

Title: Homotopy theory and quantum field theories

Speakers: Mayuko Yamashita

Series: Colloquium

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Abstract: Recently, there has been a growing interest in the relations between homotopy theory in mathematics and theoretical physics. Homotopy theory is used to classify and study physical systems. Also, physically motivated conjectures have led to many interesting developments in homotopy theory. I have been studying this subject as a mathematician.

My recent works have been motivated by the Segal-Stolz-Teichner program, which is one of the most deep and important subjects relating homotopy theory and physics. They propose a geometric model, in terms of supersymmetric quantum field theories, of a homotopy-theoretic object "Topological Modular Forms". Based on this, we show the absence of anomaly in heterotic string theory (joint work with Yuji Tachikawa), and found a new physical and geometric understanding of duality (with Y.Tachikawa) and periodicity (with Theo Johnson-Freyd) in homotopy theory. These works lead us to further interesting conjectures to explore. I would like to illustrate this exciting interplay between mathematics and physics.

Zoom link

Homotopy Theory

&

Quantum Field Theories

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Theo Johnson-Evans (Perimeter Institute)
& Dalhousie Univ

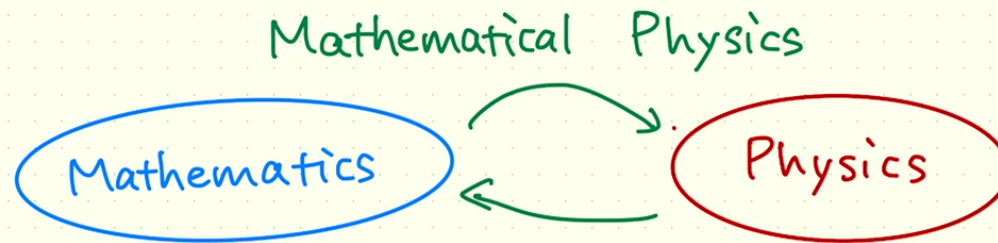
Based on

[TY'21] arXiv: 2108.13542

[TY'23] arXiv: 2305.0619

[JF-Y, in preparation]

- I am Mayuko Yamashita, a mathematician in Kyoto U.
- I am working on Mathematical Physics.



I am interested in both of

- Solving math problems motivated by physics,
- Solving physics problems using mathematics.

In particular, I use

Homotopy theory, Algebraic Topology in math.

Conceptual Structure of my works

Start from proposals / conjectures connecting

Physics and Homotopy theory (Math):

(e.g. Segal-Stolz-Teichner proposal ('04, '11)
Kitaev ('00s) / Freed-Hopkins proposal ('16))

My works, conceptually:

- (A) Use Proposal to translate
Phys. problems \rightarrow Math problems
and solve it mathematically.
- (B) Use Proposal to get
Math ideas from physics.
- (C) Try to attack Proposal.

Plan of the talk (Phys \leftrightarrow Math)

§ 1. Homotopy theory and Physics

(general introduction)

§ 2. My works on Segal-Stolz-Teichner program.

(A) ① Show Absence of anomaly in heterotic string theory
[TY21] via Homotopy theory.

(A)(B)(C) ② New interpretation of a duality in Homotopy theory
[TY23] in terms of Secondary anomalies

(A)(B) ③ Explained 576-periodicity of SUSY

+ Future directions.

Homotopy theory (Algebraic Topology)

Study **geometric objects**

(topological spaces, manifolds ...)

by extracting **algebraic** information / invariants.

X : top. sp



· $\chi(X) \in \mathbb{Z}$ Euler number

· $H^n(X; \mathbb{Z})$ Ordinary cohomology

· $K^n(X)$ K-theory

· $H_{dR}^n(M; \mathbb{Z})$ de Rham cohomology

⋮

M : manifolds



useful for classification problems in geometry.

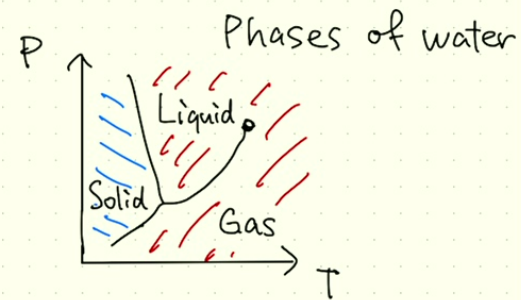
Homotopy theory and physics

There has been growing interest in the relation

Homotopy theory \leftrightarrow physics.

In particular, algebraic topology is useful for classification problems in physics.

classifications of
physical systems are
important :



Quantum Field Theories (QFT)

- describes physical systems.
- \exists various formulations.

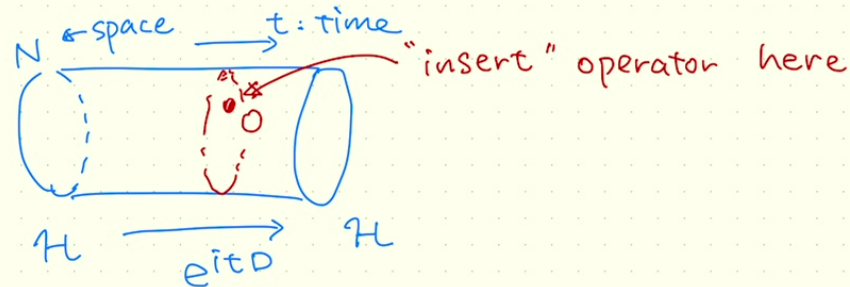
Recall : Quantum Mechanics

A physical system : (\mathcal{H}, D)

\mathcal{H} : Hilbert space $\mathcal{H} \ni |\psi\rangle$: "physical state"

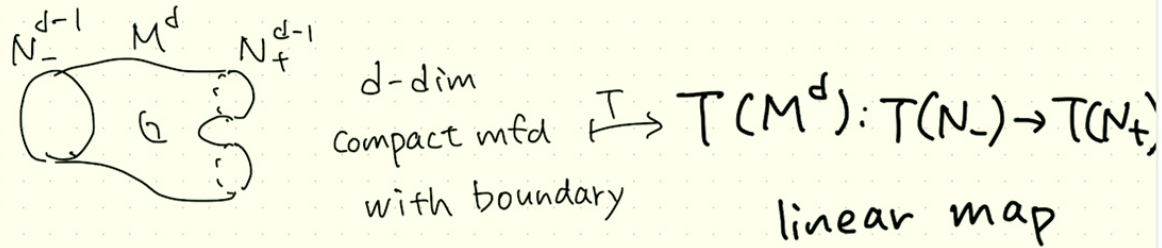
$D : \mathcal{H} \rightarrow \mathcal{H}$ Hamiltonian "time evolution"

Observables : $O : \mathcal{H} \rightarrow \mathcal{H}$ operators

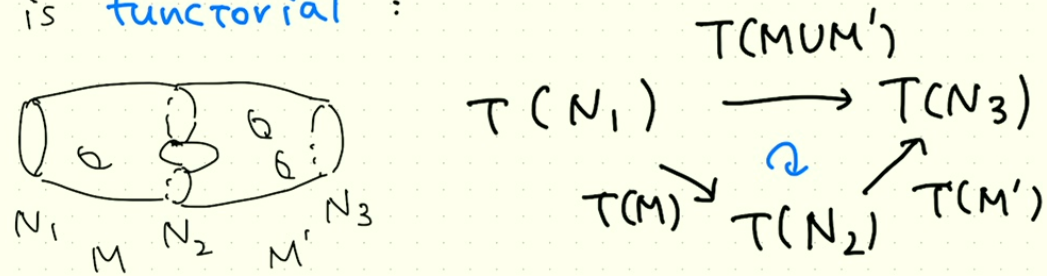


Cobordism Picture for QFTs :

A $(d-1, d)$ -dim QFT T is an assignment



which is **functorial** :



Example : Holonomy theory

Fix $(L, \nabla) \leftarrow$ Line bundle + connection
 $\downarrow \pi$
 $X \leftarrow$ a manifold

\rightarrow $(0,1)$ -dim QFT $\text{Hol}(X, \nabla)$

with structure = orientation + map to X :

$$\bullet \left(\begin{array}{c} + \\ - \\ N \end{array} \xrightarrow{f} \begin{array}{c} \text{loop} \\ X \\ \mathbb{R} \end{array} \right) \mapsto L_f(N)$$

$$\bullet \left(\begin{array}{c} M \\ \rightarrow \\ - \\ + \end{array} \xrightarrow{f} \begin{array}{c} \text{loop} \\ X \\ \mathbb{R} \end{array} \right) \mapsto \text{Hol}_f \nabla : L_f(\partial_- M) \rightarrow L_f(\partial_+ M)$$

$$\rightsquigarrow Z_{\text{Hol}} \left(\begin{array}{c} \text{loop} \\ X \\ \mathbb{R} \end{array} \right) = \text{Hol}_f(\nabla) \in U(1) \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{Holonomy} \\ \text{along a loop} \end{array}$$

Classification of QFTs

↑ up to "deformation equivalence"
(變形同値)

QFT's I_0 & I_1 are deformation equivalent $I_0 \sim I_1$

" \Leftrightarrow "
def $\exists \{I_t\}_{t \in [0,1]}$ conti. path of QFT's from I_0 to I_1

Ex Holonomy theory with target X .

- two connections ∇_0, ∇_1 on $L \rightarrow X$
can always deformed to each other: $\nabla_t = t\nabla_0 + (1-t)\nabla_1$
 $\leadsto \text{Hol}(L, \nabla_0) \sim \text{Hol}(L, \nabla_1)$
- two line bundles L, L' on X cannot necessarily deformed to each other...
 $\leadsto \text{Hol}(L, \nabla) \not\sim \text{Hol}(L', \nabla')$ in general.

Algebraic topology can be useful!

$$\underline{\text{Ex.}} \quad H^2(X; \mathbb{Z}) = \{ L \rightarrow X \text{ line bundles over } X \} / \cong_{\text{isom}}$$

$$\therefore [L] = [L'] \in H^2(X; \mathbb{Z}) \Rightarrow \text{Hol}_{(L, \nabla)} \sim \text{Hol}_{(L', \nabla')}$$

Moreover, the partition function $Z_{\text{Hol}_{(L, \nabla)}}$ recovers the isom class of (L, ∇) , since

$$\text{Hol}_f(\nabla) = \text{Hol}_f(\nabla') \quad \forall f: S^1 \rightarrow X \iff (L, \nabla) \cong (L', \nabla')$$

$$\left(Z_{\text{Hol}_{(L, \nabla)}}(f \circ \text{loop})^x \right) = \text{Hol}_f(\nabla) \in U(1) \quad \text{Holonomy along a loop}$$

$$\therefore [\text{Hol}_{(L, \nabla)}] \in H^2(X; \mathbb{Z}).$$

deformation class

A naive expectation:

• $H^2(X; \mathbb{Z})$ classifies (a subclass of)

1-dim QFTs for oriented manifolds
with map to X ?

• $H^d(X; \mathbb{Z})$ classifies higher-dim QFTs ?

→ False.

We need to work more !!

- we should fix nice "subclass" to be classified.
- we should use **generalized cohomology theory**.

(These data gives a functor
 $T: \text{Bord}_{\langle d-1, d \rangle} \rightarrow \text{Vect}_{\mathbb{C}} .$)

In particular, for closed d -dim manifolds ...

M^d
 $\phi \circlearrowleft \phi$
 closed d -dim mfd

T

$T(\phi) \rightarrow T(\phi)$
 $\text{ii } \mathbb{C} \quad T(M^d) \quad \text{ii } \mathbb{C}$

"
 multiplication by

$Z_T(M^d) \in \mathbb{C}$

partition function for M

Z_T can reflect

geometry & topology of manifolds.

* We can also put Structures on manifolds.

(orientation, metric, map to X ...)

§2 My works : I explain our works on
Segal-Stolz-Teichner proposal. ('04, '11)
... a deep "conjecture" connecting
Homotopy theory (Math) and Physics.

My works, conceptually :

- (A) Use Proposal to translate
Phys. problems \rightarrow Math problems
and solve it mathematically.
- (B) Use Proposal to get
Math ideas from physics.
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① Main Result of [TY '21] (Physical statement)
| Heterotic String theories are anomaly-free.

Strategy

We use **Proposals** relating **Homotopy theory** & **Physics**:

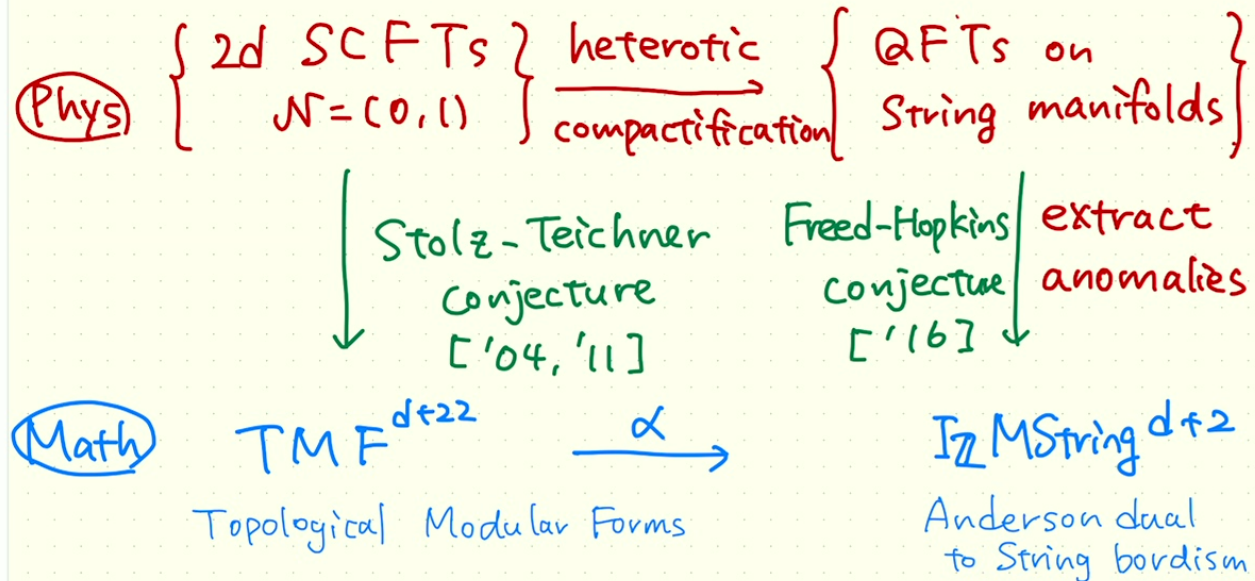


Stolz - Teichner proposal

Freed - Hopkins proposal

to translate **Phys. Q** to **Math. Q**.
and solve it **mathematically**.

We use the following diagram:



→ Phys. Problem Show that heterotic anomaly vanishes.

⇔ Math Problem (roughly): Show $\alpha = 0$.
under some conditions on α . implied by Physics.

Segal-Stolz-Teichner proposal ('04, '11)

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{2-dim } \mathcal{N}=(0,1) \text{ SUSY} \\ \text{unitary QFTs} \end{array} \right\} \cong \text{TMF.}$$

Topological Modular Forms.

a spectrum (generalized cohomology) which is a "topological" version of Modular Forms.

* SST proposal is a refinement of :

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{2d } \mathcal{N}=(0,1) \text{ unitary} \\ \text{SQFTs} \end{array} \right\} \rightarrow \text{MF}[\Delta^1] \cong \mathbb{Z}[C_6, C_6, \Delta, \Delta^1]$$

$$\downarrow$$

$$\mathbb{Z} \left(T^2, \mathbb{R}R \right)$$

$\frac{C_6^3 - C_6^2}{=1728\Delta}$

Why is SST-proposal interesting / important?

- Mathematically,

TMF itself has been deep & important.
('90s ~ now)

"topological ver." of Modular Forms.

mixture of homotopy theory & algebraic geometry...

"Spectral Algebraic Geometry"

- Physically,

SST-proposal has a lot of implications for
SQFTs.

such as torsion phenomena, duality, periodicity...
(the topic of this talk.)

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- Physically,

SST-proposal has a lot of implications for
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(the topic of this talk.)

Math TMF is a spectrum which is a
 "topological" version of $MF[\Delta^{-1}]$...

- Defined as a global section of an E_∞ -sheaf on $Mell/\mathbb{Z}$

$$-\pi_* TMF \xrightarrow{\exists} (MF[\Delta^{-1}])_{*/2} = \mathbb{Z}[C_4, C_6, \Delta, \Delta^{-1}] / (C_4^2 - C_6^2 - 1728\Delta)$$

inducing $\pi_* TMF \otimes \mathbb{Q} \cong MF[\Delta^{-1}]_{*/2} \otimes \mathbb{Q}$.

but \exists nontrivial cokernels.

e.g. $\pi_{\pm 24} TMF \rightarrow MF[\Delta^{-1}]_{\pm 12}$
 $\quad \quad \quad \downarrow$
 $\quad \quad \quad \Delta, \Delta^{-1}$
 $\quad \quad \quad \exists \text{ lift } \mapsto 24\Delta, 24\Delta^{-1}$

- \exists many 2, 3-power torsions in $\pi_* TMF$

- 576-periodic $\pi_* TMF \cong \pi_{* \pm 576} TMF$

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
f) ₍₂₎	$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2						$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$	
				\mathbb{Z}_8			\mathbb{Z}_2		\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2				
f) ₍₂₎	$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$				$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$	
		\mathbb{Z}_2			\mathbb{Z}_8	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_4	\mathbb{Z}_2	
f) ₍₂₎	$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^2$	\mathbb{Z}_2^2	\mathbb{Z}_2^2		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^2$				$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^2$	\mathbb{Z}_2^2	\mathbb{Z}_2^2		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^2$	
	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2				\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_4	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2			\mathbb{Z}_2
f) ₍₂₎	$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^2$	\mathbb{Z}_2^2	\mathbb{Z}_2^2		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^2$				$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^3$	\mathbb{Z}_2^3	\mathbb{Z}_2^3		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^3$	
	$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$		\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_8	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_4			\mathbb{Z}_2		\mathbb{Z}_2	\mathbb{Z}_4	
f) ₍₂₎ ³	$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^3$	\mathbb{Z}_2^3	\mathbb{Z}_2^3		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^3$				$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^3$	\mathbb{Z}_2^3	\mathbb{Z}_2^3		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}^3$	
21/31		\mathbb{Z}_2^2	\mathbb{Z}_2		\mathbb{Z}_2		\mathbb{Z}_2		$\mathbb{Z}_{(2)}$			\mathbb{Z}_2		

Our Result [TY21]

- Using the diagram, we translated

Phys. Problem Show that heterotic anomaly vanishes


into Math Problem: Show that a morphism

$$\alpha: \text{TMF} \rightarrow \Sigma^{-20} \mathbb{I}_2 \text{MString}$$

vanishes, under some conditions

translated from physics

- Then Solved it mathematically.

 Proof turns out to be very simple.

(ingredients: $\cdot \text{MF}[\Delta^1]_2 \ni \phi(\mathbb{Z})$, q^0 -coeff of $\phi(\mathbb{Z})$ is 0.)
 $\cdot \underline{\text{TMF}}_{-21} = 0.$

② Secondary anomaly

& Anderson self-duality of Tmf [TY'23]

[TY'23] + ε implies $\exists!$ canonical lift

$$\begin{array}{c}
 \exists! \tilde{\alpha} \\
 \swarrow \text{---} \\
 \text{TMF} \\
 \downarrow \alpha_{\text{spin}} \quad \searrow \alpha \quad \text{0 by [TY'23]} \\
 \Sigma^{-20} \mathbb{I}_2 \text{MSpin/MString} \rightarrow \Sigma^{-20} \mathbb{I}_2 \text{MSpin} \rightarrow \Sigma^{-20} \mathbb{I}_2 \text{MString}
 \end{array}$$

which we call secondary morphism.

Main Result in [TY'23]

$\tilde{\alpha}$ is directly related to Anderson self-duality of Tmf:

Fact (Stojanoska'13) $\text{Tmf} \cong \Sigma^{-21} \mathbb{I}_2 \text{Tmf}$.

Main Result in [TY'23]

$$\tilde{\alpha} : \text{TMF} \rightarrow \Sigma^{-20} \text{I}_2 \text{MSpin} / \text{MString}$$

is directly related to Anderson self-duality of Tmf :

→ 😊: New **physical** understanding of
purely homotopy-theoretic result!

😊: $\tilde{\alpha}$ is very nontrivial!

$\tilde{\alpha}$ induces pairings

$$\pi_* \text{TMF} \times \Omega_{\bullet}^{\text{Spin/string}} \rightarrow \begin{cases} \mathbb{Z} & * + \bullet = -20 \\ \mathbb{Q}/\mathbb{Z} & * + \bullet = -21 \end{cases}$$

\downarrow SQFTs \downarrow manifolds \downarrow Spin String

which is very nontrivial & computable by differential geometry!

Applications

(Math) detect power operations in TMF
via differential-geometric methods.

(Phys) extract "chromatic height -2" information
from 2d SQFTs, leading to new conjectures...

Lattice	$n = 2c$	in $KO((q))^n(\text{pt})$	we conjecture...
\widetilde{E}_8	$n = 16$	c_4/Δ	
\widetilde{D}_{12}	$n = 24$	$24/\Delta$	
$\widetilde{E}_7 \times E_7$	$n = 28$	0	nontrivial in $A^{28} \simeq \mathbb{Z}/2 \subset \text{TMF}^{28}$
\widetilde{A}_{15}	$n = 30$	0	nontrivial in $A^{30} \simeq \mathbb{Z}/2 \subset \text{TMF}^{30}$
$\widetilde{D}_8 \times D_8$	$n = 32$	0	nontrivial in $A^{32} \simeq \mathbb{Z}/3 \subset \text{TMF}^{31}$
\widetilde{D}_{16}	$n = 32$	$(c_4/\Delta)^2$	

TABLE 1. Examples of lattice SVOAs and conjectured image in TMF.

"difficult" torsions
in $\pi_*\text{TMF}$

③ Proof of 576-periodicity in SQFTs. WITHOUT using TMF.

(j. w/ Theo Johnson-Freyd, in preparation.)

Math Fact: • TMF is exactly 576-periodic.
 ($TMF^n \cong TMF^{n+576}$)

• periodicity element $\xrightarrow{\quad} \Delta^{24}$
 \uparrow
 $\pi_{576} TMF \rightarrow MF[\Delta^{24}]_{24 \times 12}$

→ If you believe in SST proposal,

SQFT should be exactly 576-periodic.

However, there had been NO physical explanation.

SQFT should be exactly 576-periodic.

To prove, we should do two things:

- give upper bound 576.

$$\Leftrightarrow \text{Verify } \pi_{576} \text{SQFT} \rightarrow \text{MF}[\Delta^{-1}]_{24 \times 12}$$

$$\Downarrow \quad \exists \mathcal{J} \quad \mapsto \quad \Delta^{24}$$

"Existence" result. Done by Gaiotto et al.
essentially

- ★ give lower bound 576.

▲ "Non-Existence" result. Difficult!

e.g. need to show $\pi_{576/2} \text{SQFT} \rightarrow \text{MF}[\Delta^{-1}]_{12 \times 12}$

$$\Downarrow \quad \not\exists \quad \mapsto \quad \Delta^{12}$$

We settle this!

$$(\exists \mathcal{T}_{288} \mapsto 2\Delta^{12})$$

Formulation of the problem.

Recall: Segal-Stolz-Teichner proposal ('04, '11)

(1) The "Space"

$\{2\text{-dim, } \mathcal{N}=(0,1) \text{ SUSY unitary QFTs}\}$

forms a spectrum "SQFT."

(2) We have $\text{SQFT} \cong \text{Tmf}$.

In this work, we only use (1) of the Proposal

We do NOT use Tmf. To do:

- Start from a spectrum SQFT
- Put assumptions for SQFT implied by physics.
- Show periodicity of SQFT ≥ 576 .

(Mathematical) assumptions for SQFT (roughly)

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 \text{MString} & \xrightarrow{\exists} & \text{SQFT} & \xrightarrow{\exists} & \text{MF}[\Delta^{-1}] \\
 \downarrow & \text{\scriptsize } \sigma\text{-model} & \downarrow \text{\scriptsize } \text{ev}_S & \text{\scriptsize } \Omega & \downarrow \\
 \text{MSpin} & \rightarrow & \text{KO}(\mathbb{Z}) & \rightarrow & \mathbb{Z}(\mathbb{Z}) \\
 & \text{Witt} & & &
 \end{array}$$

• $\pi_{-21} \text{SQFT} = 0$ \leftarrow Heterotic anomaly vanishing.

Thm (JF - Y, in preparation)

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \bullet k \Delta^{-12} \in \text{Im}(\text{SQFT} \rightarrow \text{MF}[\Delta^{-1}]) \Rightarrow 2|k. \\
 \bullet k \Delta^{-16} \in \text{Im}(\text{SQFT} \rightarrow \text{MF}[\Delta^{-1}]) \Rightarrow 3|k.
 \end{array}$$

Cor periodicity of SQFT ≥ 576 .

Strategy : use Anderson duality pairings.

Assumptions allows us to do analogy of §2. [TY23]

we get \mathbb{Z} -valued pairing

integrality is
↓
the Key!

$$\langle , \rangle : \pi_d \text{SQFT} \otimes \Omega_{d-20}^{\text{Spin/String}} \rightarrow \mathbb{Z}.$$

with explicit formula.

e.g. we can find $\left[\begin{array}{c} N \quad M \\ \text{60} \end{array} \right] \in \Omega_{24 \times 12 - 20}^{\text{Spin/String}}$

such that

$$\langle k \Delta^{-12}, [N, M] \rangle = \frac{3k}{2}$$

\Rightarrow $2|k$, as desired.

Future directions

- Attack Segal-Stolz-Teichner proposal.
 \exists various subproblems,
e.g. developing equivariant refinements of SST.
 Take Symmetries of SQFTs into account
 need Modular-Tensor-Category equivariant TMF
 which is Not mathematically established...
 (partly in progress with Ying Hsiung-Lin)
- Establish relations among
 different pictures for QFTs.
 Lagrangians, AQFTs, lattice models, cobordisms...
- Find more physical applications of
 Homotopy theories and more!

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