

Connection of Flat Vector Bundles

By AKIRA ASADA

Department of Mathematics, Faculty of Science,
Shinshu University

(Received Sept. 30, 1967)

Introduction. A flat vector bundle over a smooth manifold X is, by definition, a bundle which admits a connection with curvature 0. It is a vector bundle induced from a representation of $\pi_1(X)$. (Asada [1], Nomizu [8]). Moreover, we can prove: “A vector bundle which is induced from a representation of $\pi_1(X)$ is topologically trivial if and only if it admits a connection form $\{\theta_U\}$ such that $\theta_U = \theta|_U$, where θ is a global matrix valued form on X and $d\theta + \theta \wedge \theta = 0$ ”. (This theorem is essentially proved by Röhrl in his study of Riemann-Hilbert’s problem. (Röhrl [9], Gérard [4])). On the other hand, any connection form θ with curvature 0 of the trivial bundle ε^n satisfies $d\theta + \theta \wedge \theta = 0$ and this θ corresponds to a (unique) class $\lambda = \lambda(\theta)$ of $\text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), GL(n, F))$. ($F = \mathbb{R}$ or \mathbb{C}). If $\xi(\lambda)$ is the bundle induced from λ , then we have

$$\ker. D \text{ in } C^0(X, \varepsilon^n) \simeq \ker. d \text{ in } C^0(X, \xi),$$

where $D = d + \theta$ and $C^0(X, \xi)$ means the sheaf of germs of smooth cross-sections of ξ .

In this paper, we prove these theorems together with their relations between the representative functions of X . Their analogy for the differentiably trivial holomorphic vector bundles are also stated. In the last paragraph, we also prove “ $\chi(\theta)$ belongs in $\text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), U(n))$ if and only if there exists a positive definite matrix valued smooth functions A on X such that

$$A\theta + (A\theta)^* = dA,$$

where B^* means \overline{B}^T ”. This theorem has some relations to the theorem of Fuchs.

§ 1. An exact sequence.

We start from the following two lemmas.

Lemma 1. Let f be a matrix valued function and θ a matrix valued 1-form. Then the equation

$$(1) \quad df = f\theta, \text{ (resp. } df = \theta f),$$

has a local solution if and only if

$$(2) \quad d\theta + \theta \wedge \theta = 0,$$

and this solution is unique up to the multiple of constant matrices.

Lemma 2. *If the equation (1) is given on a simply connected manifold M , then (1) has a global solution on M . Moreover, we have*

$$(3) \quad \det. f(x) \neq 0 \text{ for all } x \in M \text{ if and only if } \det. f(y) \neq 0 \text{ for some } y \in M.$$

Lemma 1 follows from Frobenius' theorem (Cartan [3] chap. 10). Moreover, setting

$$\theta = \sum_i h_i dx_i,$$

f is given by

$$f = \hat{\int} (1 + h_i dx_i), \text{ (} i \text{ is arbitrary).}$$

Here $\hat{\int} (1 + Adt)$ means the product integral (Sasaki [10], § 23). Then we have lemma 2.

On X , we set

$GL(n, \mathbf{F})_t$: the sheaf of germs of constant $GL(n, \mathbf{F})$ -valued functions.

$GL(n, \mathbf{F})_d$: the sheaf of germs of smooth $GL(n, \mathbf{F})$ -valued functions.

\mathfrak{M} : the sheaf of germs of smooth $GL(n, \mathbf{F})$ -valued 1-forms which satisfy (2).

We note that $H^1(X, GL(n, \mathbf{F})_t)$ and $H^1(X, GL(n, \mathbf{F})_d)$ are the sets of equivalence classes of flat vector bundles and differentiable vector bundles respectively. (Hirzebruch [6] § 3).

For these sheaves, we obtain the following theorem by lemma 1.

Theorem 1. *On X , we have the following exact sequence.*

$$\begin{aligned} H^0(X, GL(n, \mathbf{F})_d) &\xrightarrow{m} H^0(X, \mathfrak{M}) \xrightarrow{\delta} H^1(X, GL(n, \mathbf{F})_t) \longrightarrow \\ &\xrightarrow{i} H^1(X, GL(n, \mathbf{F})_d), \end{aligned}$$

Here $m(f) = f^{-1}df$, $\delta(\theta)_{UV} = h_U h_V^{-1}$ where $h_U^{-1}dh_U = \theta|_U$. Moreover, we get

$$\begin{aligned} \delta(\theta) &= \delta(\theta') \text{ if and only if} \\ \theta' &= f^{-1}\theta f + f^{-1}df, \quad f \in H^0(X, GL(n, \mathbf{F})_d). \end{aligned}$$

Note. If X is a complex manifold, then by Koszul-Malgrange's theorem (Koszul-Malgrange [7]), we have the following exact sequence.

$$\begin{aligned} H^0(X, GL(n, \mathbf{C})_d) &\xrightarrow{m''} H^0(X, \mathfrak{M}^{0,1}) \xrightarrow{\delta''} H^1(X, GL(n, \mathbf{C})_o) \longrightarrow \\ &\xrightarrow{i} H^1(X, GL(n, \mathbf{C})_d). \end{aligned}$$

Here $GL(n, \mathbb{C})_\omega$ is the sheaf of germs of holomorphic sections of $GL(n, \mathbb{C})$, $\mathfrak{M}^{0,1}$ is the sheaf of germs of matrix valued $(0, 1)$ -type forms θ such that $\bar{\partial}\theta + \theta \wedge \theta = 0$ and $m''(f) = f^{-1}\bar{\partial}f$.

We denote the universal covering space of X by \tilde{X} . The projection from \tilde{X} to X is denoted by p . Then by lemma 2, we get

$$p^*(\theta) = h^{-1}dh, \quad \theta \in H^0(X, \mathfrak{M}).$$

For a matrix valued function f on X , we set $f^\sigma(x) = f(\sigma^{-1}x)$, $\sigma \in \pi_1(X)$. Then we may set

$$h^\sigma = \chi_\sigma h, \quad \chi \text{ is a homomorphism from } \pi_1(X) \text{ into } GL(n, \mathbb{F}),$$

because $p^*(\theta)$ is invariant under the operation of $\pi_1(X)$. And by the uniqueness of h , the equivalence class of χ is determined by θ . Moreover, we obtain

Lemma 3. $\{g \mid g^\sigma = \chi_\sigma g, \text{ } g \text{ is a smooth matrix valued function on } X\}$ forms a left \mathbb{F} -right $\pi^*(H^0(X, \mathfrak{gl}(n, \mathbb{F})_d))$ -modul. Here $\pi^*(H^0(X, \mathfrak{gl}(n, \mathbb{F})_d))$ means the ring of all smooth matrix valued functions on X which are invariant under the operations of the elements of $\pi_1(X)$.

Lemma 4. χ becomes the characteristic homomorphism of a bundle in i -kernel if and only if there exists a $GL(n, \mathbb{F})$ -valued smooth function h such that

$$(4) \quad h^\sigma = \chi_\sigma h.$$

Note. Since the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccc} H^1(X, GL(n, \mathbb{F})_d) & \xrightarrow{i} & H^1(X, GL(n, \mathbb{F})_d) \\ & \searrow i & \downarrow \simeq \\ & & H^1(X, GL(n, \mathbb{F})_c) \end{array}$$

is commutative, if there exists a $GL(n, \mathbb{F})$ -valued continuous function h' which satisfies (4), then there exists a smooth h which satisfies (4). Here $GL(n, \mathbb{F})_c$ means the sheaf of germs of continuous $GL(n, \mathbb{F})$ -valued functions.

By theorem 1 and lemma 4, we obtain (cf. Gérard [4], Röhl [9]),

Theorem 2. *The following conditions are equivalent :*

- (i) *A flat vector bundle ξ is differentially trivial.*
- (ii) *ξ has a connection form $\{\theta_U\}$ such that $\theta_U = \theta|_U$, where θ belongs in $H^0(X, \mathfrak{M})$.*
- (iii) *There exists a $GL(n, \mathbb{F})$ -valued function h on X which satisfies (4), where $\chi \in \text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), GL(n, \mathbb{F}))$ is the characteristic homomorphism of ξ . (Steenrod [11], § 13).*

Note. Similarly, if X is a complex manifold and ξ is a holomorphic vector bundle on X , then ξ is differentially trivial if and only if ξ has a connection form $\{\theta_U\}$ such that $\{\theta_U^{0,1}\} = \{\theta^{0,1}|_U\}$, where $\theta^{0,1}$ belongs in $H^0(X, \mathfrak{M}^{0,1})$. Moreover,

by Grauert's theorem (Grauert [5]), if X is a Stein manifold, then we may write

$$p^*(\theta^{0,1}) = h^{-1}\bar{\partial}h, \quad \theta^{0,1} \in H^0(X, \mathfrak{M}^{0,1}).$$

Here h satisfies

$$h^\sigma = \chi_\sigma h, \quad \bar{\partial}\chi_\sigma = 0, \quad \chi_{\sigma\tau} = \chi_\sigma^\tau \chi_\tau,$$

and since $h^{-1}\bar{\partial}h = h'^{-1}\bar{\partial}h'$ implies $h' = gh$, $\bar{\partial}g = 0$, we may consider

$$\{\chi_\sigma\} \sim \{\chi_{\sigma'}\} \text{ if and only if } \chi_{\sigma'} = g^\sigma \chi_\sigma g^{-1}, \quad \bar{\partial}g = 0.$$

Hence we may consider $\{\chi_\sigma\}$ to be an element of $H^1(\pi_1(X), GL(n, C_\omega(\tilde{X})))$. Here $C_\omega(\tilde{X})$ means the ring of holomorphic functions on X .

§ 2. Elliptic complexes associated with ε^n .

If ε^n is the n -dimensional trivial vector bundle over X then $\theta \in H^0(X, \mathfrak{M})$ becomes its connection form with curvature 0 and the converse is also true. Hence setting

$$D\varphi = D_\theta\varphi = (d + \theta)\varphi,$$

we have the following sequence. Here $C^p(X, \varepsilon^n) \simeq C^p(X) \otimes F^n$ is the group of smooth ε^n -valued p -forms on X for any p , ($p \geq 0$), and $m = \dim X$.

$$(5) \quad C^0(X, \varepsilon^n) \xrightarrow{D} C^1(X, \varepsilon^n) \xrightarrow{D} \cdots \xrightarrow{D} C^m(X, \varepsilon^n).$$

Since $DD = d\theta + \theta \wedge \theta$ is equal to 0 and the symbol sequence of (5) is exact (Asada [2]), (5) is an elliptic complex. Moreover we have

Lemma 5. *If $D\varphi$ is equal to 0 , then φ is written as $D\psi$ locally.*

Proof. We set $\theta|U = h_U^{-1}dh_U$. Then on U , $D\varphi$ is equal to 0 if and only if $d(h_U\varphi)$ is equal to 0 . Hence by Poincaré's lemma, we may set (with suitable U)

$$h_U\varphi = d\omega.$$

From this, we get $\varphi = D(h_U^{-1}\omega)$, because $\theta|U = h_U^{-1}dh_U$.

By lemma 5, we have

$$(6) \quad B_\theta^p(X, \varepsilon^n)/DC^{p-1}(X, \varepsilon^n) \simeq H^p(X, B_\theta^0(X, \varepsilon^n)).$$

Here $B_\theta^p(X, \varepsilon^n)$ is $\{\varphi \mid \varphi \in C^p(X, \varepsilon^n), D\varphi = 0\}$.

On the other hand, if ξ is a flat vector bundle, then we obtain the following elliptic complex

$$(7) \quad C^0(X, \xi) \xrightarrow{d} C^1(X, \xi) \xrightarrow{d} \cdots \xrightarrow{d} C^m(X, \xi).$$

If ξ is in δ -image (i.e. in i -kernel), then setting $\xi = \delta(\theta)$, we get the following commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 C^0(X, \xi) & \xrightarrow{d} & C^1(X, \xi) & \xrightarrow{d} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{d} & C^m(X, \xi) \\
 h^\# \uparrow & & h^\# \uparrow & & & & h^\# \uparrow \\
 C^0(X, \varepsilon^n) & \xrightarrow{D} & C^1(X, \varepsilon^n) & \xrightarrow{D} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{D} & C^m(X, \varepsilon^n).
 \end{array}$$

Here $h^*(\varphi) = \{h_U \varphi\}$, where $h_U^{-1}dh_U = \theta|_U$. By this diagram, we have

Theorem 3. $B_\theta^0(X, \varepsilon^n)$ is isomorphic to $B^0(X, \xi)$, where $B^0(X, \xi)$ is $\{f \mid f \in C^0(X, \xi), df=0\}$. In general, we get

$$B^p(X, \xi)/dC^{p-1}(X, \xi) \simeq B_\theta^p(X, \varepsilon^n)/DC^{p-1}(X, \varepsilon^n).$$

Moreover, the elliptic complexes (5) and (7) are equivalent if $\xi = \delta(\theta)$.

Proof. We need only to prove the equivalence of (5) and (7) which follows from the commutativity of the diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 0 \rightarrow \pi^*(\xi) & \xrightarrow{\sigma(d)} & \pi^*(\xi \otimes T^*) & \xrightarrow{\sigma(d)} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{\sigma(d)} & \pi^*(\xi \otimes \Lambda^m T^*) \rightarrow 0 \\
 h^* \uparrow & & h^* \uparrow & & & & h^* \uparrow \\
 0 \rightarrow \pi^*(\varepsilon^n) & \xrightarrow{\sigma(D)} & \pi^*(\varepsilon^n \otimes T^*) & \xrightarrow{\sigma(D)} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{\sigma(D)} & \pi^*(\varepsilon^n \otimes \Lambda^m T^*) \rightarrow 0.
 \end{array}$$

Here $\sigma(d)$ and $\sigma(D)$ mean the symbols of d and D .

In general, if $i(\xi) = i(\xi')$, then setting $\xi = \{g_{UV}\}$, $\xi' = \{h_U(x)g_{UV}h_V(x)^{-1}\}$, we have the elliptic complexes

$$(8) \quad C^0(X, \xi') \xrightarrow{d} C^1(X, \xi') \xrightarrow{d} \cdots \xrightarrow{d} C^m(X, \xi'),$$

$$(9) \quad C^0(X, \xi) \xrightarrow{D} C^1(X, \xi) \xrightarrow{D} \cdots \xrightarrow{D} C^m(X, \xi),$$

where $D = d + \theta_U$, $\theta_U = h_U^{-1}dh_U$. Then since the diagrams

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 C^0(X, \xi') & \xrightarrow{d} & C^1(X, \xi') & \xrightarrow{d} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{d} & C^m(X, \xi') \\
 h^\# \uparrow & & h^\# \uparrow & & & & h^\# \uparrow \\
 C^0(X, \xi) & \xrightarrow{D} & C^1(X, \xi) & \xrightarrow{D} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{D} & C^m(X, \xi), \\
 \\
 0 \rightarrow \pi^*(\xi') & \xrightarrow{\sigma(d)} & \pi^*(\xi' \otimes T^*) & \xrightarrow{\sigma(d)} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{\sigma(d)} & \pi^*(\xi' \otimes \Lambda^m T^*) \rightarrow 0 \\
 h^* \uparrow & & h^* \uparrow & & & & h^* \uparrow \\
 0 \rightarrow \pi^*(\xi) & \xrightarrow{\sigma(D)} & \pi^*(\xi \otimes T^*) & \xrightarrow{\sigma(D)} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{\sigma(D)} & \pi^*(\xi \otimes \Lambda^m T^*) \rightarrow 0,
 \end{array}$$

are commutative, the elliptic complexes (8) and (9) are equivalent.

Note. Similarly, if ξ and ξ' are differentiably equivalent holomorphic bundles, then the elliptic complexes

$$\begin{array}{ccccccc}
 C^0(X, \xi') & \xrightarrow{\bar{\partial}} & C^{0,1}(X, \xi') & \xrightarrow{\bar{\partial}} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{\bar{\partial}} & C^{0,m}(X, \xi'), \\
 & & D'' & & D'' & & D'' \\
 C_0(X, \xi) & \xrightarrow{D''} & D^{0,1}(X, \xi) & \xrightarrow{D''} & \cdots & \xrightarrow{D''} & C^{0,m}(X, \xi),
 \end{array}$$

are equivalent each other. Here, setting $\xi' = \{h_U g_{UV} h_V^{-1}\}$, $\xi = \{g_{UV}\}$, D'' means $\bar{\partial} + h_U^{-1} \bar{\partial} h_U$, $2m = \dim X$ (i.e. $m =$ the complex dimension of X) and $C^{0,p}(X, \xi)$ is the group of smooth $(0, p)$ -type forms with coefficients in ξ .

§ 3 Bundles induced from the representation of $\pi_1(X)$ in $U(n)$.

Since $\pi_1(X)$ may not be a finite group in general, $\text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), U(n))$ (or $\text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), O(n))$) may be different from $\text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), GL(n, \mathbb{C}))$ (resp. $\text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), GL(n, \mathbb{R}))$). But since $U(n)$ is a subgroup of $GL(n, \mathbb{C})$, there is a map

$$\iota = \iota_U : \text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), U(n)) \rightarrow \text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), GL(n, \mathbb{C})).$$

In this §, we characterize these bundles ξ that belong to i -kernel and whose characteristic homomorphisms belong to ι -image.

Theorem 4. *The characteristic homomorphism of $\xi = \delta(\theta)$ belongs to ι -image if and only if there exists a positive definite matrix valued smooth function A on X such that*

$$(10) \quad A\theta + (A\theta)^* = dA.$$

Proof. If $\xi = \delta(\theta)$, then setting

$$p^*(\theta) = h^{-1}dh, \quad h^\sigma = \chi_\sigma h,$$

the characteristic homomorphism of ξ is the class of χ . If χ is in ι -image, then by lemma 4, we get

$$(11) \quad h^* = Ah^{-1}, \quad A^\sigma = A, \quad \sigma \in \pi_1(X).$$

By (11), A must be a function on X and as $A = h^*h$, A is a smooth positive definite matrix valued function. Furthermore, since $\theta^* = dh^*h^{*-1}$, we have

$$\theta^* = dAA^{-1} - A\theta A^{-1},$$

which is equivalent to (10). This proves the necessity.

On the other hand, if θ satisfies (10), then we obtain

$$(12) \quad h^* = Ah^{-1}C,$$

where C is a constant matrix and since $C = hA^{-1}h^*$, C is a positive definite matrix. Therefore we may set

$$(13) \quad C = BB^*, \quad B \text{ is a (constant) regular matrix.}$$

Using this B , we set $h' = B^{-1}h$. Then we have

$$h'^{-1}dh' = p^*(\theta), \quad (h')^\sigma = B^{-1}\chi_\sigma Bh',$$

and by (12), (13), we get

$$(h')^* = Ah^{-1}B, \quad ((h')^*)^\sigma = (h')^*(B^{-1}\chi_\sigma B)^{-1}.$$

Hence $(B^{-1}\lambda_\sigma B)^*$ is equal to $(B^{-1}\lambda_\sigma B)^{-1}$. This proves the sufficiency.

Corollary. *If $\xi = \delta(\theta)$ is a complex line bundle, then the characteristic homomorphism of ξ is induced from a representation of $\pi_1(X)$ in $U(1)$ if and only if*

$$(14) \quad \theta + \bar{\theta} = df,$$

where f is an arbitrary smooth real valued function on X .

Proof. Since $n = 1$, the condition (10) is rewritten as

$$\theta + \theta^* = A^{-1}dA = d\log A.$$

Then as $\theta^* = \bar{\theta}$, and $\log A$ is an arbitrary smooth function on X , we have the corollary.

Note. If $n = 1$, then $GL(1, \mathbf{C}) = \mathbf{R}^+ \times U(1)$, where \mathbf{R}^+ is the multiplicative group of all positive real numbers, and we can prove the characteristic homomorphism of $\xi = \delta(\varphi)$ belongs in $\iota_R(\text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), GL(1, \mathbf{R})))$ if and only if

$$(15) \quad \varphi g + \overline{g\varphi} = dg, \quad |g| = 1.$$

On the other hand, since we get

$$\ker. i = H^1(X, \mathbf{C})/i^*(H^1(X, \mathbf{Z})), \quad \text{if } n = 1,$$

Setting $\chi = \chi_1\chi_2$, $\chi_1 \in \text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), \mathbf{R}^+)$, $\chi_2 \in \text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), U(1))$, there are functions f_1, f_2 on X such that

$$f_1^\sigma = \chi_{1\sigma}f_1, \quad f_2^\sigma = \chi_{2\sigma}f_2, \quad f_1 \neq 0, \quad f_2 \neq 0 \text{ on } X,$$

if χ is a characteristic homomorphism of a bundle $\xi = \delta(\theta)$ in $\ker. i$. Hence we have

$$(16) \quad \begin{aligned} \theta &= p^{*-1}(d\log f_1) + p^{*-1}(d\log f_2) + d\log g, \\ g &\text{ is a smooth function on } X \text{ and } g \neq 0 \text{ on } X. \end{aligned}$$

Since $H^0(X, \mathfrak{M})$ is the group of all closed 1-forms on X , we have by (14), (15) and (16),

$$(17) \quad \omega = \varphi + \theta + df, \quad \omega \text{ is a closed 1-form on } X, \quad \varphi \text{ satisfies (15), } \theta \text{ satisfies (14).}$$

In the same way, we can prove

Theorem 5. *The characteristic homomorphism of $\xi = \delta(\theta)$ belongs to $\iota(\text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), O(n)))$ if and only if there exists a positive definite smooth matrix valued function A on X such that*

$$(18) \quad A\theta + {}^t(A\theta) = dA.$$

Example. We assume $X = C^1 - \{z_1, \dots, z_m\}$, then the characteristic homomorphism of $\delta(\theta)$ belongs in $\iota_U(\text{Hom}(\pi_1(X), U(1)))$ if

$$\theta = \sum_{i=1}^m \frac{\alpha_i}{z - z_i} + d \log f, \quad \alpha_i \text{ are real numbers.}$$

Similarly, the characteristic homomorphism of $\partial(\theta)$ belongs to $\epsilon_R (\text{Hom} (\pi_1 (X), GL (1, R)))$ if

$$\theta = \sum_{i=1}^m \frac{\sqrt{-1}\beta_i}{z - z_i} + d \log f, \quad \beta_i \text{ are real numbers.}$$

Hence θ has poles of order at most 1 on $\{z_1, \dots, z_m\}$ if there exist ρ_1, \dots, ρ_m such that

$$\lim_{z \rightarrow z_i} |z - z_i|^{\rho_i} f(z) = 0, \quad i = 1, \dots, m.$$

References

- [1]. ASADA, A. : Connection of topological vector bundles, Proc. J. Acad., 41 (1965), 919-922.
- [2]. ASADA, A. : Elliptic semi-complexes, J. Fac. Sci. Shinshu Univ., 2 (1967), 1-17.
- [3]. CARTAN, E. : *Leçons sur les invariants intégraux*, Paris, 1922.
- [4]. GÉRARD, R. : Le problème de Riemann-Hilbert sur une variété analytique complexe, C. R. Acad. Sc. Paris, 264 (1967), 1133-1136.
- [5]. GRAUERT, H. : Holomorphe Funktionen mit Werten in komplexen Lieschen Gruppen, Math. Ann., 133 (1957), 450-472.
- [6]. HIRZEBRUCH, F. : *Neue topologische Methoden in der algebraischen Geometrie*, Berlin, 1956.
- [7]. KOSZUL, J. L. -MALGRANGE, B. : Sur certaines structures fibrées complexes, Arkiv der Math., 9 (1958), 102-109.
- [8]. NOMIZU, K. : *Lie groups and differential geometry*, Tokyo, 1956.
- [9]. RÖHL, H. : Das Riemann-Hilbertsche Problem der Theorie der Linearen Differentialgleichungen, Math. Ann., 133 (1957), 1-25.
- [10]. SASAKI, S. : *Riemannian geometry* (in Japanese), Tokyo, 1957.
- [11]. STEENROD, N. E. : *The topology of fibre bundles*, Princeton, 1951.