

Extension of the Virasoro and Neveu–Schwarz Algebras and Generalized Sturm–Liouville Operators

PATRICK MARCEL¹, VALENTIN OVSIENKO¹ and CLAUDE ROGER²

¹CNRS, CPT, Luminy-Case 907, F-13288 Marseille Cedex 9, France

²Girard Desargues, URA CNRS 746, Université Claude Bernard – Lyon I, 43 bd. du 11 Novembre 1918, F-69622 Villeurbanne Cedex, France. e-mail: roger@geometrie.univ-lyon1.fr

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Abstract. We consider the universal central extension of the Lie algebra $\text{Vect}(S^1) \times C^\infty(S^1)$. The coadjoint representation of this Lie algebra has a natural geometric interpretation by matrix analogues of the Sturm–Liouville operators. This approach leads to new Lie superalgebras generalizing the well-known Neveu–Schwarz algebra.

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1. Introduction

1.1. STURM–LIOUVILLE OPERATORS AND THE ACTION OF $\text{Vect}(S^1)$

Let us recall some well-known definitions (cf., e.g., [9, 8]).

Consider the Sturm–Liouville operator

$$L = -2c \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + u(x), \quad (1)$$

where $c \in \mathbb{R}$ and u is a periodic potential $u(x + 2\pi) = u(x) \in C^\infty(\mathbb{R})$.

Let $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ be the Lie algebra of a smooth vector field on S^1 : $f = f(x)d/dx$, where $f(x + 2\pi) = f(x)$, with the commutator

$$\left[f(x) \frac{d}{dx}, g(x) \frac{d}{dx} \right] = (f(x)g'(x) - f'(x)g(x)) \frac{d}{dx}.$$

We define a $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ -action on the space of Sturm–Liouville operators.

Consider a 1 -parameter family of $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ actions on the space of smooth functions $C^\infty(S^1)$:

$$L_{f(x)d/dx}^{(\lambda)} a(x) = f(x)a'(x) - \lambda f'(x)a(x). \quad (2)$$

NOTATION. (1) *The operator*

$$L_{f(x)d/dx}^{(\lambda)} = f(x) \frac{d}{dx} - \lambda f'(x)$$

is called the *Lie derivative*.

(2) Denote \mathcal{F}_λ as the $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ -module structure (2) on $C^\infty(S^1)$.

DEFINITION. The $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ action on L is defined by the commutator with the Lie derivative:

$$\left[L_{f(x)d/dx}, L \right] := L_{f(x)d/dx}^{(-(3/2))} \circ L - L \circ L_{f(x)d/dx}^{(1/2)}. \quad (3)$$

The result of this action is a *scalar operator*, i.e. the operator of multiplication by the function

$$\left[L_{f(x)d/dx}, L \right] = f(x)u'(x) + 2f'(x)u(x) - cf'''(x). \quad (4)$$

Remark. The argument a of the operator (2) has a natural geometric interpretation as a *tensor density* on S^1 of degree $-\lambda$:

$$a = a(x)(dx)^{-\lambda}.$$

One obtains a natural realization of the Sturm–Liouville operator as an operator on tensor densities $L: \mathcal{F}_{1/2} \rightarrow \mathcal{F}_{-(3/2)}$ (cf. [8]).

1.2. THE COADJOINT REPRESENTATION OF THE VIRASORO ALGEBRA

The *Virasoro algebra* is a unique (up to isomorphism) nontrivial central extension of $\text{Vect}(S^1)$. It is given by the Gelfand–Fuchs cocycle

$$c \left(f(x) \frac{d}{dx}, g(x) \frac{d}{dx} \right) = \int_0^{2\pi} f'(x)g''(x) dx. \quad (5)$$

The Virasoro algebra is therefore a Lie algebra on the space $\text{Vect}(S^1) \oplus \mathbb{R}$ with the commutator

$$[(f, \alpha), (g, \beta)] = ([f, g]_{\text{Vect}(S^1)}, c(f, g)).$$

A deep remark of A. A. Kirillov and G. Segal (see [4, 7]) is that *the* $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ *action* (4) *coincides with the coadjoint action of the Virasoro algebra*.

Let us give the precise definitions.

Consider the space $C^\infty(S^1) \oplus \mathbb{R}$ and a pairing between this space and the Virasoro algebra

$$\left\langle (u(x), c), \left(f(x) \frac{d}{dx}, \alpha \right) \right\rangle = \int_0^{2\pi} u(x)f(x) dx + c\alpha.$$

Space $C^\infty(S^1) \oplus \mathbb{R}$ is identified with a part of the dual space to the Virasoro algebra. It is called the *regular part* (see [4]).

DEFINITION. The coadjoint action of the Virasoro algebra on $C^\infty(S^1) \oplus \mathbb{R}$ is defined by

$$\left\langle \text{ad}_{(f(d/dx), \alpha)}^*(u(x), c), \left(g \frac{d}{dx}, \beta\right) \right\rangle := - \left\langle (u(x), c), \left[\left(f \frac{d}{dx}, \alpha\right), \left(g \frac{d}{dx}, \beta\right)\right] \right\rangle.$$

It is easy to calculate the explicit formula. The result is

$$\text{ad}_{(f(x)(d/dx), \alpha)}^*(u(x), c) = \left(L_{f(x)(d/dx)}^{(-2)} u(x) - cf'''(x), 0\right),$$

where $L_f^{(2)}$ is the operator of Lie derivative (2). This action coincides with the $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ action (4) on the space of Sturm–Liouville operators.

Remarks. (1) Note that the coadjoint action of the Virasoro algebra is in fact a $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ -action (the center acts trivially).

(2) The regular part of the dual space to the Virasoro algebra can be interpreted as a deformation of the $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ -module \mathcal{F}_{-2} .

2. Central Extension of $\text{Vect}(S^1) \ltimes C^\infty(S^1)$

Consider the semi-direct product $\mathcal{G} = \text{Vect}(S^1) \ltimes C^\infty(S^1)$. This Lie algebra has a three-dimensional central extension given by the nontrivial 2-cocycles

$$\begin{aligned} \sigma_1 \left(\left(f \frac{d}{dx}, a\right), \left(g \frac{d}{dx}, b\right) \right) &= \int_{S^1} f'(x)g''(x) dx, \\ \sigma_2 \left(\left(f \frac{d}{dx}, a\right), \left(g \frac{d}{dx}, b\right) \right) &= \int_{S^1} (f''(x)b(x) - g''(x)a(x)) dx, \\ \sigma_3 \left(\left(f \frac{d}{dx}, a\right), \left(g \frac{d}{dx}, b\right) \right) &= 2 \int_{S^1} a(x)b'(x) dx. \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

Let us denote \mathfrak{g} as the Lie algebra defined by this extension.

As a vector space, $\mathfrak{g} = \text{Vect}(S^1) \ltimes C^\infty(S^1) \oplus \mathbb{R}^3$. The commutator in \mathfrak{g} is

$$\left[\left(f \frac{d}{dx}, a, \alpha\right), \left(g \frac{d}{dx}, b, \beta\right) \right] = \left((fg' - f'g) \frac{d}{dx}, fb' - ga', \sigma \right), \quad (7)$$

where

$$\alpha = (\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3), \quad \beta = (\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3) \in \mathbb{R}^3 \quad \text{and} \quad \sigma = (\sigma_1, \sigma_2, \sigma_3)$$

are the 2-cocycles given by formulas (6).

The Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} is well known in physical literature (see [1, 2]). It was shown in [6] that the cocycles (6) define the *universal* central extension* the Lie algebra $\text{Vect}(S^1) \times C^\infty(S^1)$. This means $H^2(\text{Vect}(S^1) \times C^\infty(S^1)) = \mathbb{R}^3$.

In this Letter we define a space of matrix linear differential operators generalizing the Sturm–Liouville operators. This space gives a natural geometric realization of the coadjoint representation of the Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} . We hope that such a realization can be useful for the theory of KdV-type integrable systems related to the Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} as well as for studying the coadjoint orbits of \mathfrak{g} (cf. [4] for the Virasoro case). Remark here that some interesting results concerning coadjoint orbits of \mathfrak{g} have been obtained recently in [3].

3. Matrix Sturm–Liouville Operators

DEFINITION. Consider the following matrix linear differential operators on $C^\infty(S^1) \oplus C^\infty(S^1)$:

$$\mathcal{L} = \begin{pmatrix} -2c_1 \frac{d^2}{dx^2} + u(x) & 2c_2 \frac{d}{dx} + v(x) \\ -2c_2 \frac{d}{dx} + v(x) & 4c_3 \end{pmatrix}, \quad (8)$$

where $c_1, c_2, c_3 \in \mathbb{R}$ and $u = u(x), v = v(x)$ are 2π -periodic functions.

The $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ action on the space of operators (8) is defined, as in the case of Sturm–Liouville operators (1), by commutation with the Lie derivative. We consider \mathcal{L} as an operator on $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ modules:

$$\mathcal{L} : \mathcal{F}_{1/2} \oplus \mathcal{F}_{-(1/2)} \rightarrow \mathcal{F}_{-(3/2)} \oplus \mathcal{F}_{-(1/2)}.$$

We will show that there exists a structure on the space of operators (8). Namely, we will define an action of the semi-direct product $\text{Vect}(S^1) \times C^\infty(S^1)$.

3.1. $\text{Vect}(S^1) \times C^\infty(S^1)$ -MODULE STRUCTURE

Let us define a 1-parameter family of $\text{Vect}(S^1) \times C^\infty(S^1)$ -modules on the space $C^\infty(S^1) \oplus C^\infty(S^1)$:

$$T_{(f(x)d/dx, a(x))}^{(\lambda)} \begin{pmatrix} \phi(x) \\ \psi(x) \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} L_{f(d/dx)}^{(\lambda)} \phi(x) \\ L_{f(d/dx)}^{(\lambda-1)} \psi(x) - \lambda a'(x) \phi(x) \end{pmatrix}, \quad (9)$$

where $\phi(x), \psi(x) \in C^\infty(S^1)$. Verify that this formula defines a $\text{Vect}(S^1) \times C^\infty(S^1)$ -action:

$$\left[T_{(f(d/dx), a)}^{(\lambda)}, T_{(g(d/dx), b)}^{(\lambda)} \right] = T_{((fg' - f'g)d/dx, fb' - ga')}^{(\lambda)}$$

* It makes sense, since $H_1(\text{Vect}(S^1) \times C^\infty(S^1)) = 0$.

DEFINITION. Define the $\text{Vect}(S^1) \times C^\infty(S^1)$ action on the space of the operators (8) by

$$\left[T_{(f(d/dx), a)}, \mathcal{L} \right] := T_{(f(d/dx), a)}^{(-1/2)} \circ \mathcal{L} - \mathcal{L} \circ T_{(f(d/dx), a)}^{(1/2)}. \quad (10)$$

Let us give the explicit formula of this action.

PROPOSITION 1. *The result of the action (10) is an operator of multiplication by the matrix*

$$\left[T_{(f(d/dx), a)}, \mathcal{L} \right] = \begin{pmatrix} fu' + 2f'u - c_1f''' & fv' + f'v - c_2f'' \\ +va' + c_2a'' & +2c_3a' \\ fv' + f'v - c_2f'' & 0 \\ +2c_3a' & \end{pmatrix}. \quad (11)$$

Proof. Straightforward.

The following result clarifies the nature of definition (10). It turns out that, in the case of the Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} , the situation is analogous to those in the Virasoro case: one obtains a generalization of the Kirillov–Segal result.

THEOREM 1. *The action (10) coincides with the coadjoint action of the Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} .*

We will prove this theorem in the next section.

3.2. COADJOINT REPRESENTATION OF THE LIE ALGEBRA \mathfrak{g}

Let us calculate the coadjoint action of the Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} .

DEFINITION. Define the *regular part* of the dual space \mathfrak{g}^* to the Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} as follows (cf. [4]). Put $\mathfrak{g}_{\text{reg}}^* = C^\infty(S^1) \oplus C^\infty(S^1) \oplus \mathbb{R}^3$ and fix the pairing $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle: \mathfrak{g}_{\text{reg}}^* \otimes \mathfrak{g} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$:

$$\begin{aligned} & \left\langle (u(x), v(x), \mathbf{c}), \left(f(x) \frac{d}{dx}, a(x), \alpha \right) \right\rangle \\ &= \int_{S^1} f(x)u(x) dx + \int_{S^1} a(x)v(x) dx + \alpha \cdot \mathbf{c}, \end{aligned}$$

where $\mathbf{c} = (c_1, c_2, c_3)$, $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \alpha_3) \in \mathbb{R}^3$.

PROPOSITION 2. *The coadjoint action of \mathfrak{g} on the regular part of its dual space $\mathfrak{g}_{\text{reg}}^*$ is given by*

$$\text{ad}_{(f(d/dx), a)}^* \begin{pmatrix} u \\ v \\ \mathbf{c} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} fu' + 2f'u - c_1 f''' + va' + c_2 a'' \\ fv' + f'v - c_2 f'' + 2c_3 a' \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} \quad (12)$$

where $\mathbf{c} = (c_1, c_2, c_3)$ (the center of \mathfrak{g} acts trivially).

Proof. By definition of the coadjoint action,

$$\left\langle \text{ad}_{(f(d/dx), a)}^*(u, v, \mathbf{c}), \left(g \frac{d}{dx}, b\right) \right\rangle = - \left\langle (u, v, \mathbf{c}), \left[\left(f \frac{d}{dx}, a\right), \left(g \frac{d}{dx}, b\right)\right] \right\rangle.$$

Integrate by part to obtain the result.

The right-hand side of formula (12) coincides with the action (10) of the Lie algebra $\text{Vect}(S^1) \ltimes C^\infty(S^1)$ on space of operators (8).

Theorem 1 follows now from Proposition 1.

Remark. As a $\text{Vect}(S^1)$ module, $\mathfrak{g}_{\text{reg}}^*$ is a deformation of the module $\mathcal{F}_{-2} \oplus \mathcal{F}_{-1} \oplus \mathbb{R}^3$ (and coincides with it if $c_1 = c_2 = 0$). Therefore, the dual space to the Lie algebra has the following tensor sense:

$$u = u(x)(dx)^2, \quad v = v(x) dx.$$

The space of matrix Sturm–Liouville operators (8) gives a natural geometric realization of the dual space to the Lie algebra \mathfrak{g} .

4. Generalized Neveu–Schwarz Superalgebra

We introduce here a Lie superalgebra which contains \mathfrak{g} as its even part. The relation between \mathfrak{g} and this superalgebra is the same as between the Virasoro algebra and the Neveu–Schwarz superalgebra. We show that the differential operator (8) appears as a part of the coadjoint action of the constructed Lie superalgebra.

We follow here the Kirillov method (see [5]) where the Sturm–Liouville operator is realized as the even part of the coadjoint action of the Neveu–Schwarz superalgebra.

4.1. DEFINITION

Consider the \mathbf{Z}_2 -graded vector space $\mathcal{S} = \mathcal{S}_0 \oplus \mathcal{S}_1$, where $\mathcal{S}_0 = \mathfrak{g} = \text{Vect}(S^1) \oplus C^\infty(S^1) \oplus \mathbb{R}^3$ and $\mathcal{S}_1 = C^\infty(S^1) \oplus C^\infty(S^1)$. Define the structure of a Lie superalgebra on \mathcal{S} .

(1) Define the action of the even part \mathcal{S}_0 on \mathcal{S}_1 by

$$\left[\left(f(x) \frac{d}{dx}, a(x) \right), (\phi(x), \alpha(x)) \right] := T_{(f(x)d/dx, a(x))}^{(1/2)}(\phi(x), \alpha(x))$$

so that, as a $\text{Vect}(\mathcal{S}^1)$ -module, $\mathcal{S}_1 = \mathcal{F}_{1/2} \oplus \mathcal{F}_{-(1/2)}$.

(2) The even part \mathcal{S}_0 acts on \mathcal{S}_1 according to (9). Let us define the *anticommutator* $[\cdot, \cdot]_+ : \mathcal{S}_1 \otimes \mathcal{S}_1 \rightarrow \mathcal{S}_0$

$$\left[(\phi, \alpha), (\psi, \beta) \right]_+ = \left(\phi\psi \frac{d}{dx}, \phi\beta + \alpha\psi, \sigma_+ \right), \quad (13)$$

where $\sigma_+ = (\sigma_{+1}, \sigma_{+2}, \sigma_{+3})$ is the continuation of the cocycles (6) to the even part of $\mathcal{S}_0 \subset \mathcal{S}$ defined by the formulæ:

$$\begin{aligned} \sigma_{+1}((\phi, \alpha), (\psi, \beta)) &= 2 \int_{S^1} \phi'(x) \psi'(x) dx, \\ \sigma_{+2}((\phi, \alpha), (\psi, \beta)) &= -2 \int_{S^1} (\phi'(x)\beta(x) + \alpha(x)\psi'(x)) dx, \\ \sigma_{+3}((\phi, \alpha), (\psi, \beta)) &= 4 \int_{S^1} \alpha(x)\beta(x) dx. \end{aligned} \quad (14)$$

THEOREM 2. \mathcal{S} is a Lie superalgebra.

Proof. One must verify the Jacobi identity

$$(-1)^{|X||Z|}[X, [Y, Z]] + (-1)^{|X||Y|}[Y, [Z, X]] + (-1)^{|Y||Z|}[Z, [X, Y]] = 0, \quad (15)$$

where $|X|$ is a degree of X ($|X| = 0$ for $X \in \mathcal{S}_0$ and $|X| = 1$ for $X \in \mathcal{S}_1$).

Let us prove (15) for $X, Y, Z \in \mathcal{S}_1$. Take $X = (\phi, \alpha)$, $Y = (\psi, \beta)$, $Z = (\tau, \gamma)$, then

$$(a) \quad [(\phi, \alpha), [(\psi, \beta), (\tau, \gamma)]] = -T_{[(\psi, \beta), (\tau, \gamma)]_+}^{1/2}(\phi, \alpha).$$

Since the expression $[(\psi, \beta), (\tau, \gamma)]_+$ is given by (15), one gets $T_{[(\psi, \beta), (\tau, \gamma)]_+}^{1/2}(\phi, \alpha) = T_{(\psi\tau, \psi\gamma + \beta\tau)}^{1/2}(\phi, \alpha)$. According to (9),

$$T_{(\psi\tau, \psi\gamma + \beta\tau)}^{1/2}(\phi, \alpha) = (L_{\psi\tau}^{1/2}(\phi), L_{\psi\tau}^{-1/2}(\alpha) - \frac{1}{2}(\psi\gamma + \beta\tau)'\phi),$$

where

$$L_{\psi\tau}^{1/2}(\phi) = \psi\tau\phi' - \frac{1}{2}(\psi'\tau + \psi\tau')\phi$$

and

$$L_{\psi\tau}^{-1/2}(\alpha) - \frac{1}{2}(\psi\gamma + \beta\tau)'\phi = \psi\tau\alpha' + \frac{1}{2}(\psi\tau)'\alpha - \frac{1}{2}(\psi\gamma)'\phi - \frac{1}{2}(\beta\tau)'\phi.$$

In the same way, we obtain

$$(b) \quad [(\psi, \beta), [(\tau, \gamma), (\phi, \alpha)]] = (L_{\phi\tau}^{1/2}(\psi), L_{\phi\tau}^{-1/2}(\beta) - \frac{1}{2}(\tau\alpha + \phi\gamma)'\psi),$$

where

$$L_{\phi\tau}^{1/2}(\psi) = \phi\tau\psi' - \frac{1}{2}(\phi'\tau + \phi\tau')\psi$$

and

$$L_{\phi\tau}^{-1/2}(\beta) - \frac{1}{2}(\tau\alpha + \phi\gamma)'\psi = \phi\tau\beta' + \frac{1}{2}(\phi\tau)'\beta - \frac{1}{2}(\tau\alpha)'\psi - \frac{1}{2}(\gamma\phi)'\psi.$$

For the last term, one has

$$(c) \quad [(\tau, \gamma), [(\phi, \alpha), (\psi, \beta)]] = (L_{\phi\psi}^{1/2}(\tau), L_{\phi\psi}^{-1/2}(\gamma) - \frac{1}{2}(\phi\beta + \psi\alpha)'\tau),$$

where

$$L_{\phi\psi}^{1/2}(\tau) = \phi\psi\tau' - \frac{1}{2}(\phi'\psi + \phi\psi')\tau$$

and

$$L_{\phi\psi}^{-1/2}(\gamma) - \frac{1}{2}(\phi\beta + \psi\alpha)'\tau = \phi\psi\gamma' + \frac{1}{2}(\phi\psi)'\gamma - \frac{1}{2}(\phi\beta)'\psi - \frac{1}{2}(\alpha\psi)'\tau.$$

Taking the sum (a) + (b) + (c), one obtains zero.

The proof of the Jacobi identity for the other cases is analogous.

Theorem 2 is proven.

PROPOSITION 3. *The coadjoint action of \mathcal{S} is given by the formula*

$$\text{ad}^* \begin{pmatrix} f \frac{d}{dx} \\ a \\ \phi(dx)^{-\frac{1}{2}} \\ \alpha(dx)^{\frac{1}{2}} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} u \\ v \\ \mathbf{c} \\ \psi \\ \beta \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} L_f^{(-2)}(u) + va' + c_2a'' - c_1f''' \\ \quad + \frac{1}{2}\psi'\phi + \frac{3}{2}\psi\phi' - \frac{1}{2}\beta'\alpha + \frac{1}{2}\beta\alpha' \\ L_f^{(-1)}(v) + 2c_3a' - c_2f'' \\ \quad + \frac{1}{2}\beta'\phi + \frac{1}{2}\beta\phi' \\ 0 \\ L_f^{(-3/2)}(\psi) + \frac{1}{2}a'\beta \\ \quad - 2c_1\phi'' + u\phi + v\alpha + 2c_2\alpha' \\ L_f^{(-1/2)}(\beta) \\ \quad - 2c_2\phi' + v\phi + 4c_3\alpha \end{pmatrix},$$

where $\mathbf{c} = (c_1, c_2, c_3)$ (as usual, the center acts trivially).

Proof. Direct calculation using the definition of the superalgebra \mathcal{S} .

In particular, one obtains the following corollary.

COROLLARY.

$$\text{ad}^* \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ \phi(dx)^{-(1/2)} \\ \alpha(dx)^{1/2} \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} u \\ v \\ \mathbf{c} \\ 0 \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} 0 \\ 0 \\ 0 \\ -2c_1\phi'' + u\phi + v\alpha + 2c_2\alpha' \\ -2c_2\phi' + v\phi + 4c_3\alpha \end{pmatrix}$$

This corollary gives the matrix operator (8) defined in Section 2.

The Lie superalgebra \mathcal{S} seems to be an interesting generalization of the Neveu–Schwarz superalgebra. It would be interesting to obtain some information about its representations, coadjoint orbits, corresponding integrable systems, etc.

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