

# **SUPERSYMMETRY**

**An Introduction with Conceptual  
and Computational Details**

**H. J. W. Müller-Kirsten  
A. Wiedemann**

**World Scientific**

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## **SUPERSYMMETRY – AN INTRODUCTION WITH CONCEPTUAL AND CALCULATIONAL DETAILS**

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## PREFACE

This text is a detailed version of material presented by both of us in seminars and lectures in the theory group of this department. Except for parts of Chapters 9 and 10 the material has also been covered in a series of seminars by one of us (M.-K.) in the Department of Physics of the University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia, in August and September 1985 and in the Department of Physics of Shanxi University, Taiyuan, China, in March and April 1987. The interest and criticism of the audiences at these departments and, in particular, the support and enthusiasm of Professor A.W. Thomas (Adelaide) and Professor Zhang Jian-zu (Taiyuan) are gratefully acknowledged.

The text was compiled with the belief that the majority of potential readers is more interested in actually using or applying supersymmetry in some model theory than in painstakingly rediscovering the results of others for themselves. It seemed plausible, therefore, to revise various relevant concepts and in particular, to include the proof or verification of almost every formula. In this way the reader can select the problems he wants to tackle himself, compare his solutions with the calculations given here, and thus gain the confidence in his own calculations which he needs for his discussions of supersymmetry in other contexts. It has been our experience that (except for the last two chapters) the material presented here can be covered in a one-semester course for graduate or post graduate students with some knowledge of field theory.

In compiling this text we have, of course, used previous reviews. The choice of our sequence of topics was motivated by the lecture notes of Legovini<sup>1</sup>. Standard texts which we have consulted are the monograph by Wess and Bagger<sup>2</sup> and the review by Fayet and Ferrara<sup>3</sup>. For the detailed treatment of the on-shell Wess-Zumino model we consulted the lecture notes of de Roo<sup>4</sup>. In the text we do not discuss any experimental signatures of supersymmetry. For an introduction into this topic we refer to articles by Haber and Kane<sup>5,6</sup>; further details can be found in the Proceedings of the Thirteenth SLAC Summer Institute on Particle Physics<sup>7</sup> and in the reviews by Nilles<sup>8</sup> and Dragon, Ellwanger and Schmidt<sup>9</sup>. As further general references we refer to the nontechnical review by Wess<sup>10</sup>, to a very brief review of topics covered here by Campbell and Fogleman<sup>11</sup> and to the lectures of Wess<sup>12</sup>, Ferrara<sup>13</sup> and Witten<sup>14</sup>. A more advanced text is the book by Gates, Grisaru, Rocek and Siegel<sup>15</sup>. The very readable review by Sohnius<sup>16</sup> appeared after completion of the first draft of our text. Meanwhile several other texts have been published, each, however, with its emphasis in a different direction. We refer here to the books by West<sup>17</sup>, Srivastava<sup>18</sup> and Freund<sup>19</sup>. For more specific topics we refer to the article by Salam and Strathdee<sup>20</sup> to the Proceedings of the 28th Scottish Universities' Summer School in Physics<sup>21</sup>, and to the Proceedings of the NATO Advanced Study Institute on Supersymmetry<sup>22</sup>. All considerations of this text refer to a four-dimensional Minkowski space. For the basic technicalities in the context of supersymmetric quantum mechanics we refer to the work by Cooper and Freedman<sup>23</sup>, whereas those of two-dimensional field theories can be found in reference 24.

## INTRODUCTION

Symmetries are of fundamental importance in the description of physical phenomena. In the realm of particle physics symmetries are believed to permit ultimately a classification of all observed particles. A fundamental symmetry of particle physics, which has been firmly established both theoretically and experimentally is that of the Poincaré group, i.e. of rotations and translations in four-dimensional Minkowski space. Besides this fundamental symmetry there are other so-called internal symmetries (such as the symmetry of the  $SU(3)$  flavour group) which have also been firmly established over the last few decades, although their manifestation in Nature is not exact. As is well known, the consistent search for more fundamental symmetries led to the development of nonabelian gauge theories and the spectacular experimental confirmation of several predictions of the latter in recent years.

In the course of time several attempts have been made to unify the space-time symmetry of the Poincaré group with the symmetry of some internal group. Such attempts have, however, been shown to be futile if the theory, which necessarily has to be a quantum field theory, is expected to satisfy certain basic requirements. In fact, the so-called "no-go" theorem of Coleman and Mandula<sup>25</sup> shows that if one makes the plausible assumptions of locality, causality, positivity of energy and finiteness

of the number of particles (and one more technical assumption) the invariance group of the theory can at best be the direct product of the Poincaré group and a compact (internal) group, and this therefore does not offer a genuine unification of one group with the other.

Now the generators of the Poincaré group satisfy well known commutation relations, and Noether's theorem relates these to conserved currents. In their turn the conserved currents are functions of relativistic fields. The commutation relations of the field operators which quantize these fields are therefore directly related to those of the generators. It was realized by Wess and Zumino<sup>26,27</sup> that if one allows also anticommutation relations of generators of supersymmetry transformations which transform bosons into fermions and vice versa, then the unification of the space-time symmetries of the Poincaré group with this internal symmetry can be achieved. The formal proof of this discovery, i.e. the proof that anticommuting generators which respect the other assumptions of the theorem of Coleman and Mandula<sup>25</sup> do exist, was established by Haag, Lopuszanski and Sohnius<sup>28</sup>.

Supersymmetry thus arises as a symmetry which combines bosons and fermions in the same representation or multiplet of the enlarged group which encompasses both the transformations of the Poincaré group and the appropriate supersymmetry transformations. Thus every bosonic particle must have a fermionic partner and vice versa. In view of the fact that such a spectrum of particles is not compatible with observation, supersymmetry must be badly broken at the level of presently available energies. Clearly only experimental observation can decide whether supersymmetry is indeed inherent in Nature. It can be argued that one of the most immediate ways to observe evidence

of supersymmetry is to see if there is a missing energy and momentum in the final  $e^+e^-$  spectrum of the reaction

$$e^+ + e^- \longrightarrow \tilde{\gamma} \longrightarrow \tilde{e}^+ + \tilde{e}^- \longrightarrow e^+ + e^- + \tilde{\gamma} + \tilde{\gamma}$$

where  $\tilde{e}^+$ ,  $\tilde{e}^-$  and  $\tilde{\gamma}$  are the supersymmetry partners of  $e^+$ ,  $e^-$  and  $\gamma$  respectively. If there is such a missing energy and momentum it could be that carried away by the neutral photinos  $\tilde{\gamma}$  (charged supersymmetry particles at energies presently available would have been detected long ago). Since supersymmetry must be broken, the photinos  $\tilde{\gamma}$  would not be massless.

However, supersymmetry does not only open the possibility of a much more complex spectrum of particles than heretofore envisaged; supersymmetry also has some intriguing theoretical consequences which could make it a desirable symmetry. It is well known that a realistic quantum field theory in the traditional sense is plagued by the problem of ultraviolet divergences and the consequent necessity of renormalization. Supersymmetry, however, provides a mechanism for the cancellation of such divergences in view of the same number of bosonic and fermionic degrees of freedom in each particle multiplet. Clearly such a built-in cancellation of divergent terms is a highly desirable feature of a quantum field theory.

In Chapter 1 we begin with a recapitulation of basic aspects of the Lorentz group, including a discussion of Casimir operators and the classification of representations in terms of their eigenvalues. We then consider the group  $SL(2, C)$  and its basic representations, i.e. the self-representation and the complex conjugate self-representation. The elements of the appropriate representations spaces are the undotted and dotted Weyl spinors. In view of the importance of Weyl spinors throughout the



entire text, we consider these here in more detail than is generally done in the literature. We then introduce the concept of Grassmann number and perform some basic manipulations involving Weyl spinors, thereby deriving a number of useful formulae. In the subsequent section the connection between  $SL(2, \mathbb{C})$  and the proper orthochronous Lorentz group is established. It is then natural to discuss four-component Dirac spinors and the Weyl representation. The connection with two-component Weyl spinors is obtained by introducing four-component Majorana spinors. Then again various formulae are derived which are useful in later calculations.

Chapter 2 begins with a discussion of the "no-go" theorems of Coleman and Mandula<sup>25</sup> and Haag, Lopuszanski and Sohnius<sup>28</sup>. The latter leads to a consideration of graded Lie algebras which we approach in successive steps by defining first the characteristics of a Lie algebra, then those of a graded algebra and finally those of a graded Lie algebra, i.e. the properties of grading, supersymmetrization and generalized Jacobi identities. As an example we calculate the graded Lie algebra of the algebra  $su(2, \mathbb{C})$ . The final section of Chapter 2 deals with graded matrices and their properties.

Chapter 3 deals with the grading, i.e. supersymmetric extension of the Poincaré algebra. We demonstrate explicitly that for the grading chosen all possible Jacobi identities are satisfied. Having established the algebra of the Super-Poincaré group with the fermionic generators in the Dirac four-component form, we then decompose it into the appropriate relations of the Weyl two-component method.

In Chapter 4 we use the method of Casimir operators to classify the irreducible representations of the Super-Poincaré algebra, and it is shown that supersymmetry implies an equal number of bosonic and fermionic degrees of

freedom.

Chapter 5 deals with the most immediate field theoretical realization of the Super-Poincaré algebra, the Wess-Zumino model, which is a field theory involving a scalar field, a pseudoscalar field and one spinor field, all with the same mass. We demonstrate by explicit calculation that the spinor charges of the theory, considered as linear operators in Fock space, satisfy the commutation and anticommutation relations of the Super-Poincaré algebra.

In Chapter 6 we introduce the concepts of superspace and superfields, and define differentiation with respect to Grassmann numbers. Then three different but related operators are constructed which describe three different but equivalent actions of the supersymmetry group on functions in superspace. These operators define three different types of superfields. By considering infinitesimal supersymmetry transformations we obtain the corresponding three differential operator representations of the fermionic generators of the Super-Poincaré group. Then covariant derivatives are introduced as a prerequisite for the construction of manifestly supersymmetric action integrals. These covariant derivatives also permit the definition of projection operators. The search for irreducible representations of the Super-Poincaré algebra then becomes a search for solutions of constraint equations expressed in terms of these projection operators. The final section of Chapter 6 is devoted to the derivation of the explicit supersymmetry transformations of the component fields of the supermultiplet. In this context it is seen that the highest order component field always transforms into a total Minkowski derivative and thus is a candidate for a supersymmetric Lagrangian density.

In Chapter 7 we begin with an investigation of the constraint equations which define left-handed and right-

handed chiral superfields (also known as scalar superfields). Then vector superfields are defined by an appropriate constraint equation, and the supersymmetric generalization of the abelian gauge transformation is discussed. Finally left-handed and right-handed spinor superfields are discussed which represent the components of the supersymmetric field strength for an arbitrary vector superfield.

Chapter 8 deals with the construction of supersymmetric action integrals. We begin with the definition of integration over Grassmann numbers. Then Lagrangians are constructed from scalar superfields and from vector superfields (i.e. the supersymmetric field strength). The case of the former is shown to contain the Wess-Zumino model as a special case, whereas the case of the latter yields the supersymmetric generalization of the pure Maxwell theory (i.e. with no interaction with matter fields) which contains in addition to the massless vector field also the massless spinor field of the photino.

Chapter 9 deals with the spontaneous breaking of supersymmetry. For the convenience of discussions the concept of superpotential is introduced. In view of the necessity of evaluating action integrals over superspace an equivalent and convenient Grassmann projection technique is developed. Some general aspects of spontaneous symmetry breaking are then discussed and, in particular, the Goldstone theorem is established for the general case of the breaking of supersymmetry or some other symmetry. Finally the O'Raifeartaigh model, which is a specific theory involving three scalar superfields, is considered and the spectrum resulting from the spontaneous breaking of supersymmetry is investigated. In this case supersymmetry breaking results from the nonvanishing vacuum expectation value of some auxiliary field of a superfield.

Finally, in Chapter 10, we consider supersymmetric gauge theories. Introducing first global and local  $U(1)$  gauge transformations of scalar superfields and the corresponding supersymmetric version of minimal coupling, we consider super quantum electrodynamics. We then investigate the Fayet-Iliopoulos mechanism of spontaneous breaking of supersymmetry in which the latter results from the nonvanishing vacuum expectation value of the highest order component field of a vector superfield. The last section contains a brief introduction to nonabelian gauge transformations for superfields with the appropriate tensorial transformation properties.

# CONTENTS

<u>Preface</u>	v
<u>Introduction</u>	xi
 1 <u>Lorentz Group, Poincaré Group, <math>SL(2,C)</math>, Dirac and Majorana Spinors</u>	
1.1 The Lorentz Group	1
1.2 The Poincaré Group	20
1.3 $SL(2,C)$ , Dotted and Undotted Indices	32
1.3.1 Spinor Algebra	32
1.3.2 Calculations with Spinors	52
1.3.3 Connection between $SL(2,C)$ and $L_+^\uparrow$	58
1.3.4 The Fierz-Reordering Formula	72
1.3.5 Further Calculations with Spinors	73
1.3.6 Higher Order Weyl Spinors and their Representations	92
1.4 Dirac and Majorana Spinors	100
1.4.1 The Weyl Basis or Chiral Representation	103
1.4.2 The Canonical Basis or Dirac Representation	113
1.4.3 The Majorana Representation	118
1.4.4 Charge Conjugation, Dirac and Weyl Representations	126
1.4.5 Majorana Spinors	138
1.4.6 Calculations with Dirac Spinors	141
1.4.7 Calculations with Majorana Spinors	145

<b>2</b>	<b><u>No-go Theorems and Graded Lie Algebras</u></b>	
2.1	The Coleman-Mandula Theorem and the Haag-Lopuszanski-Sohnius Theorem	149
2.2	Graded Lie Algebras	153
2.2.1	Lie Algebras	153
2.2.2	Graded Algebras	155
2.2.3	Graded Lie Algebras	156
2.3	The Graded Lie Algebra of the Group $SU(2,C)$	158
2.4	$Z_2$ Graded Lie Algebras	167
2.5	Graded Matrices	179
<b>3</b>	<b><u>The Supersymmetric Extension of the Poincare Algebra</u></b>	
3.1	The Supersymmetric Extension of the Poincaré Algebra in the Four-Component Dirac Formulation	189
3.2	The Supersymmetric Extension of the Poincaré Algebra in the Two-Component Weyl Formulation	208
<b>4</b>	<b><u>Representations of the Super-Poincaré Algebra</u></b>	
4.1	Casimir Operators	210
4.2	Classification of Irreducible Representations	222
4.2.1	$N = 1$ Supersymmetry	222
4.2.2	$N > 1$ Supersymmetry	233
<b>5</b>	<b><u>The Wess-Zumino Model</u></b>	
5.1	The Lagrangian and the Equations of Motion	239
5.2	Symmetries	242
5.3	Plane Wave Expansions	251
5.4	Projection Operators	265
5.5	Anticommutation Relations	271
5.6	The Energy-Momentum Operator of the Wess-Zumino Model	288
5.6.1	The Hamilton Operator	291

5.6.2	The Three-Momentum $P_i$	300
5.7	Generators of Infinitesimal Supersymmetry Transformations	304
6	<u>Superspace Formalism and Superfields</u>	
6.1	Superspace	315
6.2	Differentiation with respect to Grassmann Numbers	320
6.3	Supersymmetry Transformations in the Weyl Formalism	326
6.3.1	Finite Supersymmetry Transformations	326
6.3.2	Infinitesimal Supersymmetry Transformations and Differential Operator Representations of the Generators	336
6.4	Consistency with the Majorana Formalism	346
6.5	Covariant Derivatives	349
6.6	Projection Operators	361
6.7	Constraints	372
6.8	Transformation Properties of Component Fields	373
7	<u>Constrained Superfields and Supermultiplets</u>	
7.1	Chiral Superfields	388
7.2	Vector Superfields and Generalized Gauge Transformations	409
7.3	The Supersymmetric Field Strength	418
8	<u>Supersymmetric Lagrangians</u>	
8.1	Integration with respect to Grassmann Numbers	433
8.2	Lagrangians and Actions	441
8.2.1	Construction of Lagrangians from Scalar Superfields	441
8.2.2	Construction of Lagrangians from Vector Superfields	455

9	<u>Spontaneous Breaking of Supersymmetry</u>	
9.1	The Superpotential	469
9.2	Projection Technique	476
9.3	Spontaneous Symmetry Breaking	501
9.3.1	The Goldstone Theorem	506
9.3.2	Remarks on the Wess-Zumino Model	510
9.4	The O'Raifeartaigh Model	511
9.4.1	Spontaneous Breaking of Supersymmetry in the O'Raifeartaigh Model	511
9.4.2	The Mass Spectrum of the O'Raifeartaigh Model	519
10	<u>Supersymmetric Gauge Theories</u>	
10.1	Minimal Coupling	530
10.2	Super Quantum Electrodynamics	541
10.3	The Fayet-Iliopoulos Model	548
10.4	Supersymmetric Nonabelian Gauge Theory	564
	<u>References</u>	577
	<u>Index</u>	583



## C H A P T E R 1

LORENTZ GROUP, POINCARÉ GROUP,  $SL(2, C)$ , DIRAC AND MAJORANA  
SPINORS1.1 The Lorentz Group<sup>a</sup>

A point in the space-time manifold is denoted by  $(x^\mu)$  =  $(x^0, x^1, x^2, x^3)$  where  $x^0 = t$  and  $x^1, x^2, x^3$  are the space components of the four-vector  $x^\mu$ . The laws of physics are invariant under the Lorentz group. Transformations of this group are linear transformations acting on four-vectors

$$x'^\mu = \Lambda^\mu_\nu x^\nu \quad (1.1)$$

leaving the quadratic form

$$\begin{aligned} x^2 &= x^\mu x_\mu \\ &= \eta_{\mu\nu} x^\mu x^\nu \\ &= (x^0)^2 - (\vec{x})^2 \end{aligned} \quad (1.2)$$

invariant, i.e.

a Sections 1.1 and 1.2 serve mainly the purpose of completeness, to define notation and to recollect some formulae which will be needed later in the text. The reader familiar with Sections 1.1 and 1.2 could start immediately with Section 1.3 .