

Non-invertible Symmetries of Weyl Fermions, and Fermion-Boundary Scattering

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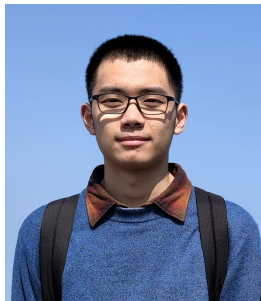
Symmetries 2026, Paris

[Pengcheng Wei, YZ, 2605.19363]

June 25th, 2026

Acknowledgements

Pengcheng Wei



- Our results are heavily inspired by [Ohmori,Watanabe,22'], [Beest,Boyle-Smith,Delmastro,Komargodski,Tong,23'].
- Recent overlapping works: [Arias-Tamargo,Boyle-Smith,Mouland,Hutt,26'],[Antinucci,Copetti,Galati,Rizi,26'], [Talks by A.Antinucci and L.Fidkowski]

Weyl Fermions in 1+1d

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- Simplest quantum field theories in 1+1d
 - Free field theory.
 - Chiral
 - Built-up from smallest central charge $c = \frac{1}{2}$.
- Ubiquitous in condensed matter physics, e.g. edge of integer quantum hall states.

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- **Main claim:** The theory enjoys a lot more non-invertible symmetries.

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conformal defect = topological defect. $\Rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ is topological. $\Rightarrow$
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- Conformal boundary conditions is a “source” for global symmetries.

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Unfolding such boundary conditions gives $U(N_f) \rtimes \mathbb{Z}_2^C$.

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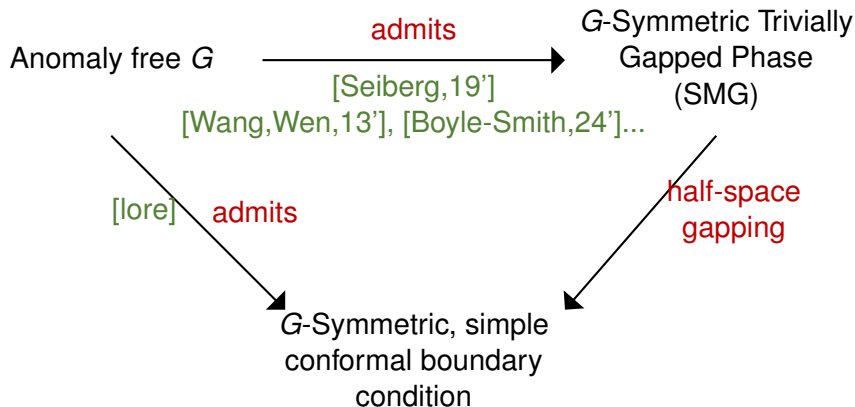
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- To find more exotic boundary conditions, symmetry helps!

Lore on Anomaly, Gappability, Boundaribility



G Symmetric Conformal Boundary Conditions

- Despite anomaly free, G can act chirally.

$$\psi^L \rightarrow U_g \psi^L U_g^{-1}, \quad \psi^R \rightarrow V_g \psi^R V_g^{-1}$$

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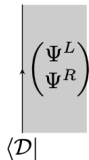
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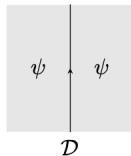
- $G = U(1)^n$: the boundary states are constructed explicitly by [Boyle-Smith, Tong, 19']
- $G =$ non-abelian Lie group: hard to construct, but believed to exist due to the Lore.

G -Intertwining Topological Defect



G -symmetric boundary

$$U_g V_g |\mathcal{D}\rangle = |\mathcal{D}\rangle$$



G -intertwining defect

$$V_g \mathcal{D} = \mathcal{D} U_g$$

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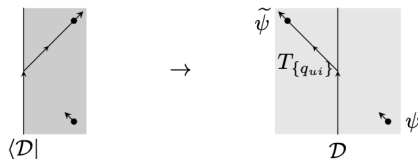
Upshot:

- Consider an anomaly free subgroup of $G \subset (U(n) \rtimes \mathbb{Z}_2^C)^2$ of n Dirac fermions. Each of them should give rise to G -symmetric boundary condition $|\mathcal{D}\rangle$.
- Unfolding along $|\mathcal{D}\rangle$ gives n Weyl fermions with a G -intertwining topological defect $\mathcal{D}$.

$$G \Rightarrow \mathcal{D}$$

- We will construct $\mathcal{D}$ without using explicit form of $|\mathcal{D}\rangle$.

Fermion-Boundary Scattering



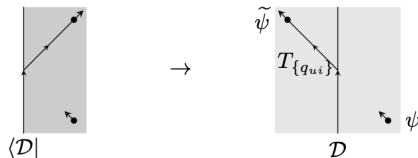
- A boundary condition preserving a non-anomalous chiral symmetry often gives rise to categorical scattering—a fermion is scattered to excitations in the twisted sector.

[Beest,Boyle-Smith,Delmastro,Komargodski,Tong,23'],
[Beest,Boyle-Smith,Delmastro,Mouland,Tong,23'], [Antinucci talk]...

- After unfolding, it means $\mathcal{D}$ maps a fermion to a twisted sector operator— $\mathcal{D}$ is a non-invertible symmetry.¹

¹In [Ohmori,Watanabe,22'], they first realized $G = U(1) \times SU(n)$, and $\mathcal{D}$ is $TY(\mathbb{Z}_n)$ (odd n) or $TY(\mathbb{Z}_{n/2})$ (even n).

Fermion-Boundary Scattering



- Conversely, determining non-invertible symmetry $\mathcal{D}$ helps to construct $|\mathcal{D}\rangle$. The former task is intuitively simpler, since it is purely kinematic.
- Finding $\mathcal{D}$ opens up the possibility of solving fermion-boundary scattering problems, some of which are still open.

Example 1: $G = U(1)^n$

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$U(1)_a$	Q_{ai}	$\tilde{Q}_{ai}$

$$U_{g_a} \psi_i^L U_{g_a}^{-1} = e^{-2\pi i Q_{ai} \lambda_a} \psi_i^L, \quad V_{g_a} \psi_i^R V_{g_a}^{-1} = e^{-2\pi i \tilde{Q}_{ai} \lambda_a} \psi_i^R$$

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- $U(1)^n$ intertwining defect $\mathcal{D}$

$$V_{g_a} \mathcal{D} = \mathcal{D} U_{g_a}$$

$\mathcal{D}$ is Non-invertible

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 Combining the above, denote $y \equiv Q^T \lambda \in \mathbb{Z}^n$, $Ry \in \mathbb{Z}^n$, i.e. R maps an arbitrary integer vector to an integer vector, it is possible only when $R \in O(n, \mathbb{Z}) \subset O(n, \mathbb{Q})$.

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- R contains fractional matrix elements $\Leftrightarrow \mathcal{D}$ is non-invertible.

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$$\frac{\quad}{U(1)_a} \left| \begin{array}{cc} \psi_i^L & \psi_i^R \\ Q_{ai} & \tilde{Q}_{ai} \end{array} \right., \quad V_{g_a} \mathcal{D} = \mathcal{D} U_{g_a}$$

- Simplest non-invertible defect is duality defect, associated with gauging a finite abelian symmetry.

²See [Wei,YZ,26'] for a more convoluted derivation. We thank A.Antinucci for telling us this simpler derivation, which is used in [Antinucci,Copetti,Galati,Rizi,26'].

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- Set $V_{g_a} = 1$, ask which group Γ does U_{g_a} form.

$$\Gamma = \{\lambda | \tilde{Q}^T \lambda \in \mathbb{Z}^n\} / \sim$$

$\sim$ is an equivalence relation: $\lambda \sim \lambda'$ if $\lambda - \lambda' \in \mathbb{Z}^n$ or $Q^T(\lambda - \lambda') \in \mathbb{Z}^n$.²

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$$\Gamma = \frac{R^T \mathbb{Z}^n}{R^T \mathbb{Z}^n \cap \mathbb{Z}^n}$$

It is a finite abelian group.

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$$\Gamma = \frac{R^T \mathbb{Z}^n}{R^T \mathbb{Z}^n \cap \mathbb{Z}^n}$$

- The explicit form of Γ can be extracted from R .

$$\Gamma = \prod_{u=1}^n \mathbb{Z}_{N_u}$$

where

$$N_u = \frac{d}{\gcd(d, s_u)}, \quad q_{ui} = \frac{s_u}{\gcd(s_u, d)} U_{iu}$$

Here d is the minimal positive integer such that dR^T is an integer matrix. s_u and U_{iu} come from the Smith normal form $dR^T = USV$, where $S = \text{diag}(s_1, s_2, \dots, s_n)$.

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$$\Gamma = \frac{R^T \mathbb{Z}^n}{R^T \mathbb{Z}^n \cap \mathbb{Z}^n} = \prod_{u=1}^n \mathbb{Z}_{N_u}$$

- Self-duality under gauging Γ can be explicitly checked at the level of torus partition function.

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{|\Gamma|} \sum_{\{a_u, b_u\}} \prod_{i=1}^n \frac{1}{\eta(\tau)} \theta \left[- \sum_{u=1}^n \frac{q_{ui}}{N_u} a_u - \sum_{v=1}^n \frac{q_{vi}}{N_v} b_v - Q_{\alpha i} \lambda_{\alpha} \right] (0, \tau) \\ &= \prod_{i=1}^n \frac{1}{\eta(\tau)} \theta \left[- \tilde{Q}_{\alpha i} \lambda_{\alpha} \right] (0, \tau). \end{aligned}$$

Example 2: $G = SU(2)$ in 15789 Model

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$SU(2)$	$\mathbf{1} \oplus \mathbf{5} \oplus \mathbf{9}$	$\mathbf{7} \oplus \mathbf{8}$

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- The Lore predicts the existence of a $SU(2)$ preserving conformal boundary condition $|\mathcal{D}\rangle$. Hasn't been constructed yet.

$\mathcal{D}$ is Non-invertible

- Focus on the $U(1)$ cartan subgroup of $SU(2)$.

$$Q_i = (0, 2, 1, 0, -1, -2, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0, -1, -2, -3, -4)$$

$$\tilde{Q}_i = (3, 2, 1, 0, -1, -2, -3, \frac{7}{2}, \frac{5}{2}, \frac{3}{2}, \frac{1}{2}, -\frac{1}{2}, -\frac{3}{2}, -\frac{5}{2}, -\frac{7}{2})$$

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- Define R matrix $\sum_{j=1}^{15} R_{ij} Q_j = \tilde{Q}_i$. Since $\tilde{Q}_i$ is fractional, R_{ij} can not be all integers. $\Rightarrow \mathcal{D}$ is non-invertible.

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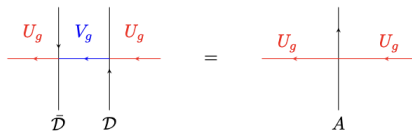
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- However, such Γ -duality defect does not intertwine $SU(2)$!

$\mathcal{D}$ can not be $TY(\Gamma)$ for finite abelian Γ

- Intertwining relation implies $[U_g, A] = 0$, $A = \bigoplus_{h \in \Gamma} h$ is algebra.



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- It can be shown that $[U_g, h] = 0$ is not compatible with any choice of Γ .
- As a consequence, in the fermion-boundary scattering, the out-going state is in the twist sector of certain non-invertible line.

Details of Proof 1

- The action of Γ should be proportional to identity in each multiplet of $SU(2)$.

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- q_{ui} and N_u depends on the R matrix from Smith normal form decomposition.

$$R_{ij} = \sum_{u=1}^n V_{ui} \frac{q_{uj}}{N_u}$$

Fractional part of R_{ij} , denoted by C_{ij} , determined by q_{uj}/N_u .

Details of Proof 1

- The action of Γ should be proportional to identity in each multiplet of $SU(2)$.

$$q_{u2} = \dots = q_{u6} \bmod N_u$$

$$q_{u7} = \dots = q_{u,15} \bmod N_u$$

- q_{ui} and N_u depends on the R matrix from Smith normal form decomposition.

$$R_{ij} = \sum_{u=1}^n V_{ui} \frac{q_{uj}}{N_u}$$

Fractional part of R_{ij} , denoted by C_{ij} , determined by q_{uj}/N_u .

- Split R into integer and fractional parts, $R_{ij} = Z_{ij} + C_{ij}$.

$$C_{i2} = \dots = C_{i6}, C_{i7} = \dots = C_{i,15}$$

Details of Proof 2

$$R_{ij} = Z_{ij} + C_{ij}$$

$$C_{i2} = \dots = C_{i6}, \quad C_{i7} = \dots = C_{i,15}$$

Details of Proof 2

$$R_{ij} = Z_{ij} + C_{ij}$$

$$C_{i2} = \dots = C_{i6}, \quad C_{i7} = \dots = C_{i,15}$$

- However,

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{Q}_i &= \sum_{j=1}^{15} R_{ij} Q_j \\ &\stackrel{\text{mod } 1}{=} \sum_{j=1}^{15} C_{ij} Q_j \\ &= C_{i1} \underbrace{Q_1}_{=0} + C_{i2} \underbrace{(Q_2 + \dots + Q_6)}_{=0} + C_{i7} \underbrace{(Q_7 + \dots + Q_{15})}_{=0} \\ &= 0 \text{ mod } 1\end{aligned}$$

Contradicts with $\tilde{Q}_i$ contains half integer!

Summary

- Symmetries in n Weyl fermions is still far from understood, despite being a free field theory.
- Symmetric conformal boundary condition of Dirac fermions is a “source” for symmetries of Weyl fermions.
- G symmetric boundary condition $\xrightarrow{\text{unfolding}}$ G -intertwining defect.
 - ① $G = U(1)^n$, $\mathcal{D} = TY(\Gamma)$, $\Gamma =$ finite abelian group.
 - ② G general nonabelian group, the G intertwining defect can not be TY type, and is yet to be determined.

Thank you!