

Supersymmetric BRST cohomology

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Context / applications:

- ▶ Quantum field theory: classification of candidate counterterms and anomalies; "algebraic renormalization"
- ▶ Classical field theory: classification of conservation laws and consistent deformations

Outline:

- ▶ Supersymmetry algebra cohomology (SAC)
- ▶ Descent equations
- ▶ Elimination of trivial pairs
- ▶ Emergence of SAC in local BRST cohomology
- ▶ SUSY ladder equations
- ▶ Example in $D=2$
- ▶ Comparison to Lie algebra cohomology

Supersymmetry algebra cohomology (SAC)

Supersymmetry (SUSY) algebra, represented on “generalized tensors” \tilde{T} :

$$[P_a, P_b] = 0, \quad [P_a, Q_{\underline{\alpha}}^i] = 0, \quad \{Q_{\underline{\alpha}}^i, Q_{\underline{\beta}}^j\} = M^{ij} (\Gamma^a C^{-1})_{\underline{\alpha}\underline{\beta}} P_a$$

SUSY differential:

$$s_{\text{susy}} = c^a P_a + \xi_i^{\underline{\alpha}} Q_{\underline{\alpha}}^i - \frac{1}{2} M^{ij} (\Gamma^a C^{-1})_{\underline{\alpha}\underline{\beta}} \xi_i^{\underline{\alpha}} \xi_j^{\underline{\beta}} \frac{\partial}{\partial c^a}, \quad (s_{\text{susy}})^2 = 0$$

c^a : anticommuting translation ghosts, $a = 1, \dots, D$

$\xi_i^{\underline{\alpha}}$: commuting SUSY ghosts, $\underline{\alpha} = \underline{1}, \dots, \underline{2}^{\lfloor D/2 \rfloor}$, $i = 1, \dots, N$

SAC:

$$H(s_{\text{susy}}) = \frac{\text{kernel of } s_{\text{susy}} \text{ in } \Omega}{\text{image of } s_{\text{susy}} \text{ in } \Omega}$$

Representatives of SAC:

$$s_{\text{susy}} \omega = 0, \quad \omega \sim \omega + s_{\text{susy}} \eta, \quad \omega, \eta \in \Omega$$

Ω : space of polynomials $\omega(c, \xi, \tilde{T})$ or similar

Descent equations

Local BRST-cohomology $H(s|d)$, descent equations:

$$\left. \begin{array}{r} s\omega_D + d\omega_{D-1} = 0 \\ s\omega_{D-1} + d\omega_{D-2} = 0 \\ \vdots \\ s\omega_m = 0 \end{array} \right\} \Leftrightarrow (s+d)\tilde{\omega} = 0, \quad \tilde{\omega} = \sum_{p=m}^D \omega_p$$

In general: descent is trivial, ascent is generally obstructed
 \Rightarrow generally, the relation of $H(s)$ and $H(s|d)$ is subtle, $H(s)$ and $H(s+d)$ differ substantially.

In standard supersymmetric field theories (when s contains SUSY):
the relation between $H(s)$, $H(s|d)$ and $H(s+d)$ is direct. In particular:

$$s\omega = 0 \Rightarrow (s+d)\tilde{\omega} = 0 \text{ with } \tilde{\omega} = \omega(c^a \rightarrow c^a + dx^a)$$

Reason: $s = c^a \partial_a + \dots$, $(s+d) = (c^a + dx^a) \partial_a + \dots$

$\Rightarrow H(s)$ contains all relevant information on $H(s|d)$.

$H(s_{\text{susy}})$ contributes to $H(s)$ and thus also directly to $H(s|d)$.

Elimination of trivial pairs

Useful method to analyse the local BRST cohomology:
 construction of variables u^ℓ, v^ℓ, w^I s.t.

$$(s + d) u^\ell = v^\ell \quad (\Rightarrow \quad (s + d) v^\ell = 0), \quad (s + d) w^I = r^I(w)$$

This implies, with $\mathcal{F} = \{f(u, v, w)\}$, $\mathcal{F}_{u,v} = \{f(u, v)\}$, $\mathcal{F}_w = \{f(w)\}$:

$$H(s + d, \mathcal{F}) = H(s + d, \mathcal{F}_{u,v}) \times H(s + d, \mathcal{F}_w)$$

Usually (at least locally):

$$H(s + d, \mathcal{F}_{u,v}) \simeq \mathbb{K} \quad (= \mathbb{R} \text{ or } \mathbb{C}) \quad \Rightarrow \quad H(s + d, \mathcal{F}) \simeq H(s + d, \mathcal{F}_w)$$

Typically:

$$\{u^\ell\} = \{A_\mu, \phi^*, \dots\},$$

$$\{v^\ell\} = \left\{ \partial_\mu C + \dots, \frac{\delta \mathcal{L}}{\delta \phi} + \dots, \dots \right\}$$

$$\{w^I\} = \{\tilde{T}^A, \tilde{C}^N\} \text{ with } \tilde{T}^A = T^A + \dots, \quad \tilde{C}^N = C^N + \dots$$

with

$$(s + d) A_\mu = \partial_\mu C + \dots, \quad (s + d) \phi^* = \frac{\delta \mathcal{L}}{\delta \phi} + \dots$$

$$(s + d) \tilde{T}^A = \tilde{C}^N \Delta_N \tilde{T}^A, \quad (s + d) \tilde{C}^N = \pm \frac{1}{2} \tilde{C}^K \tilde{C}^L \mathcal{F}_{LK}^N(\tilde{T}),$$

$$[\Delta_K, \Delta_L]_\pm = \mathcal{F}_{KL}^N(\tilde{T}) \Delta_N$$

Emergence of SAC in local BRST cohomology

SAC arises within the linearized problem $H(s^{(0)}, \mathcal{F}_w)$ corresponding to

$$s^{(0)} \tilde{T}^A = \tilde{C}^N \Delta_N^{(0)} \tilde{T}^A, \quad s^{(0)} \tilde{C}^N = \pm \frac{1}{2} \tilde{C}^K \tilde{C}^L f_{LK}^N,$$

$$[\Delta_K^{(0)}, \Delta_L^{(0)}]_{\pm} = f_{KL}^N \Delta_N^{(0)} \quad (f_{KL}^N = \text{constant})$$

- ▶ SAC always emerges in this way within the local BRST cohomological analysis of standard supersymmetric field theories,
 - both for global and local SUSY
 - whether or not the algebra of SUSY transformations closes off-shell and/or modulo (other) gauge transformations
- ▶ Existence proof for variables \tilde{T} : FB, Lett. Math. Phys. 55 (2001) 149 [arXiv:math-ph/0103006]
- ▶ If the antifields are not eliminated as members of trivial pairs, the SAC arises as a "weak cohomology" (cohomology on-shell)

SUSY ladder equations

Strategy to compute SAC:

Decomposition in c -degree N_c (= degree in the translation ghosts)

$$s_{\text{susy}} = d_c + d_\xi + s_{\text{gh}}$$

$$d_c = c^a P_a, \quad d_\xi = \xi_i^\alpha Q_\alpha^i, \quad s_{\text{gh}} = -\frac{1}{2} M^{ij} (\Gamma^a C^{-1})_{\underline{\alpha}\underline{\beta}} \xi_i^\alpha \xi_j^\beta \frac{\partial}{\partial c^a}$$

$$\omega = \sum_{p=m}^M \omega^p, \quad N_c \omega^p = p \omega^p$$

SUSY ladder equations:

$$s_{\text{susy}} \omega = 0 \Leftrightarrow \begin{cases} 0 = s_{\text{gh}} \omega^m \\ 0 = d_\xi \omega^m + s_{\text{gh}} \omega^{m+1} \\ 0 = d_c \omega^p + d_\xi \omega^{p+1} + s_{\text{gh}} \omega^{p+2} \text{ for } m \leq p \leq M-2 \\ 0 = d_c \omega^{M-1} + d_\xi \omega^M \\ 0 = d_c \omega^M \end{cases}$$

Compute $H(s_{\text{gh}})$ ("primitive elements" of SAC) and use the result to compute $H(s_{\text{susy}})$ (spectral sequence technique)

Remark: analysis of the ladder eqs. is nontrivial only in c -degrees where $H(s_{\text{gh}})$ does not vanish; typically (always?) these c -degrees are $\leq D/2$.

Example in $D = 2$

SUSY algebra in $D = 2$ for Minkowski signature $(-1,1)$,

$$\Gamma^1 = -i\sigma_1, \Gamma^2 = \sigma_2, C = \sigma_2, M^{ij} \equiv -i\delta^{ij},$$

$(Q_{\underline{1}}, Q_{\underline{2}}) = (Q_+, Q_-)$ (two real Majorana-Weyl SUSYs):

$$(Q_+)^2 = -\frac{i}{2}(P_1 + P_2), \quad (Q_-)^2 = \frac{i}{2}(P_1 - P_2), \quad \{Q_+, Q_-\} = 0$$

Lagrangian for real boson φ and fermion $(\psi_{\underline{1}}, \psi_{\underline{2}}) = (\psi_+, \psi_-)$:

$$\begin{aligned} L &= -\frac{1}{2}\eta^{ab}\partial_a\varphi\partial_b\varphi - i\psi^{\underline{\alpha}}(\Gamma^a C^{-1})_{\underline{\alpha}\underline{\beta}}\partial_a\psi^{\underline{\beta}} \\ &= \frac{1}{2}(\partial_1\varphi)^2 - \frac{1}{2}(\partial_2\varphi)^2 + i\psi_-(\partial_1 + \partial_2)\psi_- - i\psi_+(\partial_1 - \partial_2)\psi_+ \end{aligned}$$

The action $\int dx^1 dx^2 L$ is invariant under the **symmetry transformations**

$$\begin{aligned} \delta_a\varphi &= \partial_a\varphi, \quad \delta_a\psi_{\underline{\alpha}} = \partial_a\psi_{\underline{\alpha}}, \quad \delta_{\underline{\alpha}}\varphi = \psi_{\underline{\alpha}}, \quad \delta_{\underline{\alpha}}\psi_{\underline{\beta}} = -\frac{i}{2}(\Gamma^a C^{-1})_{\underline{\alpha}\underline{\beta}}\partial_a\varphi \\ \delta_{\pm}\varphi &= \psi_{\pm}, \quad \delta_+\psi_+ = -\frac{i}{2}(\partial_1 + \partial_2)\varphi, \quad \delta_-\psi_- = \frac{i}{2}(\partial_1 - \partial_2)\varphi, \quad \delta_{\pm}\psi_{\mp} = 0 \end{aligned}$$

SUSY algebra holds only on-shell, e.g.:

$$(\delta_+)^2\psi_- = 0 \approx -\frac{i}{2}(\partial_1 + \partial_2)\psi_-$$

(Extended) BRST transformations for the example

$$\begin{aligned}
 s\varphi &= c^a \partial_a \varphi + \xi^+ \psi_+ + \xi^- \psi_- \\
 s\psi_+ &= c^a \partial_a \psi_+ - \frac{i}{2} \xi^+ \partial_+ \varphi + \frac{1}{4} \xi^- \xi^- \psi_+^* - \frac{1}{4} \xi^+ \xi^- \psi_-^* \\
 s\psi_- &= c^a \partial_a \psi_- + \frac{i}{2} \xi^- \partial_- \varphi + \frac{1}{4} \xi^+ \xi^+ \psi_-^* - \frac{1}{4} \xi^+ \xi^- \psi_+^* \\
 s\varphi^* &= -\partial_+ \partial_- \varphi + c^a \partial_a \varphi^* - \frac{i}{2} \xi^+ \partial_+ \psi_+^* + \frac{i}{2} \xi^- \partial_- \psi_-^* \\
 s\psi_+^* &= 2i \partial_- \psi_+ + c^a \partial_a \psi_+^* + \xi^+ \varphi^* \\
 s\psi_-^* &= -2i \partial_+ \psi_- + c^a \partial_a \psi_-^* + \xi^- \varphi^* \\
 sc^+ &= i \xi^+ \xi^+ \\
 sc^- &= -i \xi^- \xi^- \\
 s\xi^\pm &= 0
 \end{aligned}$$

where φ^* , ψ_+^* , ψ_-^* are the antifields to φ , ψ_+ , ψ_- and

$$\partial_\pm = \partial_1 \pm \partial_2, \quad c^\pm = c^1 \pm c^2, \quad c^a \partial_a = c^1 \partial_1 + c^2 \partial_2 = \frac{1}{2}(c^+ \partial_+ + c^- \partial_-)$$

On all fields and antifields:

$$s^2 = 0$$

Appropriate variables for computing $H(s)$

” **Trivial pairs** ”: BRST-doublets $\{u^\ell, v^\ell\}$ with $v^\ell = s u^\ell$:

$$\{u^\ell\} = \{\partial_+^m \partial_-^n \varphi^*, \partial_+^m \partial_-^n \psi_+^*, \partial_+^m \partial_-^n \psi_-^* \mid m, n = 0, 1, 2, \dots\}$$

$$s \partial_+^m \partial_-^n \varphi^* = -\partial_+^{m+1} \partial_-^{n+1} \varphi + \dots$$

$$s \partial_+^m \partial_-^n \psi_+^* = 2i \partial_+^m \partial_-^{n+1} \psi_+ + \dots$$

$$s \partial_+^m \partial_-^n \psi_-^* = -2i \partial_+^{m+1} \partial_-^n \psi_- + \dots$$

where $\partial_+^m = \partial_+ \cdots \partial_+$ etc

” **Nontrivial variables** ” $\{w^I\} = \{c^+, c^-, \xi^+, \xi^-, \tilde{T}^A\}$ with $s w^I = r^I(w)$:

$$\{\tilde{T}^A\} = \{\varphi_{(0,0)}, \varphi_{(m+1,0)}, \varphi_{(0,m+1)}, \psi_{+(m,0)}, \psi_{-(0,m)} \mid m = 0, 1, 2, \dots\}$$

$$\varphi_{(0,0)} = \varphi$$

$$\varphi_{(m+1,0)} = \partial_+^m (\partial_+ \varphi - \frac{i}{2} \xi^- \psi_-^* + \frac{1}{2} c^- \varphi^*)$$

$$\varphi_{(0,m+1)} = \partial_-^m (\partial_- \varphi + \frac{i}{2} \xi^+ \psi_+^* - \frac{1}{2} c^+ \varphi^*)$$

$$\psi_{+(m,0)} = \partial_+^m (\psi_+ - \frac{i}{4} c^- \psi_+^*)$$

$$\psi_{-(0,m)} = \partial_-^m (\psi_- + \frac{i}{4} c^+ \psi_-^*)$$

BRST transformations of the \tilde{T}^A and SUSY algebra

$$s\tilde{T}^A = s_{\text{SUSY}}\tilde{T}^A = \left(\frac{1}{2}c^+P_+ + \frac{1}{2}c^-P_- + \xi^+Q_+ + \xi^-Q_-\right)\tilde{T}^A$$

| | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| \tilde{T}^A | $\varphi(0,0)$ | $\varphi(m+1,0)$ | $\varphi(0,m+1)$ | $\psi_{+(m,0)}$ | $\psi_{-(0,m)}$ |
| $P_+\tilde{T}^A$ | $\varphi(1,0)$ | $\varphi(m+2,0)$ | 0 | $\psi_{+(m+1,0)}$ | 0 |
| $P_-\tilde{T}^A$ | $\varphi(0,1)$ | 0 | $\varphi(0,m+2)$ | 0 | $\psi_{-(0,m+1)}$ |
| $Q_+\tilde{T}^A$ | $\psi_{+(0,0)}$ | $\psi_{+(m+1,0)}$ | 0 | $-\frac{i}{2}\varphi(m+1,0)$ | 0 |
| $Q_-\tilde{T}^A$ | $\psi_{-(0,0)}$ | 0 | $\psi_{-(0,m+1)}$ | 0 | $\frac{i}{2}\varphi(0,m+1)$ |

with $P_{\pm} = P_1 \pm P_2$. SUSY algebra:

$$[P_+, P_-] = [P_+, Q_+] = [P_+, Q_-] = [P_-, Q_+] = [P_-, Q_-] = 0,$$

$$(Q_+)^2 = -\frac{i}{2}P_+, \quad (Q_-)^2 = \frac{i}{2}P_-, \quad \{Q_+, Q_-\} = 0$$

Notice: P_+ and P_- map half of the generalized tensors $\varphi(m+1,0)$, $\varphi(0,m+1)$, $\psi_{+(m,0)}$, $\psi_{-(0,m)}$ to zero respectively and correspond to the action of ∂_+ and ∂_- on-shell (owing to $\partial_+(\partial_-)^{m+1}\varphi \approx 0$ etc)

Computation and result of $H(s)$

1. The trivial pairs drop from $H(s)$: $H(s) \simeq H(s_{\text{susy}})$
2. Computation of $H(s_{\text{gh}})$. Result:

$$s_{\text{gh}} f(c, \xi) = 0 \Leftrightarrow f(c, \xi) \sim a + \xi^+ a_+ + \xi^- a_- + \xi^+ \xi^- a_{+-};$$

$$a + \xi^+ a_+ + \xi^- a_- + \xi^+ \xi^- a_{+-} \sim 0 \Leftrightarrow a = a_+ = a_- = a_{+-} = 0$$

3. Computation of $H(s_{\text{susy}})$ by analysis of the ladder equations:

cocycles :

$$s_{\text{gh}} \omega^m = 0 \Rightarrow m = 0, \omega^0 = a(\tilde{T}) + \xi^+ a_+(\tilde{T}) + \xi^- a_-(\tilde{T}) + \xi^+ \xi^- a_{+-}(\tilde{T})$$

$$d_\xi \omega^0 + s_{\text{gh}} \omega^1 = 0 \Rightarrow Q_+ a(\tilde{T}) = Q_- a(\tilde{T}) = 0, Q_- a_+(\tilde{T}) + Q_+ a_-(\tilde{T}) = 0$$

$$\Rightarrow \begin{cases} \text{gh} = 0 : \omega = a = \text{constant} \\ \text{gh} = 1 : \omega \sim (\xi^+ + i c^+ Q_+) a_+(\tilde{T}) + (\xi^- - i c^- Q_-) a_-(\tilde{T}) \\ \text{gh} = 2 : \omega \sim (\xi^+ \xi^- + i c^+ \xi^- Q_+ - i c^- \xi^+ Q_- - c^+ c^- Q_+ Q_-) a_{+-}(\tilde{T}) \\ \text{gh} > 2 : \omega \sim 0 \end{cases}$$

coboundaries :

$$\text{gh} = 1 : \omega \sim 0 \Leftrightarrow a_+(\tilde{T}) = Q_+ b(\tilde{T}) \wedge a_-(\tilde{T}) = Q_- b(\tilde{T})$$

$$\text{gh} = 2 : \omega \sim 0 \Leftrightarrow a_{+-}(\tilde{T}) = Q_- b_+(\tilde{T}) + Q_+ b_-(\tilde{T})$$

Sample solutions

Simple examples:

$$\text{gh} = 2 : a_{+-}(\tilde{T}) = f(\varphi) \Rightarrow$$

$$\begin{aligned} \omega &= \xi^+ \xi^- f(\varphi) + i(c^+ \xi^- \psi_{+(0,0)} - c^- \xi^+ \psi_{-(0,0)}) f'(\varphi) \\ &\quad - c^+ c^- \psi_{+(0,0)} \psi_{-(0,0)} f''(\varphi) \end{aligned}$$

$$\omega_2 = -dx^+ dx^- \left[\psi_+ \psi_- f''(\varphi) + \frac{1}{4} (\psi_-^* \xi^+ - \psi_+^* \xi^-) f'(\varphi) \right]$$

$$\text{gh} = 1 : a_+(\tilde{T}) = \psi_{+(0,0)}, \quad a_-(\tilde{T}) = -\psi_{-(0,0)} \Rightarrow$$

$$\omega = \xi^+ \psi_{+(0,0)} - \xi^- \psi_{-(0,0)} + \frac{1}{2} (c^+ \varphi_{(1,0)} - c^- \varphi_{(0,1)})$$

$$\omega_1 = \frac{1}{2} (dx^+ \partial_+ - dx^- \partial_-) \varphi + \dots = (dx^1 \partial_2 + dx^2 \partial_1) \varphi + \dots$$

$$\omega_2 = -\frac{1}{2} dx^+ dx^- \varphi^* = dx^1 dx^2 \varphi^*$$

More complicated example:

$$a_{+-}(\tilde{T}) = \varphi_{(1,0)} \psi_{+(0,0)} \varphi_{(0,1)} \psi_{-(0,0)} \Rightarrow$$

$$\omega_2 = dx^+ dx^- \left(\frac{i}{2} \partial_+ \varphi \partial_+ \varphi + \psi_+ \partial_+ \psi_+ \right) (\psi_- \partial_- \psi_- - \frac{i}{2} \partial_- \varphi \partial_- \varphi) + \dots$$

Comparison to Lie algebra cohomology (LAC)

Semisimple Lie algebra:

$$[\delta_i, \delta_j] = f_{ij}^k \delta_k$$

BRST-type differential:

$$s_{\text{Lie}} = C^i \delta_i + \frac{1}{2} C^j C^k f_{kj}^i \frac{\partial}{\partial C^i}$$

LAC:

$$s_{\text{Lie}} \omega(C, T) = 0 \Leftrightarrow \omega(C, T) = s_{\text{Lie}} \eta(C, T) + \sum_r f^r(C) g_r(T)$$

with $s_{\text{Lie}} f^r(C) = 0 \wedge s_{\text{Lie}} g_r(T) = 0$

i.e., the representatives of the LAC factorize in C s and T s.

In sharp contrast, the representatives of the SAC do *not* factorize in this way because (normally) there are no nontrivial s_{susy} -invariants $g(\tilde{T})!$

However, the s_{Lie} -invariants $f(C)$ have counterparts in $H(s_{\text{susy}})$ given by the representatives of $H(s_{\text{gh}})$.

Brief summary

- ▶ SAC is a cornerstone of the local BRST cohomology in **any** standard supersymmetric field theory, both for global and local SUSY and whether or not the algebra of the symmetry transformations closes off-shell
- ▶ SAC involves particularly useful variables for local BRST cohomology
- ▶ The differential

$$s_{\text{gh}} = -\frac{1}{2} M^{ij} (\Gamma^a C^{-1})_{\underline{\alpha}\underline{\beta}} \xi_i^{\underline{\alpha}} \xi_j^{\underline{\beta}} \frac{\partial}{\partial c^a}$$

plays a distinguished part and has no counterpart in standard (non-supersymmetric) Yang-Mills or gravity theories

- ▶ The representation of the translational generators P_a on the \tilde{T} differs substantially from usual partial or covariant derivatives as it corresponds to a representation of partial or covariant derivatives *on-shell*

Recent work on SAC:

FB, Supersymmetry algebra cohomology I: Definition and general structure, J. Math. Phys. 51 (2010) 122302 [arXiv:0911.2118]

FB, Supersymmetry algebra cohomology II: Primitive elements in 2 and 3 dimensions, J. Math. Phys. 51 (2010) 112303 [arXiv:1004.2978]

FB, Supersymmetry algebra cohomology III: Primitive elements in four and five dimensions, J. Math. Phys. 52 (2011) 052301 [arXiv:1005.2102]

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M. Movshev, A. Schwarz, R. Xu, Homology of Lie algebra of supersymmetries and of super Poincare Lie algebra, Nucl. Phys. B 854 (2012) 483 [arXiv:1106.0335]