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The deformation space of an associative submanifold Y^3 of a G_2 manifold (M^7, φ) becomes smooth after perturbing it by natural parameters; this corresponds to either allowing φ to vary, or allowing Y to move through pseudo-associative submanifolds (Y 's where a fixed rotation makes TY associative). Both cases are related by the gauge group of the bundle $T(M) \rightarrow M$. By this one can associate invariants to Y and (M, φ) by using gauge theories.

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