

Gravitational electric-magnetic duality and the (4,0) exotic theory in 6 dimensions

Marc Henneaux

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The maximal supersymmetry algebra is unique in all spacetime dimensions $4 \leq D \leq 11$, except in dimensions 6 and 10, where one can independently assign different chiralities to the supercharges (Nahm 1977, Strathdee 1986).

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These spacetime dimensions are also the dimensions where chiral $\left(\frac{D}{2} - 1\right)$ -forms can be consistently defined.

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The corresponding supergravities are well known, type II_B supergravity and type II_A supergravity, respectively.

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The situation is more intricate in $D = 6$ spacetime dimensions, where three different maximal supersymmetry algebras exist : the (4,0) and (3,1) chiral algebras and the (2,2) non-chiral algebra.

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Only the theory realizing the non-chiral (2,2) supersymmetry algebra is known : it is just the toroidal dimensional reduction of maximal supergravity in 11 dimensions

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Are there theories corresponding to the other algebras ?

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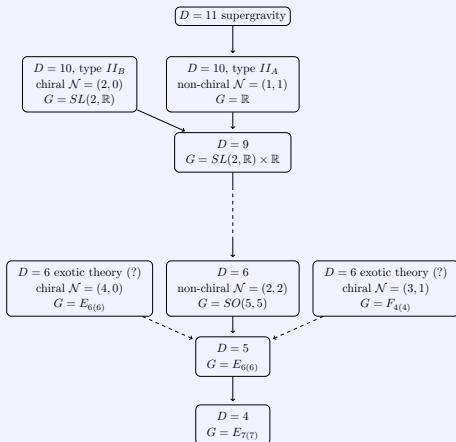


Figure 1. The various higher-dimensional origins of $D = 4, \mathcal{N} = 8$ supergravity, with a question mark for the so far unknown theories. We have indicated the supersymmetry in dimensions ten and six, where chirality allows for different maximal supersymmetry algebras. The (conjectured in the case of six-dimensional exotic theories) global symmetry groups G are also written.

(Taken from MH, V. Lekeu, J. Matulich and S. Prohazka (2018))

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The field contents of the theories and the equations of motion were written in the free case.

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The field contents involve unusual fields, “exotic gravitons” and “exotic gravitini”, as well as chiral 2-forms.

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However, very little is known about these intriguing theories : in particular, no action principle was written down, even in the free case.

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The problem comes from the presence of chiral fields.

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- As we shall see, the exotic fields enjoy remarkable duality properties.

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- It has been argued from different approaches that spacetime and spacetime geometry are “emergent” and thus approximate concepts emerging in some limit.

Alternative, “non-geometric” formulations of gravity where electric-magnetic duality plays a central role, are thus worth exploring.

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The purpose of the lecture is to give some feeling about these exotic theories of supergravity.

The central goal will be to give an idea of the action principles for the (free) theories that have recently been derived.

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As we shall see, they involve interesting constructions.

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The first part of the talk will be devoted to the exotic graviton.

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The second part will be devoted to the exotic gravitino.

The last part will discuss supersymmetry algebras in six spacetime dimensions and the construction of the exotic theory of supergravity.

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Similar ideas apply to the (3, 1)-theory.

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Work based for the (4, 0)-theory on M.H., V. Lekeu, A. Leonard, arXiv :1612.02772 (PRD 2017),

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subject to self-duality conditions.

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The gauge symmetries for a -field (“(2,2)-field”) are

$\delta T_{\alpha_1 \alpha_2 \beta_1 \beta_2} = \mathbb{P}_{(2,2)} (\partial_{\alpha_1} \eta_{\beta_1 \beta_2 \alpha_2})$ where $\eta_{\beta_1 \beta_2 \alpha_2}$ is an arbitrary (2,1)-tensor. Here, $\mathbb{P}_{(2,2)}$ is the projector on the (2,2) symmetry.

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The gauge invariant curvature, or “Riemann tensor”, is a tensor of type (2,2,2), $R \sim$  containing second derivatives of the gauge field T .

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The gauge invariant curvature, or “Riemann tensor”, is a tensor of type (2,2,2), $R \sim \begin{array}{|c|c|} \hline & \\ \hline & \\ \hline \end{array}$ containing second derivatives of the gauge field T .

The equations of motion for a general (2,2)-tensor express that the corresponding (2,2) “Ricci tensor”, i.e., the trace $R_{\alpha_1 \alpha_2 \beta_1 \beta_2} \equiv R_{\alpha_1 \alpha_2 \alpha_3 \beta_1 \beta_2 \beta_3} \eta^{\alpha_3 \beta_3}$ of the Riemann tensor, vanishes,

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(T. Curtright 1985)

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In 6 spacetime dimensions, the dual *R of the Riemann tensor on, say, the first three indices,

$${}^*R_{\alpha_1\alpha_2\alpha_3\beta_1\beta_2\beta_3} = \frac{1}{3!}\epsilon_{\alpha_1\alpha_2\alpha_3\lambda_1\lambda_2\lambda_3}R^{\lambda_1\lambda_2\lambda_3}_{\beta_1\beta_2\beta_3}$$

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has the same number of indices as R .

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This implies that a $(2,2)$ -tensor field T with a self-dual or anti-self-dual Riemann tensor,

$$R = *R$$

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It also follows that ${}^* R$ is a (2,2,2) tensor.

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It also follows that $*R$ is a (2,2,2) tensor.

The (anti-) self-duality condition is consistent because $(*)^2 = 1$ in this case.

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The question addressed here is to derive the (anti-) self-duality condition from a variational principle.

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The question addressed here is to derive the (anti-) self-duality condition from a variational principle.

Note that there is a mismatch between the number of self-duality conditions, namely 175, and the number of components of the (2,2)-tensor field, namely 105.

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The question addressed here is to derive the (anti-) self-duality condition from a variational principle.

Note that there is a mismatch between the number of self-duality conditions, namely 175, and the number of components of the (2,2)-tensor field, namely 105.

But the self-duality conditions are not all independent.

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To that end, we decompose the Riemann tensor into electric and magnetic components.

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One can replace the equations by a smaller, complete subset.

To that end, we decompose the Riemann tensor into electric and magnetic components.

The electric field \mathcal{E}^{ijkl} is defined as :

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One can replace the equations by a smaller, complete subset.

To that end, we decompose the Riemann tensor into electric and magnetic components.

The electric field \mathcal{E}^{ijkl} is defined as :

$$\mathcal{E}^{ijkl} \equiv G^{ijkl}$$

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where $G^{ij}_{kl} = \frac{1}{(3!)^2} R^{abcdef} \varepsilon_{abc}^{ij} \varepsilon_{defkl}$ is the spatial “Einstein tensor”.

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The magnetic field is defined as

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To that end, we decompose the Riemann tensor into electric and magnetic components.

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$$\mathcal{E}^{ijkl} \equiv G^{ijkl}$$

where $G^{ij}_{kl} = \frac{1}{(3!)^2} R^{abcdef} \varepsilon_{abc}^{ij} \varepsilon_{defkl}$ is the spatial “Einstein tensor”.

The magnetic field is defined as

$$\mathcal{B}^{ijkl} = \frac{1}{3!} R_{0ij}{}^{abc} \varepsilon_{abckl}.$$

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where $G_{kl}^{ij} = \frac{1}{(3!)^2} R^{abcdef} \varepsilon_{abc}^{ij} \varepsilon_{defkl}$ is the spatial “Einstein tensor”.

The magnetic field is defined as

$$\mathcal{B}_{ijkl} = \frac{1}{3!} R_{0ij}{}^{abc} \varepsilon_{abckl}.$$

Both electric and magnetic fields have the (2,2) Young symmetry, are transverse and traceless ($\partial_i \mathcal{E}^{ijkl} = 0$, $\mathcal{B}^{ik} \equiv \mathcal{B}^{ijkl} \delta_{jl} = 0$ etc)

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The self-duality equation implies

$$\mathcal{E}^{ijrs} - \mathcal{B}^{ijrs} = 0.$$

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The self-duality equation implies

$$\mathcal{E}^{ijrs} - \mathcal{B}^{ijrs} = 0.$$

Conversely, this equation implies all the components of the self-duality condition.

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The self-duality equation implies

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Conversely, this equation implies all the components of the self-duality condition.

We have thus replaced the self-duality conditions by a smaller, equivalent, subset.

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Conversely, this equation implies all the components of the self-duality condition.

We have thus replaced the self-duality conditions by a smaller, equivalent, subset.

One central feature of this subset is that it is expressed in terms of spatial objects.

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Conversely, this equation implies all the components of the self-duality condition.

We have thus replaced the self-duality conditions by a smaller, equivalent, subset.

One central feature of this subset is that it is expressed in terms of spatial objects.

It is also of first order in the time derivatives, like the Hamiltonian equations.

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In order to derive these equations from a variational principle, one must introduce a “prepotential” Z_{ijrs} ,

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The self-duality equation implies

$$\mathcal{E}^{ijrs} - \mathcal{B}^{ijrs} = 0.$$

Conversely, this equation implies all the components of the self-duality condition.

We have thus replaced the self-duality conditions by a smaller, equivalent, subset.

One central feature of this subset is that it is expressed in terms of spatial objects.

It is also of first order in the time derivatives, like the Hamiltonian equations.

In order to derive these equations from a variational principle, one must introduce a “prepotential” Z_{ijrs} ,

which is another a (2, 2)-tensor.

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**Prepotentials enjoy the symmetries of conformal mixed
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Prepotentials enjoy the symmetries of conformal mixed symmetry fields.

One needs to develop the relevant algebraic tools.

We start by recalling the situation for a rank-2 symmetric tensor,
 $Z_{ij} \sim \begin{array}{|c|c|} \hline & \\ \hline \end{array}$.

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Prepotentials enjoy the symmetries of conformal mixed symmetry fields.

One needs to develop the relevant algebraic tools.

We start by recalling the situation for a rank-2 symmetric tensor,
 $Z_{ij} \sim \begin{bmatrix} \square & \square \end{bmatrix}$.

The gauge transformations are

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One needs to develop the relevant algebraic tools.

We start by recalling the situation for a rank-2 symmetric tensor,
 $Z_{ij} \sim \begin{bmatrix} \square & \square \\ \square & \square \end{bmatrix}$.

The gauge transformations are

$$\delta Z_{ij} = \partial_i \xi_j + \partial_j \xi_i + \lambda \delta_{ij}$$

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 $Z_{ij} \sim \square\square$.

The gauge transformations are

$$\delta Z_{ij} = \partial_i \xi_j + \partial_j \xi_i + \lambda \delta_{ij}$$

(linearized diffeomorphisms + linearized Weyl rescalings).

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The question is to build a complete set of gauge invariant objects.

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The question is to build a complete set of gauge invariant objects.

Three dimensions is very special from the point of view of conformal geometry.

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Indeed, in $D \geq 4$, the invariants are given by the functions of the Weyl tensor and its derivatives,

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Indeed, in $D \geq 4$, the invariants are given by the functions of the Weyl tensor and its derivatives,

“Riemann = Weyl + Ricci without trace + scalar curvature”

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Indeed, in $D \geq 4$, the invariants are given by the functions of the Weyl tensor and its derivatives,

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A geometry is conformally flat if and only if

$$\text{Weyl} = 0.$$

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However, in $D = 3$ dimensions, the Weyl tensor identically vanishes,

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A geometry is conformally flat if and only if

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(not every Z_{ij} is “pure gauge”).

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(not every Z_{ij} is “pure gauge”).

What plays the role of the Weyl tensor is the Cotton tensor, which contains 3 derivatives of the spin-2 field.

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The analysis can be extended to higher general mixed Young symmetry tensors.

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The analysis can be extended to higher general mixed Young symmetry tensors.

But the critical dimension where the Weyl tensor identically vanishes and must be replaced by the Cotton tensor depends on the Young symmetry type.

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
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The analysis can be extended to higher general mixed Young symmetry tensors.

But the critical dimension where the Weyl tensor identically vanishes and must be replaced by the Cotton tensor depends on the Young symmetry type.

In the particular case of a -tensor, the critical dimension turns out to be 5, i.e., 6 spacetime dimensions !

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
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The 3-dimensional techniques mentioned above can be immediately transposed to a (2,2)- tensor in 5 dimensions, with gauge symmetries

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
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$$\delta Z_{ijrs} = \mathbb{P}_{(2,2)} (\partial_i \xi_{rsj} + \lambda_{ir} \delta_{js}).$$

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
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
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The question is again : what are the invariants ?

The Riemann tensor of Z is invariant under the generalized diffeomorphisms

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The question is again : what are the invariants ?

The Riemann tensor of Z is invariant under the generalized diffeomorphisms

but is not invariant under generalized Weyl transformations.

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The question is again : what are the invariants ?

The Riemann tensor of Z is invariant under the generalized diffeomorphisms

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By taking one more derivative (three derivatives in total)

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The question is again : what are the invariants ?

The Riemann tensor of Z is invariant under the generalized diffeomorphisms

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By taking one more derivative (three derivatives in total)

one gets the Cotton tensor D_{ijkl}

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By taking one more derivative (three derivatives in total)

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The Cotton tensor is a -tensor which is transverse and traceless,

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$$\partial_i D^{ijrs} = 0 = D^{ijrs} \delta_{js}.$$

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One can show that conversely, any

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
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The Cotton tensor is a -tensor which is transverse and traceless,

$$\partial_i D^{ijrs} = 0 = D^{ijrs} \delta_{js}.$$

One can show that conversely, any -tensor which is transverse and traceless

can be written as the Cotton tensor of some prepotential Z_{ijmn} .

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The self-duality equation written in terms of prepotentials, taken to be the fundamental variables,

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$$S[Z] = \frac{1}{2} \int d^6x Z_{mnrs} \left(\dot{D}^{mnrs}[Z] - \frac{1}{2} \epsilon^{mnik} \partial_k D_{ij}{}^{rs}[Z] \right)$$

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which is of first order in the time derivatives (and of fourth order in all derivatives).

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is easily verified to derive from the variational principle

$$S[Z] = \frac{1}{2} \int d^6x Z_{mnrs} \left(\dot{D}^{mnrs}[Z] - \frac{1}{2} \epsilon^{mnik} \partial_k D_{ij}{}^{rs}[Z] \right)$$

which is of first order in the time derivatives (and of fourth order in all derivatives).

It is a Hamiltonian-like action.

Chiral action

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This is the searched-for action for a chiral (2,2)-tensor in six dimensions.

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which is of first order in the time derivatives (and of fourth order in all derivatives).

It is a Hamiltonian-like action.

This is the searched-for action for a chiral (2,2)-tensor in six dimensions.

One can show that it reduces to the Pauli-Fierz action for a conventional symmetric field $h_{\mu\nu}$ in 5 dimensions (in prepotential formulation).

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Its action is given by a straightforward generalization of the Rarita-Schwinger action,

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Its action is given by a straightforward generalization of the Rarita-Schwinger action,

$$S = \int d^6x \bar{\Psi}_{\mu\nu} \Gamma^{\mu\nu\rho\sigma\tau} \partial_\rho \Psi_{\sigma\tau}.$$

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It is invariant under the gauge transformations

$$\delta\Psi_{\mu\nu} = \partial_\mu\lambda_\nu - \partial_\nu\lambda_\mu = 2\partial_{[\mu}\lambda_{\nu]}.$$

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The invariant field strengths are

$$H_{\mu\nu\rho} = \partial_\mu\Psi_{\nu\rho} + \partial_\nu\Psi_{\rho\mu} + \partial_\rho\Psi_{\mu\nu} = 3\partial_{[\mu}\Psi_{\nu\rho]}.$$

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The equation of motion is the generalized Rarita-Schwinger equation

$$\Gamma^{\mu\nu\alpha\beta\gamma} H_{\alpha\beta\gamma} = 0.$$

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The equation of motion is the generalized Rarita-Schwinger equation

$$\Gamma^{\mu\nu\alpha\beta\gamma} H_{\alpha\beta\gamma} = 0.$$

One can show that when reduced to 5 dimensions, the action becomes just the ordinary Rarita-Schwinger action for a standard spin- $\frac{3}{2}$ field ψ_μ .

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$$H = \star H$$

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In order to treat the exotic gravitino on the same footing as the exotic graviton,

one introduces its (fermionic) prepotential, which is a chiral antisymmetric tensor-spinor χ_{ij} ($\Gamma_7 \chi_{ij} = \chi_{ij}$, $\chi_{ij} = -\chi_{ji}$)

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$$\delta \chi_{ij} = \partial_{[i} \eta_{j]} + \Gamma_{[i} \rho_{j]},$$

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(Standard gauge transformations + generalized Weyl transformations)

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$$\delta \chi_{ij} = \partial_{[i} \eta_{j]} + \Gamma_{[i} \rho_{j]}$$

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The Cotton tensor D^{ij} involves two derivatives of the prepotential

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The Cotton tensor D^{ij} involves two derivatives of the prepotential and is invariant under both standard gauge transformations and Weyl transformations.

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(Standard gauge transformations + generalized Weyl transformations)

The Cotton tensor D^{ij} involves two derivatives of the prepotential and is invariant under both standard gauge transformations and Weyl transformations.

It is divergenceless, $\partial_i D^{ij} = 0$, and also gamma-traceless, $\Gamma^i D_{ij} = 0$.

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In terms of the prepotential, the action is

$$S[\chi] = -2i \int dt d^5x \chi_{ij}^\dagger \left(\dot{D}^{ij}[\chi] - \frac{1}{2} \varepsilon^{ijklm} \partial_k D_{lm}[\chi] \right).$$

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It is of third order in derivatives (but of first order in the time derivative)

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It is remarkable that the actions for the exotic graviton and exotic gravitino have the similar structure “prepotential \times time derivative of the Cotton tensor” minus “prepotential \times curl of the Cotton tensor”

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It is remarkable that the actions for the exotic graviton and exotic gravitino have the similar structure “prepotential \times time derivative of the Cotton tensor” minus “prepotential \times curl of the Cotton tensor”

The equations of motion obtained by varying the prepotential are just the self-duality condition on H .

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The (4, 0)-theory has the following description (Hull 2000).

The bosonic field content is given by

$$(5, 1; 1) \oplus (3, 1; 27) \oplus (1, 1; 42)$$

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
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The bosonic field content is given by

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(1 chiral tensor of mixed Young symmetry  (exotic graviton),
27 chiral two-forms, 42 scalars - 128 physical degrees of freedom).

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
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The fermionic field content is given by

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
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$$(4, 1; 8) \oplus (2, 1; 48)$$

(8 fermionic chiral 2-forms (exotic gravitini) and 48 spin-1/2
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
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fields - 128 physical degrees of freedom again).

The R -symmetry is $usp(8)$ and $usp(8)$ representations are given by
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$$S = S_{\square\square} + S_{\square_F} + S_{\square_B} + S_{\frac{1}{2}} + S_0.$$

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The supersymmetry parameters are 8 symplectic Majorana-Weyl spinors.

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**Strong coupling limit of maximal supergravity in 5 dimensions?
(Hull)**

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A similar construction can be achieved for the (3, 1) theory, which involves a  tensor with self-dual field strength. The R -symmetry is $usp(6) \oplus usp(2)$ and the global symmetry conjectured to be $F_{4(4)}$.

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
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The question of interactions remain open !