

# Special holonomy in Lorentzian geometry

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# Outline

## 1 Holonomy groups

- The holonomy group of a linear connection
- Classification problem and Berger algebras
- Holonomy and geometric structure
- Riemannian holonomy

## 2 Holonomy groups of Lorentzian manifolds

- Special Lorentzian holonomy
- Classification and Applications
- Two ways of constructing metrics
- Open problems



# Holonomy group of a linear connection

- Let  $M$  be a smooth manifold and  $\nabla$  a linear connection.

$\leadsto$  Parallel displacement along  $\gamma : [0, 1] \rightarrow M$ , piecewise smooth,

$$\mathcal{P}_\gamma : T_{\gamma(0)}M \ni X_0 \xrightarrow{\sim} X(1) \in T_{\gamma(1)}M$$

where  $X(t)$  is the solution to the ODE  $\nabla_{\dot{\gamma}(t)}X(t) \equiv 0$  with  $X(0) = X_0$ .

For  $p \in M^n$  we define the (Connected) Holonomy group

$$\text{Hol}_p^0(M, \nabla) := \left\{ \mathcal{P}_\gamma \mid \gamma(0) = \gamma(1) = p, \gamma \sim \{p\} \right\} \subset \text{GL}(T_pM) \simeq \text{GL}(n, \mathbb{R})$$

and its Lie algebra  $\mathfrak{hol}_p(M, \nabla)$ .

- For  $p, q \in M$ :  $\text{Hol}_p(M, \nabla) \overset{\text{conjugated in } \text{GL}(n, \mathbb{R})}{\sim} \text{Hol}_q(M, \nabla)$
- If  $\nabla = \text{LC}$  of a metric  $g$  on  $M$ , then  $\text{Hol}_p(M, g) \subset \text{O}(T_pM, g) = \text{O}(t, s)$ .

# Holonomy and curvature

- Recall that  $\nabla$  and  $\mathcal{P}_\gamma$  are related via

$$\nabla_{\dot{\gamma}(0)} X|_p = \frac{d}{dt} \left[ \mathcal{P}_{\gamma|_{[0,t]}}^{-1} (X(\gamma(t))) \right] \Big|_{t=0}.$$

- This implies for the curvature  $\mathcal{R}$  of  $\nabla$ : Let  $X, Y \in T_p M$  and  $\lambda_t$  the loop along the parallelogram at  $p$  with sides  $\sqrt{t}X$  and  $\sqrt{t}Y$ . Then

$$\mathcal{R}(X, Y)|_p = \lim_{t \rightarrow 0} \frac{1}{t} (\mathcal{P}_{\lambda_t} - Id_{T_p M}).$$

Hence,  $\mathcal{R}(X, Y)|_p \in \mathfrak{hol}_p(M, \nabla)$  for all  $X, Y \in T_p M$ .

- One has to collect curvature all over  $M$  to get all of  $\mathfrak{hol}_p(M, \nabla)$ :

## Theorem (Ambrose-Singer '53)

If  $M$  is connected, then  $\mathfrak{hol}_p(M, \nabla)$  is spanned by

$$\left\{ \mathcal{P}_\gamma^{-1} \circ \mathcal{R}(X, Y) \circ \mathcal{P}_\gamma \in \text{GL}(T_p M) \mid \gamma(0) = p \text{ and } X, Y \in T_{\gamma(1)} M \right\}$$

# Classification: Which groups occur as holonomy groups?

- **Hano/Ozeki '56**: Any closed  $G \subset GL(n, \mathbb{R})$ ! But  $\nabla$  might have torsion.
- Conditions on the **torsion**  $T^\nabla$  of  $\nabla$ , e.g.  $T^\nabla = 0$  or  $T^\nabla \in \Lambda^3 TM$   
 $\leadsto$  algebraic constraints on the holonomy representation. **Why?**

$$\mathcal{R}_\gamma := \mathcal{P}_\gamma^{-1} \circ \mathcal{R}(\mathcal{P}_\gamma(\cdot), \mathcal{P}_\gamma(\cdot)) \circ \mathcal{P}_\gamma \in \Lambda^2(T_p^*M) \otimes GL(T_pM)$$

Now, if  $T^\nabla = 0$ , then  $\mathcal{R}$  and hence  $\mathcal{R}_\gamma$  satisfy the Bianchi identity:

$$\mathcal{R}_\gamma(X, Y)Z + \mathcal{R}_\gamma(Y, Z)X + \mathcal{R}_\gamma(Z, X)Y = 0.$$

$\implies \mathfrak{hol}_p(M, \nabla)$  is a **Berger algebra**: For  $\mathfrak{g} \subset \mathfrak{gl}(n, \mathbb{R})$  define the  $\mathfrak{g}$ -module:

$$\mathcal{K}(\mathfrak{g}) := \left\{ R \in \Lambda^2 \mathbb{R}^n \otimes \mathfrak{g} \mid R(x, y)z + R(y, z)x + R(z, x)y = 0 \right\}$$

$\mathfrak{g}$  is a **Berger algebra**  $:\iff \mathfrak{g} = \text{span} \{R(x, y) \mid R \in \mathcal{K}(\mathfrak{g}), x, y \in \mathbb{R}^n\}$ .

$T^\nabla = 0$ : Ambrose-Singer  $\implies \mathfrak{hol}_p(M, \nabla)$  is a Berger algebra.

Classification of **irreducible** Berger algebras

- $\mathfrak{g} \subset \mathfrak{so}(p, q)$  [**Berger '55**],  $\mathfrak{g} \subset \mathfrak{gl}(n, \mathbb{R})$  [**Schwachhöfer/Merkulov '99**].

# Holonomy and geometry 1: Parallel sections

Let  $V$  be a “geometric” vector bundle over  $M$  and  $\nabla$  a connection on  $V$  “induced” by a connection  $\nabla$  on  $TM$

(e.g. tangent bundle, tensor bundles, spinor bundle) . Then:

$$\left\{ v \in V_p \mid \text{Hol}_p(M, \nabla)(v) = v \right\} \simeq \left\{ \varphi \in \Gamma(V) \mid \nabla \varphi = 0 \right\}$$

$$v \mapsto \varphi := \mathcal{P}_\gamma(v)$$

independent of  $\gamma$  with  $\gamma(0) = p$

- $\text{Hol}_p(M, \nabla) \subset \text{SL}(n, \mathbb{R}) \quad \Leftrightarrow \omega \in \Omega^n M : \nabla \omega = 0.$
- $\text{Hol}_p(M^{2k}, \nabla) \subset \text{GL}(k, \mathbb{C}) \Leftrightarrow J \in \text{End}(TM) \text{ with } J^2 = -id : \nabla J = 0.$
- $\text{Hol}_p(M, \nabla) \subset \text{O}(p, q) \quad \Leftrightarrow \text{metric } g \in \Gamma(\odot^2 TM) : \nabla g = 0.$

## Holonomy and geometry 2: Parallel distributions

$$\begin{aligned} \{V \subset T_p M \mid \text{Hol}_p(M, \nabla)(V) \subset V\} &\simeq \{\text{Distribution } \mathcal{V} \subset TM \mid \mathcal{P}_\gamma(\mathcal{V}) \subset \mathcal{V}\} \\ V &\mapsto \mathcal{V} := \mathcal{P}_\gamma(V) \end{aligned}$$

$\mathcal{P}_\gamma(\mathcal{V}) \subset \mathcal{V} \iff \nabla_X : \Gamma(\mathcal{V}) \rightarrow \Gamma(\mathcal{V})$ , in particular,  $\mathcal{V}$  is **integrable**.

This leads to:

### Decomposition of a semi-Riemannian manifold $(M, g)$

If  $V \subset T_p M$  is  $\text{Hol}(M, g)$ -invariant, non-degenerate ( $V \cap V^\perp = \{0\}$ ),  
i.e.  $T_p M = V \oplus V^\perp$  invariant decomposition, then

$$(M, g) \stackrel{\text{locally}}{\simeq} (N, h) \times (N^\perp, h^\perp)$$

with  $V^{(\perp)} \simeq T_p N^{(\perp)}$  as  $\text{Hol}_p(M, g)$ -module.

# De Rham–Wu decomposition

Complete decomposition of  $T_p M$  into  $Hol_p(M, g)$ -modules:

$$T_p M = \bigoplus_{i=0}^k V_i, \text{ with } V_0 \text{ trivial and } V_i \text{ indecomposable for } i > 0$$

non-degenerate and only de-  
generate invariant subspaces

Theorem (de Rham '52, Wu '64)

Let  $(M, g)$  be semi-Riemannian, *complete* and *simply connected*.

Then there is a  $k > 0$ :

$$(M, g) \stackrel{\text{globally}}{\simeq} (M_1, g_1) \times \dots \times (M_k, g_k)$$

- $(M_i, g_i)$  complete and 1-connected,
- $(M_i, g_i)$  flat or with *indecomposable* holonomy representation,
- $Hol_p(M, g) \simeq Hol_{p_1}(M_1, g_1) \times \dots \times Hol_{p_k}(M_k, g_k)$ .

Manifold of special holonomy: Indecomposable holonomy  $\not\subseteq SO(p, q)$ .



# Holonomy of Riemannian manifolds $(M, g)$

Positive definite metric  $\implies$  indecomposable = irreducible  
 $\implies \text{Hol}_p(M, g) \simeq$  product of irreducible holonomy groups.

## Berger's list ('55)

Let  $(M, g)$  be simply-connected, irreducible, non locally symmetric. Then

$\text{Hol}_p(M, g) \overset{O(n)}{\sim}$

	$SO(n)$	$U(\frac{n}{2})$	$SU(\frac{n}{2})$	$Sp(\frac{n}{4})$	$Sp(1) \cdot Sp(\frac{n}{4})$	$G_2$	$Spin(7)$
	generic	Kähler		hyper Kähler	quat. Kähler		
par. field	none	$J$		$J_1, J_2, J_3$	$\langle J_1, J_2, J_3 \rangle$	$\omega^3$	$\omega^4$
Ric	—	$\neq 0$	0	0	$c \cdot g$	0	0
$\dim\{\nabla\varphi = 0\}$	0	0	2	$\frac{n}{4} + 1$	0	1	1
par. spinor							

- Complete mf's: Calabi (SU, Sp), LeBrun (qK), Bryant ( $G_2$ , Spin(7)).
- Compact mf's: Yau (SU), Beauville, Mukai (Sp), LeBrun-Salamon (qK), Joyce ( $G_2$ , Spin(7)).

# Special Lorentzian holonomy

## Wu–Decomposition for a Lorentz manifold $(M, g)$

Let  $(M, g)$  be a complete, simply-connected Lorentzian manifold.

$$(M, g) \simeq (\bar{M}, \bar{g}) \times \underbrace{(N_1, g_1) \times \dots \times (N_k, g_k)}_{\substack{\uparrow \\ \text{Riemannian, irreducible or flat}}}$$

Lorentzian manifold which is either

- ①  $(\mathbb{R}, -dt^2)$ , or
- ② irreducible, i.e.  $\text{Hol}_p(\bar{M}, \bar{g}) = \text{SO}_0(1, n)$   
[Olmos/Di Scala '00], or
- ③ indecomposable, non-irreducible

I.e., an indecomposable Lorentzian manifold has **special holonomy**

$\iff$  its holonomy admits a degenerate invariant subspace

$\iff$  it admits a **parallel null line**.

# Algebraic preliminaries

We have to consider  $H \subset SO_0(1, n-1)$  indecomposable, non-irreducible, i.e.  $\exists V \subset \mathbb{R}^{1, n-1} : H(V) \subset V$  such that

$L := V \cap V^\perp \neq \{0\}$  is a  $H$ -invariant, totally null line in  $\mathbb{R}^{1, n-1}$

$$\Rightarrow H \subset \text{Iso}_{SO_0(1, n-1)}(L) = (\mathbb{R}^+ \times SO(n-2)) \ltimes \mathbb{R}^{n-2}$$

$$\text{Change basis of } \mathbb{R}^{1, n-1}: \mathfrak{h} \subset \left\{ \left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} a & v^t & 0 & a \in \mathbb{R}, \\ 0 & A & -v & v \in \mathbb{R}^{n-2}, \\ 0 & 0^t & -a & A \in \mathfrak{so}(n-2) \end{array} \right) \right\}$$

The orthogonal part is reductive:

$$\mathfrak{g} := \text{pr}_{\mathfrak{so}(n-2)} \mathfrak{h} = \underbrace{\mathfrak{z}}_{\text{centre}} \oplus \underbrace{\mathfrak{g}'}_{= [\mathfrak{g}, \mathfrak{g}] \text{ semisimple}} \quad (\text{Levi-decomposition})$$

# Parallel null line and screen bundle

Let  $(M, g)$  be a Lorentzian manifold with

$$H := \text{Hol}_p(M, g) \subset \text{Iso}(L) = (\mathbb{R}^+ \times \text{SO}(n-2)) \times \mathbb{R}^{n-2}.$$

- $L$  defines a filtration  $\mathcal{L} \subset \mathcal{L}^\perp \subset TM$  with parallel null line  $\mathcal{L}$  and parallel null hypersurface  $\mathcal{L}^\perp$ .
- If  $H \subset \text{SO}(n-2) \ltimes \mathbb{R}^{n-2}$ , then  $\exists$  parallel null vector field (**Brinkmann wave**).
- What about  $G := \text{pr}_{\text{SO}(n-2)} \text{Hol}_p(M, g) \subsetneq \text{SO}(n-2)$ ?

## Proposition (TL '03)

The vector bundle (“screen bundle”)  $\mathcal{S} = \mathcal{L}^\perp / \mathcal{L}$  with covariant derivative  $\nabla_U^{\mathcal{S}}[V] := [\nabla_U V]$  satisfies  $\text{pr}_{\text{SO}(n-2)} \text{Hol}_p(M, g) = \text{Hol}_p(\mathcal{S}, \nabla^{\mathcal{S}})$ .

- Hence, algebraic structures for  $G$  correspond to geometric structures on  $\mathcal{S}$ , e.g. product structure, parallel complex structure etc.
- Which  $G$ 's can occur?

# Classification 1: $\mathfrak{h} \subset \mathfrak{iso}_{\mathbb{S}O(1,n-1)}(L)$ indecomposable

## Theorem (Berard-Bergery/Ikemakhen '96)

For  $\mathfrak{h}$  with  $\mathfrak{g} := \mathfrak{pr}_{\mathbb{S}O(n-2)}\mathfrak{h} = \mathfrak{z} \oplus [\mathfrak{g}, \mathfrak{g}]$  there are the following cases:

$\mathbb{R}^{n-2} \subset \mathfrak{h}$  – **Type I:**  $\mathfrak{h} = (\mathbb{R} \oplus \mathfrak{g}) \ltimes \mathbb{R}^{n-2}$ .

**Type II:**  $\mathfrak{h} = \mathfrak{g} \ltimes \mathbb{R}^{n-2}$ .

**Type III:**  $\exists \varphi : \mathfrak{z} \rightarrow \mathbb{R} : \mathfrak{h} = \left\{ \left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} \varphi(A) & v^t & 0 & A \in \mathfrak{z} \\ 0 & A+B & -v & B \in \mathfrak{g}' \\ 0 & 0 & -\varphi(A) & v \in \mathbb{R}^{n-2} \end{array} \right) \right\}$

$\mathbb{R}^{n-2} \not\subset \mathfrak{h}$  – **Type IV:**  $\exists \varphi : \mathfrak{z} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^k$ , for  $0 < k < n-2$ :

$$\mathfrak{h} = \left\{ \left( \begin{array}{ccc|c} 0 & \psi(A)^t & v^t & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & -\psi(A) \\ 0 & 0 & A+B & -v \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \end{array} \right) \left| \begin{array}{l} A \in \mathfrak{z} \\ B \in \mathfrak{g}' \\ v \in \mathbb{R}^{n-2-k} \end{array} \right. \right\}$$

**Note:** Groups of coupled type III and IV can be **non-closed**, first examples in Berard-Bergery/Ikemakhen '96

## Classification II: $\mathfrak{h} \subset \mathfrak{iso}_{\mathfrak{so}(1,n-1)}(L)$ indecomposable

### Theorem (TL '03)

If  $\mathfrak{h}$  is a Berger algebra (e.g. a Lorentzian holonomy algebra), then  $\mathfrak{g} := \text{proj}_{\mathfrak{so}(n-2)}\mathfrak{h}$  is a Riemannian holonomy algebra (and hence known to be a product of algebras from Berger's list).

Idea of the proof: For  $\mathfrak{g} \subset \mathfrak{so}(n)$  define **weak curvature endomorphisms**:

$$\mathcal{B}(\mathfrak{g}) := \left\{ Q \in \text{Hom}(\mathbb{R}^n, \mathfrak{g}) \mid \langle Q(x)y, z \rangle + \langle Q(y)z, x \rangle + \langle Q(z)x, y \rangle = 0 \right\}.$$

$\mathfrak{g}$  is a **weak Berger algebra** :  $\iff \mathfrak{g} = \text{span}\{Q(x) \mid Q \in \mathcal{B}(\mathfrak{g}), x \in \mathbb{R}^n\}$

[TL '02] If  $\mathfrak{h} \subset \mathfrak{iso}_{\mathfrak{so}(1,n-1)}(L)$  is an indecomposable Berger algebra, then  $\mathfrak{g} := \text{proj}_{\mathfrak{so}(n-2)}(\mathfrak{h})$  is a weak Berger algebra. Classify them  $\implies$  result.  $\square$

### Theorem (Berard-Bergery-Ikemakhen '96, Boubel '00, TL '03, Galaev '05)

If  $\mathfrak{g} := \text{proj}_{\mathfrak{so}(n-2)}\mathfrak{h}$  is a Riemannian holonomy algebra, then there is a Lorentzian metric  $h$  with  $\mathfrak{h} \cap \mathfrak{l}_p(h) = \mathfrak{h}$ .



# Lorentzian Einstein manifolds

## Theorem (Galaev-TL '06)

The holonomy of an indecomposable non-irreducible Lorentzian *Einstein* manifold is *uncoupled*, i.e.

$$\text{Hol}_p^0(M, g) = \begin{cases} (\mathbb{R}^+ \times G) \ltimes \mathbb{R}^{n-2}, & \text{or} \\ G \ltimes \mathbb{R}^{n-2} \end{cases}$$

with a Riemannian holonomy group  $G$ . Furthermore:

- If  $\text{Hol}_p^0(M, g) = G \ltimes \mathbb{R}^{n-2}$ , then  $\text{Ric} = 0$  and  $G = \text{Holonomy of Ricci-flat Riemannian manifold, i.e. } G = \text{product of } \text{SO}(n), \text{SU}(p), \text{Sp}(q), \text{G}_2, \text{ and Spin}(7).$



# Coordinates

## Theorem (Brinkmann'25, Walker'49)

For a Lorentzian manifold  $(M, h)$  with parallel null line  $\mathcal{L}$  there are coordinates  $(x, y_1, \dots, y_{n-2}, z)$ :  $\frac{\partial}{\partial x}$  spans  $\mathcal{L}$ ,  $(\frac{\partial}{\partial x}, \frac{\partial}{\partial y_1}, \dots, \frac{\partial}{\partial y_{n-2}})$  span  $\mathcal{L}^\perp$ , and

$$\bullet \quad h = 2 \, dx dz + \underbrace{\sum_{i=1}^{n-2} u_i dy_i}_{= \phi_z} \, dz + f dz^2 + \underbrace{\sum_{i,j=1}^{n-2} g_{ij} dy_i dy_j}_{= g_z},$$

family of 1-forms family of Riem. metrics

with  $\frac{\partial g_{ij}}{\partial x} = \frac{\partial u_i}{\partial x} = 0$ ,  $f \in C^\infty(M)$ .

$$\bullet \quad \exists \text{ parallel null vector field} \iff \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} = 0.$$

**Note:**  $Hol_p(g_z) \subset pr_{SO(n)} Hol_p(h)$ , but in general  $\neq$  (see Galaev's examples on next slides)

# Manifolds of uncoupled holonomy type

## Construction method for the uncoupled types

Let  $(N^{n-2}, g)$  be a Riemannian manifold and  $f \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R}^2 \times N)$  “sufficiently generic”. Then  $M = \mathbb{R}^2 \times N$  with the metric  $h := 2dxdz + fdz^2 + g$  is indecomposable, non irreducible with holonomy

$$(\mathbb{R}^+ \times \text{Hol}(N, g)) \ltimes \mathbb{R}^{n-2} \quad \text{or} \quad \text{Hol}(N, g) \ltimes \mathbb{R}^{n-2}, \quad \text{if } \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} = 0$$

Example:  $(M, h)$  **pp-wave**  $\iff g \equiv$  flat metric.

[TL '01]: An indecomposable Lorentzian mfd. has **Abelian** holonomy  $\mathbb{R}^{n-2}$   
 $\iff$  it is a pp-wave.

- E.g. Symmetric spaces (Cahen-Wallach spaces)  $\iff f$  is a quadratic polynomial in the  $y_i$ 's.
- Plane waves:  $f$  is a quadratic polynomial in the  $y_i$ 's with coefficients depending on  $z$  [Hull-Figueroa O'Farrill-Papadopoulos '02].

# Coupled types — Proof of Theorem [Galaev '05]

For a Riemannian holonomy algebra  $\mathfrak{g}$ , fix  $Q_1, \dots, Q_N$ , a basis of  $\mathcal{B}(\mathfrak{g})$ , and define polynomials on  $\mathbb{R}^{n-1}$ :

$$u_i(y_1, \dots, y_{n-2}, z) := \sum_{A=1}^N \sum_{k,l=1}^{n-2} \frac{1}{(A-1)!} \langle Q_A(e_k)e_l, e_i \rangle y_k y_l z^A.$$

## Theorem (Galaev '05)

For any indecomposable  $\mathfrak{h} \subset \mathfrak{so}(1, n-1)_L$ , for which  $\mathfrak{g} = \text{proj}_{\mathfrak{so}(n-2)}(\mathfrak{h})$  is a Riemannian holonomy algebra, there exists an analytic  $f : \mathbb{R}^n \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  such that the following Lorentzian metric has holonomy  $\mathfrak{h}$ :

$$h = 2dx dz + f dz^2 + 2 \underbrace{\sum_{i=1}^{n-2} u_i dy_i}_{\text{family of 1-forms on } \mathbb{R}^n} dz + \underbrace{\sum_{k=1}^{n-2} dy_k^2}_{\text{flat metric}}$$

# Open Problems

Study *Lorentzian manifolds with special holonomy* !

- 1 Find global examples of metrics with prescribed holonomy, which are **globally hyperbolic** with **complete** or **compact** Cauchy surface (cylinder constructions in [Bär-Gauduchon-Moroianu '05] and [Baum-Müller '06])
- 2 Describe the geometric structures corresponding to the **coupled types III and IV**.
- 3 Describe indecomposable, non-irreducible **Lorentzian homogeneous spaces** and their holonomy.
- 4 Study further spinor field equations for these manifolds (Killing spinors, generalised Killing spinors).

Thank you!