Thermodynamics of oscillating neutrinos

Luke Johns NASA Einstein Fellow UC Berkeley



Also see: Ehring et al., PRD (2023) Nagakura, PRL (2023)

Neutrino mass raises fundamental questions for particle physics.

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and statistical

Every neutrino is a superposition of wave packets:



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Schrödinger cat states



Rundle, Mills, Tilma, Samson, Everitt, PRA 2017







When neutrinos **forward scatter** on background particles, they acquire in-medium effective masses.



Neutrinos contribute to their own background. As a result, forward scattering changes oscillations in a nonlinear way.

Collective oscillations



Absorption and momentum-changing scattering cause **collisional decoherence**.

clowder *noun* : a group of cats

Merriam-Webster

Schrödinger's clowder







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Statistical mechanics of superpositions of particles



Quantum kinetic equation for density matrix $\rho(t, r, p)$:



Dolgov, SJNP (1981); Stodolsky, PRD (1987); Nötzold & Raffelt, NPB (1988); Pantaleone, PLB (1992); Sigl & Raffelt, NPB (1993); Raffelt, Sigl, & Stodolsky, PRL (1993); Raffelt & Sigl, AP (1993); Loreti & Balantekin, PRD (1994); Yamada, PRD (2000); Friedland & Lunardini, PRD (2003); Strack & Burrows, PRD (2005); Cardall, PRD (2008); Volpe, Väänänen, & Espinoza, PRD (2013); Vlasenko, Fuller, & Cirigliano, PRD (2014); Kartavtsev, Raffelt, & Vogel, PRD (2015); Stirner, Sigl, & Raffelt, JCAP (2018); Nagakura, PRD (2022); Johns, 2305.04916; plus many others Compare to climate modeling...



NOAA Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory

Without hydrodynamics, this field would not have gotten far.





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The environment

Classical: Particles bouncing off container walls. Blackbody radiation. *Quantum:* Decoherence (in the word's most common usage).

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* Small scales

Classical: Collisionless relaxation in galaxies & plasmas. Turbulence. *Quantum:* Mixing equilibration.

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Second law of thermodynamics

S is maximal at equilibrium, subject to conservation laws.

We then appeal to two physical principles: scale separation & ergodicity.

Equilibrium distribution of collisionless neutrino matter:

$$\rho_{\mathbf{p}}^{\mathrm{eq}} = \frac{1}{e^{\beta \left(H_{\mathbf{p}}^{\mathrm{eq}} - \mu_{\mathbf{p}}\right)} + 1}$$

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$\frac{\text{Third law of thermodynamics}}{\text{The unique } (S = 0) \text{ ground state:}}$ $\left(\rho_{\mathbf{p}}^{\text{eq}}\right)_{IJ} \xrightarrow{T \to 0} \begin{cases} \delta_{IJ} & \left(H_{\mathbf{p}}^{\text{eq}}\right)_{IJ} \leq \mu_{\mathbf{p}} \\ 0 & \left(H_{\mathbf{p}}^{\text{eq}}\right)_{IJ} > \mu_{\mathbf{p}} \end{cases}$

 $\frac{\text{First law of thermodynamics}}{\Delta U = W + Q}$ with W and Q appropriately defined.

$$\Delta U = \underbrace{\frac{1}{N_f} H_0 \Delta P_0 + \frac{1}{2} \vec{H} \cdot \Delta |\vec{P}| \hat{P}}_{= \frac{1}{N_f} P_0 + \frac{1}{2} \vec{P} \cdot \vec{\Lambda}} \underbrace{= \frac{Q^{\text{kin}}}{\sum Q^{\text{kin}}} + \frac{Q^{\text{kin}}}{\frac{1}{2} |\vec{H}| |\vec{P}| \Delta \left(\hat{H} \cdot \hat{P}\right)}_{= W}$$

Johns, 2306.14982

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From here it's easy to show that quantum-adiabatic effects (MSW, spectral swaps, MNR) are **adiabatic processes in the thermodynamic sense**.



Thermodynamics predicts the mean asymptotic distributions.

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Sawyer, PRL (2016); Chakraborty, Hansen, Izaguirre, & Raffelt, JCAP (2016); Dasgupta, Mirizzi, & Sen, JCAP (2017) [*figure*]; Izaguirre, Raffelt, & Tamborra, PRL (2017); Capozzi, Dasgupta, Lisi, Marrone, & Mirizzi, PRD (2017); Abbar & Duan, PRD (2018); Capozzi, Dasgupta, Mirizzi, Sen, & Sigl, PRL (2019); Martin, Yi, & Duan, PLB (2020); Johns, Nagakura, Fuller, & Burrows, PRD (2020a); Johns & Nagakura, PRD (2021); Nagakura, Burrows, Johns, & Fuller, PRD (2021); Morinaga, PRD (2022); Dasgupta, PRL (2022); & many others

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Non-collective neutrino oscillations

Work

The MSW effect

Wolfenstein, PRD (1978) Mikheyev & Smirnov, SJNP (1985) Bethe, PRL (1986)

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Heat (internal)

Kinematic decoherence

Nussinov, PLB (1976) Kayser, PRD (1981) Kiers, Nussinov, & Weiss, PRD (1996)

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Heat (external)

Collisional decoherence

Harris & Stodolsky, PLB (1978) Thomson, PRA (1992) Raffelt, Sigl, & Stodolsky, PRL (1993)

Collective neutrino oscillations

Work

MSW-like effects Spectral swaps. Matter-neutrino resonances.

Duan, Fuller, Carlson, & Qian, PRD (2006) Raffelt & Smirnov, PRD (2007) Malkus, Friedland, & McLaughlin, 1403.5797

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Heat (internal)

Collisionless instabilities Slow instabilities. Fast instabilities.

Kostelecký & Samuel, PLB (1993) Sawyer, PRD (2005) Duan, Fuller, & Qian, PRD (2006)

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HeatCollisional instabilities(external)Johns, PRL (2023)Xiong, Johns, Wu, & Duan, 2212.03750Liu, Zaizen, & Yamada, PRD (2023)

Local mixing equilibrium

 $\rho \longrightarrow \rho^{\mathrm{eq}}$

The miscidynamic equation

 $i\left(\partial_t + \hat{\mathbf{p}} \cdot \partial_{\mathbf{x}}\right) \rho^{\mathrm{eq}} = iC^{\mathrm{eq}}$

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What changes need to be made to current simulations?

(1) Distribution functions \longrightarrow Density matrices.

(2) Add off-diagonals to collision terms.

(3) Re-equilibrate ρ after each step.

Summary

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Main idea #2. We've outlined the thermodynamic theory of oscillating neutrinos. The primary equilibration mechanism is collisionless phase-space transfer.

Main idea #3. A transport theory — miscidynamics — follows from the assumption of local equilibrium. It might enable the accurate incorporation of neutrino mixing into simulations.