}
 \end{array}$$

$$\underline{20}_H = 2(\underline{2}) \oplus 3(\underline{1}) \oplus (\underline{0})$$

$$\underline{20}_S = (\underline{3}) \oplus (\underline{2}) \oplus 2(\underline{1}) \oplus 2(\underline{0})$$

$$P_H + P_S = I$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

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$$A_{\mu\nu\lambda} \in \mathcal{A} \equiv T_x \otimes \text{Sym}(T_x \otimes T_x)$$

$$\square\square \otimes \square = \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \square \\ \hline \square \\ \hline \end{array} \oplus \square\square\square$$

We have 22 independent monomials with this symmetry

→ **22 projectors** in the basis $(P_i)^{\mu\nu\lambda}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$

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We need 10 extra spin operators with mixed symmetry

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We have 22 independent monomials with this symmetry

→ **22 projectors** in the basis $(P_i)^{\mu\nu\lambda}_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$

We need 10 extra spin operators with mixed symmetry

One spin-3, four spin-2, eleven spin-1 and six spin-0

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

In FOQG around flat space

$$g_{\mu\nu} = \eta_{\mu\nu} + \kappa h_{\mu\nu}$$

$$\Gamma_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda} = \bar{\Gamma}_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda} + A_{\mu\nu}^{\lambda}$$

$$A_{\alpha\beta\gamma} K_{\mu\nu\lambda}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} A^{\mu\nu\lambda} + h^{\mu\nu} M_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} h^{\rho\sigma} + h^{\mu\nu} N_{\mu\nu}^{\rho\sigma} A_{\lambda\rho\sigma}^{\lambda}$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

In **FOQG** around flat space

$$A_{\alpha\beta\gamma} K_{\mu\nu\lambda}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} A^{\mu\nu\lambda}$$

All the dynamics
encoded in the gauge
field

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

In **FOQG** around flat space $A_{\alpha\beta\gamma} K_{\mu\nu\lambda}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} A^{\mu\nu\lambda}$ All the dynamics encoded in the gauge field

Taking for instance the simpler action

$$S_{FOQ} \equiv \int d^n x \sqrt{-g} \left(\alpha R[\Gamma]^2 + \beta R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu} + \gamma R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \right)$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

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$$S_{FOQ} \equiv \int d^n x \sqrt{-g} \left(\alpha R[\Gamma]^2 + \beta R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu} + \gamma R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \right)$$

\mathcal{P} Hook \mathcal{P} Symmetric \mathcal{P} Mixed

$$\begin{aligned} (K_{FOQ})_{\tau\lambda}^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} = & \left(-2(2\gamma + \beta) \mathcal{P}_0^s - (4\gamma + 9\alpha + 2\beta) \mathcal{P}_0^s + (2\gamma - \beta) \mathcal{P}_0^x - \frac{4}{3}(3\gamma + 5\beta) \mathcal{P}_1^s \right. \\ & - 2\gamma \mathcal{P}_1^s - \frac{4}{3}(3\gamma + \beta) \mathcal{P}_1^t - (2\gamma + \beta) \mathcal{P}_1^{wx} + 4\beta \mathcal{P}_1^{ss} - 2(2\gamma + \beta) (\mathcal{P}_2 + \mathcal{P}_2) \\ & \left. - 4\gamma \mathcal{P}_2^s + 2(\beta + \gamma) \mathcal{P}_2^x - 4\gamma \mathcal{P}_3 \right)_{\tau\lambda}^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

Taking for instance the simpler action

$$S_{FOQ} \equiv \int d^n x \sqrt{-g} \left(\alpha R[\Gamma]^2 + \beta R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu} + \underline{\gamma} R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \right)$$

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Spin-3 is present and comes from the Riemann squared terms

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

Taking for instance the simpler action

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We have in principle three **Spin-2** components

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

Taking for instance the simpler action

$$S_{FOQ} \equiv \int d^n x \sqrt{-g} \left(\alpha R[\Gamma]^2 + \beta R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu} + \gamma R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \right)$$

\mathcal{P} Hook \mathcal{P} Symmetric \mathcal{P} Mixed

$$\begin{aligned} (K_{FOQ})_{\tau\lambda}^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} = & \left(-2(2\gamma + \beta) \underline{\mathcal{P}_0^s} - (4\gamma + 9\alpha + 2\beta) \underline{\mathcal{P}_0^s} + (2\gamma - \beta) \underline{\mathcal{P}_0^x} - \frac{4}{3}(3\gamma + 5\beta) \underline{\mathcal{P}_1^s} \right. \\ & - 2\gamma \underline{\mathcal{P}_1^s} - \frac{4}{3}(3\gamma + \beta) \underline{\mathcal{P}_1^t} - (2\gamma + \beta) \underline{\mathcal{P}_1^{wx}} + 4\beta \underline{\mathcal{P}_1^{ss}} - 2(2\gamma + \beta) (\mathcal{P}_2 + \mathcal{P}_2) \\ & \left. - 4\gamma \mathcal{P}_2^s + 2(\beta + \gamma) \mathcal{P}_2^x - 4\gamma \mathcal{P}_3 \right)_{\tau\lambda}^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \quad \square \end{aligned}$$

We have in principle three **Spin-0**
and four **Spin-1** components

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

Taking for instance the simpler action

$$S_{FOQ} \equiv \int d^n x \sqrt{-g} \left(\alpha R[\Gamma]^2 + \beta R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu} + \gamma R[\Gamma]_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} R[\Gamma]^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \right)$$

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Which ones appear in the **propagator**? Which ones survive **on-shell**?

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

We need a gauge fixing to invert the operator

$$S_{gf} = \frac{1}{\chi} \int d^4x \eta^{\mu\nu} \eta^{\rho\sigma} \eta_{\tau\lambda} A_{\mu\nu}^{\tau} \square A_{\rho\sigma}^{\lambda}$$

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

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\mathcal{P} Hook \mathcal{P} Symmetric \mathcal{P} Mixed

$$\begin{aligned} (K_{gf})_{\tau\lambda}^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} &= \frac{1}{\chi} \left(\mathcal{P}_0^w + 3 \mathcal{P}_0^s + 3 \mathcal{P}_0^{\mathcal{S}} - 3 \mathcal{P}_0^x + \mathcal{P}_0^{sw} + \mathcal{P}_0^{ws} + \mathcal{P}_1 - \frac{5}{3} \mathcal{P}_1^s + \mathcal{P}_1^w \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \frac{2}{3} \mathcal{P}_1^t - \mathcal{P}_1^{wx} + \mathcal{P}_1^{ws} + \mathcal{P}_1^{sw} + \mathcal{P}_1^{sx} + 4 \mathcal{P}_1^{ss} \right)_{\tau\lambda}^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \square \end{aligned}$$

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Important to note: **no spin-2 or spin-3 in the gauge fixing!**

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

If we make $\beta = \gamma = 0$

$$\begin{aligned} (K_{R^2+\text{gf}})^{\mu\nu \rho\sigma}_{\tau \lambda} &= \frac{1}{\chi} \left(P_0^w + 3 P_0^s + (3 - 9\chi) \mathcal{P}_0^s - 3 \mathcal{P}_0^x + \mathcal{P}_0^{sw} + \mathcal{P}_0^{ws} + P_1^w - \frac{5}{3} P_1^s \right. \\ &\quad \left. + \mathcal{P}_1^w + \frac{2}{3} \mathcal{P}_1^t - \mathcal{P}_1^{wx} + \mathcal{P}_1^{ws} + \mathcal{P}_1^{sw} + \mathcal{P}_1^{sx} + 4 \mathcal{P}_1^{ss} \right)_{\tau \lambda}^{\mu\nu \rho\sigma} \square \end{aligned}$$

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**No spin-2
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The projection onto spin-2 and spin-3 are zero modes



We would need to gauge fix them

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

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$$(K_{R^2+\text{gf}})^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma}_{\tau\lambda} = \frac{1}{\chi} \left(P_0^w + 3 P_0^s + (3 - 9\chi) \mathcal{P}_0^s - 3 \mathcal{P}_0^x + \mathcal{P}_0^{sw} + \mathcal{P}_0^{ws} + P_1^w - \frac{5}{3} P_1^s \right. \\ \left. + \mathcal{P}_1^w + \frac{2}{3} \mathcal{P}_1^t - \mathcal{P}_1^{wx} + \mathcal{P}_1^{ws} + \mathcal{P}_1^{sw} + \mathcal{P}_1^{sx} + 4 \mathcal{P}_1^{ss} \right)_{\tau\lambda}^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \square$$

No spin-2 or spin-3

The projection onto spin-2 and spin-3 are zero modes

→ We would need to gauge fix them

In fact, for R^2 there are 13 zero modes

Physical content of $A_{\mu(\nu\lambda)}$

For $\alpha \neq \beta \neq \gamma \neq 0$ we can invert the operator in order to get the **propagator**. In doing so, **all the projectors of the basis appear**.

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The next step is to couple **external sources for the connection** and see the spin components that survive.

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To see the asymptotic states, we need to compute the **equations of motion for the different spin pieces** of the connection.

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The next step is to couple **external sources for the connection** and see the spin components that survive.

To see the asymptotic states, we need to compute the **equations of motion for the different spin pieces** of the connection.

We have not found any obvious problem with the **spin-3 piece** so far. A full analysis of this piece is needed in order to see if inconsistencies appear.

Outline

- **First order** formalism vs. **Second order** formalism
- First order **quadratic gravity**
- Physical content of the **connection**

The **coupling to matter** in first order formalism

- Summary and Outlook

The coupling to matter in FO

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We are interested in the **coupling of fermions to gravity in first order formalism**, as they turn out to be a source of **torsion**.

This constitutes a difference between first order linear gravity and second order linear gravity, not present in the case of pure gravity.

Coupling of fermions in FO

We take the minimal coupling of fermions to gravity. To do that, we need to change to the vielbein formalism

$$\underline{e_a^\mu} \quad \omega_\mu^{ab} \quad \text{Independent}$$

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Variations with respect to the vierbein

$$\underline{G_\mu^a} + \kappa T_\mu^a = 0$$

Not symmetric!

$$T_\mu^a = \frac{i}{2} \kappa \left(\bar{\psi} \gamma^a \nabla_\mu \psi - \nabla_\mu \bar{\psi} \gamma^a \psi \right) - \frac{i}{2} \kappa e_\mu^a \left(\bar{\psi} \gamma^\nu \nabla_\nu \psi - \nabla_\nu \bar{\psi} \gamma^\nu \psi \right)$$

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Fermions act like a **source of torsion**

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The antisymmetric part of the variations with respect to the spin connection

$$T_{\nu\lambda\rho} = \frac{\kappa^2}{2} \epsilon_{\nu\lambda\rho\sigma} J_5^\sigma$$

Totally antisymmetric torsion
proportional to the axial current

Coupling of fermions in FO

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$$\tilde{S}_{DEH} = S_{DEH} + \frac{3\kappa^2}{16} \int d^4x e \bar{\psi} \gamma^\sigma \gamma_5 \psi \bar{\psi} \gamma_\sigma \gamma^5 \psi$$

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Dirac-EH action with **torsion** Dirac-EH action with **no torsion**

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Extra quartic contact
interaction between fermions

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$$\underbrace{\tilde{S}_{DEH}}_{\text{Dirac-EH action with torsion}} = \underbrace{S_{DEH}}_{\text{Dirac-EH action with no torsion}} + \frac{3\kappa^2}{16} \int d^4x e \bar{\psi} \gamma^\sigma \gamma_5 \psi \bar{\psi} \gamma_\sigma \gamma^5 \psi$$

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Nevertheless, suppressed by the Planck mass

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What form does the torsion have when coupling fermions in FOQG?

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- The theory must undergo a spontaneous symmetry breaking so that EH dominates in the IR

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What are the sources of the connection?

Is the free energy positive definite?

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Are there ghostly degrees of freedom?

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Can we reintroduce it in the action?

What kind of new interactions do we get?

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- The spin-3 part is worth of deeper study

C. Aragone and S. Deser (1979)

M. A. Vasiliev (1988)

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Are there any inconsistencies in the interactions?

Thank you for your attention

Backup

Possible sources

$$J_{\alpha\beta\gamma} \equiv Ak_{\alpha} \eta_{\beta\gamma} + B(k_{\beta}\eta_{\alpha\gamma} + k_{\gamma}\eta_{\alpha\beta})$$

$$J_{\alpha\beta\gamma} = Aj_{\alpha}T_{\beta\gamma} + B(j_{\beta}T_{\alpha\gamma} + j_{\gamma}T_{\alpha\beta})$$

Zero modes

$$Z_1 \equiv (P_0^w + P_0^s - \mathcal{P}_0^{ws})_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_2 \equiv (-P_1^w + P_1^s + 3\mathcal{P}_1^w - \frac{3}{8}\mathcal{P}_1^{sw} - \frac{3}{2}\mathcal{P}_1^{wst})_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_3 \equiv (2\mathcal{P}_1^w + \mathcal{P}_1^t - \frac{3}{2}\mathcal{P}_1^{sw})_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_4 \equiv (-2P_1^w + \mathcal{P}_1^w + \mathcal{P}_1^{ws} - \frac{1}{8}\mathcal{P}_1^{sw} - \frac{1}{2}\mathcal{P}_1^{wst})_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_5 \equiv (-2P_1^w + \mathcal{P}_1^w - \frac{3}{4}\mathcal{P}_1^{sw} + \mathcal{P}_1^{sx} - \mathcal{P}_1^{wst})_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_6 \equiv (-\frac{7}{6}P_1^w + \frac{14}{3}\mathcal{P}_1^w - \frac{21}{16}\mathcal{P}_1^{ws} + \mathcal{P}_1^{ss} - \frac{7}{4}\mathcal{P}_1^{wst})_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_7 \equiv (\mathcal{P}_1^s)_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_8 \equiv (\mathcal{P}_1^{wx})_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_9 \equiv (P_2)_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_{10} \equiv (\mathcal{P}_2)_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_{11} \equiv (\mathcal{P}_2^s)_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_{12} \equiv (\mathcal{P}_2^x)_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$

$$Z_{13} \equiv (P_3)_{\lambda\mu\nu}^{\alpha\beta\gamma} \Omega_{\alpha\beta\gamma}$$