

Couplings between massless spin-2 fields,
partially-massless spin-2 fields
and vector gauge fields in de-Sitter spacetime

Nicolas Boulanger , Service de Physique de l'Univers, Champs et Gravitation
Université de Mons - UMONS

Work in collaboration with Sebastian Garcia-Saenz , Cedric Deffayet
and Lucas Traina (UMONS)

Plan of the talk

1. Introduction
2. UIRs of $so(1, d+1)$: Dictionary for physicists
[Th. Basile, X. Bekaert, N.B. 2017]
[1612.08166](#)
3. Couplings between massless spin-2 fields, PM spin-2 and vector gauge fields
↳ Based on the PhD Thesis of Lucas Traina . UMONS.
4. A theory for multiple PM spin-2 fields
[N.B., C. Deffayet, S. Garcia-Saenz, L. Traina, [1906.03868](#)]

① Introduction

• De Sitter and anti-de Sitter spacetimes allow for *partially massless* (PM) gauge fields, with *no* counterpart in Minkowski spacetime.

↳ Possess a mass m_{PM} (\rightarrow eigenvalue of (A)dS covariant d'Alembertian

$$(\square - m_{\text{PM}}^2) \Psi = 0$$

intermediate between those of *massive* and *massless* fields

$$(\square - m_{\text{PM}}^2) \Psi = 0$$

↳ Non-zero mass m_{PM} proportional to λ , the (square root of) the

cosmological constant

$$\Lambda = -\sigma \frac{d(d-1)}{2} \lambda^2$$

where $\text{AdS}_{d+1} \rightsquigarrow \sigma = +1$

$\text{dS}_{d+1} \rightsquigarrow \sigma = -1$

and Einstein-Hilbert

$$S^{\text{EH}} = \frac{1}{\kappa^2} \int_{\mathcal{M}_D} \sqrt{-g} (R - 2\Lambda) d^D x$$

- Upper bound on graviton mass from BH mergers: $\Delta m^2 \leq 10^{-110}$ in Planck units
[Abbott et al. (2016)] where $\Delta m^2 = m_{\text{PM}}^2 - m_0^2$, m_0^2 being the critical value for the massless graviton in dS.
↳ Theoretically $\Delta m^2 = 2 \lambda^2$ (see below)

- Cosmological constant $\sim 10^{-122}$ in Planck units (Wikipedia). There is still room for a PM spin-2.

AdS_{d+1} $so(2, d)$ dS_{d+1} $so(1, d+1)$

- $\mathcal{D}(e_0, \mathbb{Y}) \rightsquigarrow so(2) \oplus so(d)$

- $C_2 = e_0(e_0 - d) + C_2[so(d)]$

- $\mathcal{D}(\Delta_c, \mathbb{Y}) \rightsquigarrow so(1, 1) \oplus so(d)$

- $C_2 = \Delta_c(\Delta_c - d) + C_2[so(d)]$

$$\boxed{(\square - \lambda^2 m_{\mathbb{Y}}^2) \Psi_{\mathbb{Y}} = \Theta}$$

+ extra conditions
tracelessness, divergenceless

- $m_{\mathbb{Y}}^2 = e_0(e_0 - d) - \sum_{k=1}^{\ell} s_k$

- (Partially) massless for

$$e_0 = e_t^I := s_I - p_I + d - t$$

$$1 \leq t \leq s_I - s_{I+1}$$

- $m_{\mathbb{Y}}^2 = -\Delta_c(\Delta_c - d) + \sum_{k=1}^{\ell} s_k$

- Various cases of "masslessness":

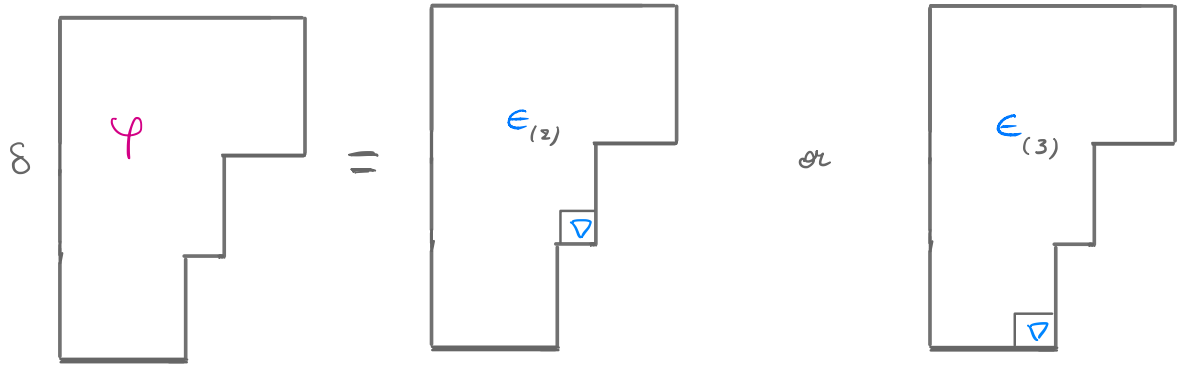
Exceptional & Discrete UIR series

$$\begin{matrix} d+1 & \text{even} \\ \rightarrow & \Delta_c = s_{\ell} - \ell + d - t \end{matrix}$$

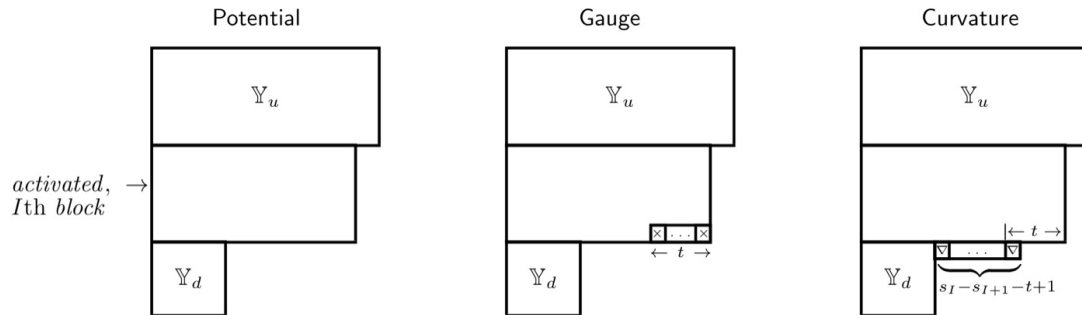
$$\Delta_c = s_B - p + d - t$$

$$\boxed{\Delta_c = s + 2 - t \text{ in } dS_4}$$

or



For a *partially* massless field in (A)dS [N.B., C. Iazeolla, P. Sundell 2008]



• Unitary in AdS_{d+1} : 1st block activated

② UIRs of $so(1, d+1)$: Dictionary for physicists

- Principal series : $\Delta_c = \frac{d}{2} + i\epsilon$, Ψ & $e^{\epsilon \mathbb{R}}$ arbitrary

[scalar: $\nabla^2 \Psi_0 = (-\lambda^2) \Delta_c (\Delta_c - d) \Psi_0$ where $-\Delta_c (\Delta_c - d) = \epsilon^2 + \frac{d^2}{4} \Rightarrow \nabla^2 \geq 0$ in dS_{d+1}]

- Complementary series : $p < \Delta_c < d-p$, $p \in \{0, 1, \dots, [\frac{d-1}{2}]\}$

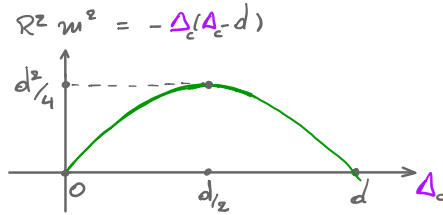
$$s_i = 0 \quad \text{for } p+1 \leq i \leq \kappa$$

Rem : s_r may be $\neq 0$ for $d = 2\kappa + 1$, but then $s_r \in \mathbb{N}$

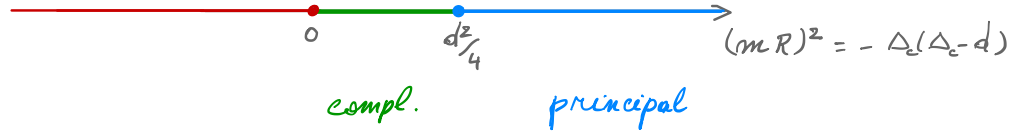
Rem : A scalar field can sit in these two UIRs

A scalar in the complementary series : $p=0$ and $\Delta_c \in]0, d[$

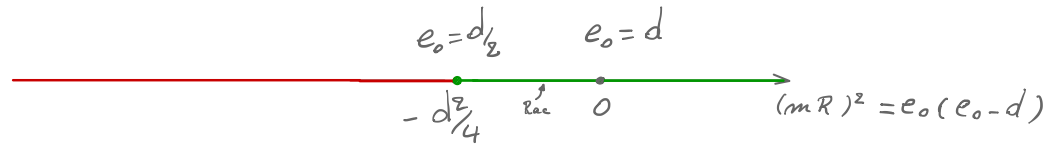
Example : scalar field



dS_{d+1}



AdS_{d+1}



$e_0 \geq s - p + d - 1$ for $s > 0$

$e_0 > \frac{d-2}{2}$ for $s = 0$

$e_0 > \frac{d-1}{2}$ for $s = 1/2$

$\cdot m_{Rac}^2 = -\frac{1}{4}(d^2 - 4)$

• Special case: $dS_4 \leftrightarrow so(1, 4) \leftrightarrow \kappa = [\frac{3}{2}] = 1$

↳ (Partially) Massless fields with $\varphi \sim \boxed{s = s_r}$ are in the *discrete series*

$$\Delta_c = s_r - \kappa + d - t = \boxed{s + 2 - t = \Delta_c} \leftrightarrow (\square - \lambda^2 m^2) \varphi = 0$$

$$\text{where } 1 \leq t \leq s$$

$$\boxed{m^2 = -\Delta_c(\Delta_c - d) + s}$$

e.g. $s = 1$: $\Delta_c = 3 - t \rightarrow t = 1 \rightarrow$ massless only, $m^2 = -2(2-3) + 1 = 3$

$s = 2$: $\Delta_c = 4 - t \rightarrow t = 1$: massless (graviton) $m^2 = -3(3-3) + 2 = 2$

$\rightarrow t = 2$: PM spin-2 $m^2 = -2(2-3) + 2 = 4$

↳ Hence $\Delta m^2 = 4 - 2 = 2$ in unit of λ^2 .

→ Search for couplings among "massless" spin 2,
PM spin 2 and massless spin-1 vectors.

③. Couplings between massless spin-2 fields, PM spin-2 and vector gauge fields

3.1) NON-ABELIAN DEFORMATIONS

Interactions among the set $\{ h_{\mu\nu}^i, k_{\mu\nu}^a, A_\mu^a \}$, g_{ij}, g_{aa}, g_{ab}

↳ Deformation of the gauge algebra asking for the existence of vertices with no more than 2 ∂ 's

What is left is Diffeo., Yang-Mills, geometric-coupling algebra

$$a_2^{EH} = \sum_i^{\mu\nu} \xi^{i\nu} \nabla_{[\mu} \xi_{\nu]}^k g^i{}_{jk}, \quad a_2^{Geom} = 2 a_2^{(7)} + \frac{\sigma}{2} (D-3) a_2^{(5)}, \quad a_2^{YM} = \frac{1}{2} C_a^k C^b C^c$$

$$a_2^{(5)} = \sum_i^{\mu\nu} \chi^a \nabla_\mu \chi^\alpha \frac{f_{(5)}^i}{k^{(5)}} a_\alpha, \quad a_2^{(7)} = \chi_a^k \nabla^\mu \chi^\alpha \sum_\mu f_{(7)}^i \rho^a$$

$$a_2 = \kappa a_2^{EH} + \alpha_{PM} a_2^{Geom} + g_{YM} a_2^{YM}$$

↳ leads to a_0^{EH} , $a_0^{Geom} = h_{\mu\nu}^i T_{\mu\nu}^i(k, k)$ where $T_{\mu\nu}^i(k, k) \sim$ stress-energy tensor of PM field.
 $\sim \nabla^\mu k^\nu \nabla_\mu k_\nu + \frac{\sigma}{2} k^\mu k_\mu$

$$a_0^{YM} = -\frac{1}{2} F_c^{\mu\nu} A_\mu^a A_\nu^b f_{ab}^c, \quad g_{ijk} := g_{jk}^l g_{il} = g_{(ijk)}$$

$$f_{abc} := f_{bc}^d f_{ad} = f_{[abc]}, \quad f_{(5)}^i a_\alpha = f_{(7)}^i a_\alpha = a_\alpha^i a_\Omega = a_\alpha^i(a_\Omega)$$

$$a_1^{Geom} = 2 \underline{h^{*a\mu\nu}} (\nabla_\mu k_{\nu\sigma}^a \xi^{i\sigma} + 2 k_{\mu\sigma}^a \nabla_\nu \xi^{i\sigma} - \nabla_\mu h_{\nu\sigma}^i \nabla^\sigma \chi^\alpha + \frac{1}{2} \nabla_\sigma h_{\mu\nu}^i \nabla^\sigma \chi^\alpha - \frac{\sigma}{2} h_{\mu\nu}^i \chi^\alpha) a_{i\alpha\Omega} \\ + \frac{\sigma}{2} (D-3) \underline{h^{*i\mu\nu}} k_{\mu\nu}^a \chi^\alpha a_{i\alpha\Omega} + \underline{h^{*i\mu\nu}} F_{\sigma\mu\nu}^a \nabla^\sigma \chi^\alpha a_{i\alpha\Omega} + 2 \underline{h^{*a\mu\nu}} F_{\sigma\mu\nu}^a \xi^{i\sigma} a_{i\alpha\Omega}$$

3-2) ABELIAN DEFORMATIONS

1) Another type of coupling between $h_{\mu\nu}^i$ and $h_{\mu\nu}^a$, that is abelian but $Q_1^{\text{Non-Geo}} \neq \text{trivial}$

$$\delta h_{\mu\nu}^a = \left(F_{\sigma\mu\nu}^a \xi^{\sigma} - \frac{\sigma L^2}{2(D-2)} \nabla_\mu F_{\sigma\nu}^a \nabla^{\sigma} \xi^{\sigma} - \frac{\sigma L^2}{2(D-2)} F_{\sigma\mu}^a \nabla_\nu \nabla^{\sigma} \xi^{\sigma} \right) b_{i a \Omega}$$

$\delta h_{\mu\nu}$ undeformed. $\delta h_{\mu\nu} = 0$.

$$Q_0^{\text{Non-Geo}} = \frac{1}{2} h_{\mu\nu}^i J_i^{\mu\nu} (F, F) \quad \text{where} \quad J_i^{\mu\nu} = (F^\Omega F^\Xi)^{\mu\nu} b_{i \Omega \Xi}$$

Conserved on-shell $\nabla_\mu J_i^{\mu\nu} \approx 0 \Rightarrow$ Forces $b_{i a \Omega} = b_{i (a \Omega)}$

In case of a single PM $h_{\mu\nu}$ field, Y. Zinoviev had obtained the current $J_{\mu\nu} (F, F)$

2) In case only $h_{\mu\nu}^a$'s fields involved $\Rightarrow \exists$ theory! \hookrightarrow last part of talk.

$$\delta h_{\mu\nu}^a = F_{\sigma\mu\nu}^a \nabla^\sigma \xi^a = c_{\varepsilon^a \Omega} \quad , \quad Q_0^{\text{PM}} = h_{\mu\nu}^a J_0^{\mu\nu} \quad \text{where} \quad b_{i a \Omega} \rightarrow c_{\varepsilon a \Omega}$$

Requires $D=4$ and $c_{\varepsilon a \Omega} = \underbrace{c_{\varepsilon (a \Omega)}} =: c_{\varepsilon, a \Omega}$

3) Between A_μ^a 's and $h_{\mu\nu}$'s

$$\alpha_0^a = \frac{1}{2} h_{\mu\nu}^i T_{,i}^{\mu\nu} \quad , \quad T_{,i}^{\mu\nu} = (F_{\mu\sigma}^a F_{\nu}^{b\sigma} - \frac{1}{4} \bar{g}_{\mu\nu} F_{c\sigma}^a F^{bc\sigma}) d_{i,ab}$$

minimal coupling
to gravity.

Enforces $d_{i,ab} = d_{i,ba}$ symmetric.

$$\delta A_\mu^a = -F_{\mu\nu}^b \xi^i d_{i,ab} \sim \xi_{,i}^a A_\mu^a$$

4) Between A_μ^a 's and $k_{\mu\nu}^a$'s

$$\alpha_0^{PL1} = \frac{1}{2} k_{\mu\nu}^a T_{,a}^{\mu\nu} \quad \text{where} \quad T_{,a}^{\mu\nu} = (F^a F^a - \frac{1}{4} \bar{g} F^a \cdot F^a) e^a_{ab} .$$

↪ Requires $e_{\Delta ab} = e_{\Delta ba}$ symmetric

3.3) QUADRATIC CONSTRAINTS

Jacobi identity test on $a_2 = \kappa a_2^{EH} + \alpha_{PH} a_2^{Geom} + g_{YM} a_2^{YM}$

And compatibility between gauge algebra and its realisation on the set of fields at hand

$$a_1 = \kappa a_1^{EH} + \frac{\kappa}{2} a_1^{Geom} + g_{YM} a_1^{YM} + \beta \bar{a}_1^{Abn-Geom} + \omega \bar{a}_1^{PM} + \alpha_1 \bar{a}_1^{G^4} + \alpha_{PM-1} \bar{a}_1^{PM-1}$$

\hookrightarrow requires $D=4$

\hookrightarrow many quadratic constraints, they imply

$$\alpha_{PH} = \frac{\kappa}{2} \quad \text{and} \quad \alpha_1 = \kappa = \frac{\sqrt{2}}{2} \alpha_{PM-1} \quad ,$$

Mixing of photons and (h^i, k^a) sector :

$$\int d^4x e^{i a_1 c} d^i d^a_{1b} = 0 \quad , \quad \int d^4x e^{i a_1 c} e^a_{1b} = 0 \quad , \quad d^i_{1ac} d^j_{1b} = g_{ij} k^a d^a_{1ab} \quad ,$$

$$e_{1ac} e^c_{1b} = a^i_{1a} d^i_{1ab} \quad , \quad d^i_{1ac} e^c_{1b} = a^i_{1a} e^a_{1b} \quad .$$

Pure $h_{\mu\nu} - k_{\mu\nu}$ sector: $a_{i[1]2} a_{j2} = 0 = a_{[i1]4} a_{j2}$

$$g^k_{ij} a_{k4} = a_{i4} a_{j2} \quad \text{and} \quad a_{i4} a^i_{12} = 0 \quad , \quad a_{i2} [d^i c_{\Omega}]^2 = 0 = c_{[1]1} c_{[\Omega]2}^2$$

3.4) ANALYSIS OF THE CONSTRAINTS

We assume each sector separately has same sign of kinetic terms :

$$g_{ij} = \delta_{ij} \quad , \quad g_{a\alpha} = \pm \delta_{a\alpha} \quad , \quad g_{ab} = \pm \delta_{ab}$$

↳ Rederive the known result that \mathfrak{g}_{bc} is compact semi-simple Lie algebra with δ_{ab} inv. tensor,

$$\bullet \quad g_{ijk} = 0 \quad \text{unless } i = j = k$$

$$g_{ij}^k a_{k\Delta\Omega} = a_{i\Delta\Omega} a_j^{\Omega} \Rightarrow (a_i a_j)_{\Delta\Omega} = g_{iii} \delta_{ij} (a_i)_{\Delta\Omega}$$

$\Rightarrow (a_i)_{\Delta\Omega}$ Projectors (up to rescaling)

$$\Rightarrow a_{i\Delta\Omega} = g_{iii} \delta_{i\Delta} \delta_{i\Omega} \quad (\text{no sum over } i) \quad \begin{pmatrix} 0 & & & & \\ & \ddots & & & \\ & & 1 & & \\ & & & 0 & \\ 0 & & & & \ddots & \\ & & & & & 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad \begin{matrix} \\ \\ \text{blue arrow} \\ \\ \end{matrix} \quad \begin{matrix} \\ \\ i^{\Delta k} \text{ entry} \\ \\ \end{matrix}$$

\Rightarrow Massless spin-2 $h_{\mu\nu}^i$'s and PM $k_{\mu\nu}^i$'s come in same number.

We can group them in pairs : $a_{1,11}$, $a_{2,22}$, etc $(k_{\mu\nu}^1 \leftrightarrow k_{\mu\nu}^2)$, ... , $(k_{\mu\nu}^N \leftrightarrow k_{\mu\nu}^{N+1})$ interactions

1) Then, restricting to one of the pairs $(h_{\mu\nu}, k_{\mu\nu})$ and discarding the

non-geometric coupling, $\beta = 0$ ($\Rightarrow a_0^{\text{No. Gauss}} = h_{\mu\nu} J^{\mu\nu}(F, F)$)

\hookrightarrow recovers conformal gravity as non-linear theory of massless spin-2 $h_{\mu\nu}$

coupled to $h_{\mu\nu}$ PM. Only in 4D as $c_{1,2}$ is only $D=4$.

requires opposite sign of kinetic terms.

• In case $\beta \neq 0$, no general solution of constraints.

• For spin-1 mixing

2) Coupling of spin-1 fields to one PM requires

(i) $D=4$

(ii) presence of a massless spin-2 to couple to Yang-Mills

\hookrightarrow reconstructs YM coupled to conformal gravity

④ . A theory for multiple PM spin-2 fields

$$\hookrightarrow \delta \varphi_{\mu\nu} = \nabla_\mu \nabla_\nu \epsilon - \sigma \lambda^2 \bar{g}_{\mu\nu} \epsilon \quad \rightsquigarrow \quad \delta \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \tilde{\square} \\ \hline \varphi \\ \hline \end{array} = \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \tilde{\square} \\ \hline \tilde{\square} \\ \hline \end{array} \epsilon, \quad K \sim \begin{array}{|c|} \hline \square \\ \hline \square \\ \hline \end{array}$$

Observations : $m^2 \lambda^2$ is small, so is λ if $g_{\mu\nu} = \varphi_{\mu\nu}$ PM ($m^2 = 4$)

. Several endeavours to find a consistent theory of non-linear

PM spin-2 fields [Y. Zinoviev 2006, C. de Rham - S. Renaux-Petel 2012, S.F. Hassan, A. Schmidt-May, M. von Strauss 2012, S. Deser, E. Joung and A. Waldron 2012, Deser - Sandora - Waldron 2013 E. Joung, K. Mkrtchyan and G. Poghosyan 2019]

\Rightarrow] 2-derivative (cubic) vertex for a single PM field in 4D [Y. Zinoviev 2006]

however it does not admit any consistent higher-order completion.

- A systematic analysis about a possible *non-abelian* deformation of PM spin-2 theory was suggested by the comment

[26] In fact, since $s = 2$, $d = 4$ PM is gauge invariant, propagates on light cone [14], is conformally [15] and duality invariant [16], and couples consistently to charged matter, it might make more sense to search for non-abelian Yang-Mills-like interactions.

in [Deser - Young - Waldron 2012] & [S. Deser - M. Sandora - A. Waldron 1301.5621]

- For a *set* of PM spin-2 [S. Garcia-Saenz, K. Hinterbichler, A. Joyce, E. Mitsou & R.A. Rosen 2015]

show that there is *NO* non-abelian deformation $\delta_\epsilon^{(1)} \mathcal{L}_{\mu\nu} = \vec{R}_{\mu\nu}(\epsilon)$

with assumptions on $\#$ derivatives (max. 2) and taking $\vec{R}_{\mu\nu}$ linear in $[\epsilon]$.

Felt the necessity to revisit this problem with more powerful methods

↳ BRST-BV from [G. Barnich & M. Henneaux 1993]: cohomological reformulation
of [Berends-Burgers-van Dam 1985]

since the no-go result of [S. Garcia-Saenz, K. Hinterbichler, A. Joyce, E. Mitsou & R.A. Rosen 2015]

does not rule out non-abelian gauge algebras starting at higher orders in \mathcal{V} ,

nor does it rule out transformations with more (than 2) derivatives.

→ We find that the abelian PM symmetry admits no nonabelian deformation
without any assumption on order of $\bar{R}_{\mu\nu}$ in $[\mathcal{V}]$
nor in the number of derivatives.

• Revisiting these analyses in the BV BRST-cohomological formulation

Start from $S_0[\varphi_{\mu\nu}^a] = -\frac{1}{4} \int d^n x \sqrt{g} \kappa_{ab} [F^{a\mu\nu c} F^b_{\mu\nu c} - 2 F^{a\mu} F^b_{\mu}]$

$$F^a_{\mu\nu c} := 2 \nabla_{[\mu} \varphi^a_{\nu]c} \quad \text{curvature for PM}$$

$$\delta_{\epsilon}^{(0)} S_0 = 0 \quad \text{under} \quad \delta_{\epsilon}^{(0)} \varphi^a_{\mu\nu} = \nabla_{\mu} \nabla_{\nu} \epsilon^a - \sigma \chi^2 \bar{g}_{\mu\nu} \epsilon^a$$

1) We prove that the most general deformation of the gauge algebra:

$$[\delta_{\epsilon_1}, \delta_{\epsilon_2}] \varphi^a_{\mu\nu} = \delta_{\chi}^{(0)} \varphi^a_{\mu\nu} \quad (\text{off-shell})$$

where $\chi = (m^a{}_{bc} \in_1^b \in_2^c + n^a{}_{bc} \nabla^{\chi} \in_1^b \nabla_{\mu} \in_2^c) \rightarrow$ no field dependence

2) Consistency requires $m^a{}_{bc} = 0 = n^a{}_{bc} \Rightarrow$ Abelian

3) We prove that there are NO higher-order corrections!

4) Deformation of gauge symmetry (but abelian g), if 2 ∂ 's :

Consistency gives only (out of 6 candidates)

$$\delta_{\epsilon}^{(1)} \varphi_{\mu\nu}^a = \alpha f_{b,c}^a F_{e(\mu\nu)}^b \nabla^e \epsilon^c, \quad \text{only in } D=4.$$

5) Corresponding cubic vertex with 2 ∂ 's : $S_1 = \int d^4x \sqrt{-g} \varphi_{\mu\nu}^a J_a^{\mu\nu}$

where $J_a^{\mu\nu} = f_{bc,a} [F^{b\mu}{}_{e\nu} F^{c\nu e\sigma} - \frac{1}{4} \bar{g}^{\mu\nu} F^{b\sigma\lambda} F_{\sigma\lambda}^c] + \text{improvements}$

\Rightarrow # independent deformation : $\frac{1}{2} N^2 (N-1) \rightsquigarrow f_{ab,c} \sim \boxed{a} \boxed{b} \otimes \boxed{c}$

\rightarrow Uniqueness result (existence not new)

• Conservation : Obviously $\nabla_\mu \nabla_\nu J_a^{\mu\nu} - \frac{\sigma}{L^2} \bar{g}_{\mu\nu} J_a^{\mu\nu} \approx 0$

but also, since $D=4$: $\nabla_\mu J_a^{\mu\nu} \approx 0$

$\Rightarrow \gamma_{ab}^\mu := \sqrt{g} J_a^{\mu\nu} \nabla_\nu \bar{E}_b$ Noether current $\partial_\mu \gamma_{ab}^\mu \approx 0$ in 4D

rigid symmetry $\delta \varphi_{\mu\nu}^a = f_{b,c}^a K_{e(\mu\nu)}^b \nabla^e \bar{E}^c$ Killing

6) Higher-order consistency :

Provided $f_{a,e,b} f^e_{c,d} = 0$ (1) & $f_{a,b,e} f^e_{c,d} = 0$ (2)

$S := S_0 + S_1$ fully consistent to all orders (!)

But (1) & (2) non-trivial solution only if $k_{ab} \neq 0$

i.e. "wrong" relative signs.

⇒ **First** consistent interacting theory for **PM** spin-2 .

- Analogous to (but not all obtainable from) **conformal gravity** and its multi-conformal graviton extensions [N.B., M. Henneaux 2001] & [N.B., M. Henneaux, P. van Nieuwenhuizen 2002]
- Possibility that coupling to gravity or more general Einstein background might cure unitarity issue .