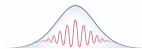


CLASSICAL APPROXIMATION OF QUANTUM MEAN-FIELD DYNAMICS

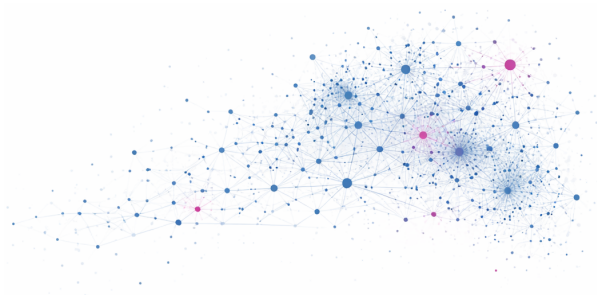
SRS Les Diablerets - August 31, 2026

Chiara Saffirio

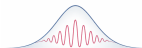
(University of Basel and University of Freiburg)



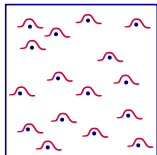
How can **simple macroscopic laws** emerge
from extremely **complex microscopic dynamics**?



DERIVATION OF EFFECTIVE EVOLUTION EQUATIONS

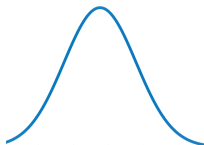


MICRO SCALE



Many-body
description

MACRO SCALE



PDE
Effective Equation

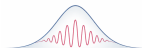


scaling limit

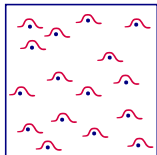
DERIVATION PROBLEM

(Hilbert's 6th problem)

DERIVATION OF EFFECTIVE EVOLUTION EQUATIONS

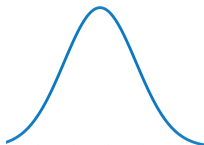


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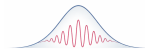


PDE
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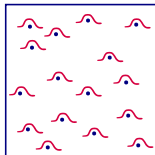


BOTTOM-UP AND TOP-DOWN APPROACHES

DERIVATION OF EFFECTIVE EVOLUTION EQUATIONS

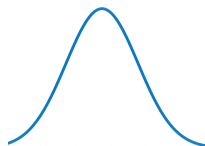


MICRO SCALE



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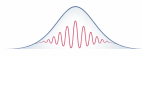


PDE
Effective Equation



BOTTOM-UP AND TOP-DOWN APPROACHES

QUANTITATIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE METHODS

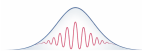


★ VLASOV EQUATION

$$\partial_t f + v \cdot \nabla_x f + E_f \cdot \nabla_v f = 0$$

astrophysics
plasma physics
semiconductor devices } *Coulomb*

MEAN-FIELD EFFECTIVE EQUATIONS: EXAMPLES



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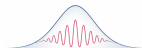
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$$i\varepsilon \partial_t \rho = [H_\rho, \rho]$$

large atoms and molecules
quantum chemistry
quantum Landau damping } *Coulomb / delta*

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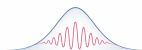
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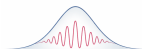
*superconductor
BEC-BCS cross-over* } *attractive interactions*

★ SCHRÖDINGER/DIRAC-MAXWELL

...

*relativistic
QED* } *screened Coulomb*

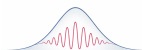
WHAT MAKES EFFECTIVE THEORIES WORK?



Many effective theories in physics are extremely successful, but rarely we understand *how* or *why* they work so well.

Mathematical physics tries to answer these questions

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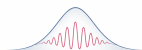


Many effective theories in physics are extremely successful, but rarely we understand *how* or *why* they work so well.

Mathematical physics tries to answer these questions

- ▶ quantitative estimates:
control on the accuracy and time of validity
- ▶ emergence of mechanisms:
correlations and interactions across scales reveal how emergent phenomena appear
- ▶ modeling:
from simplified structures to arbitrarily complex equations

WHAT MAKES EFFECTIVE THEORIES WORK?



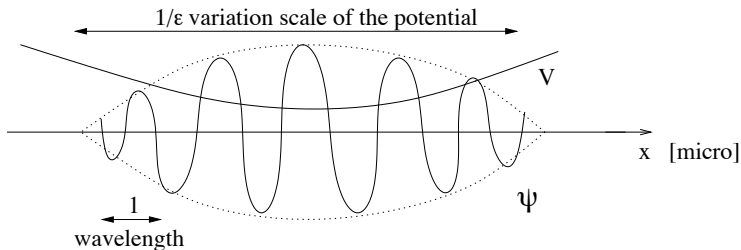
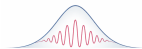
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Many effective equations arise when micro and macro scales separate.

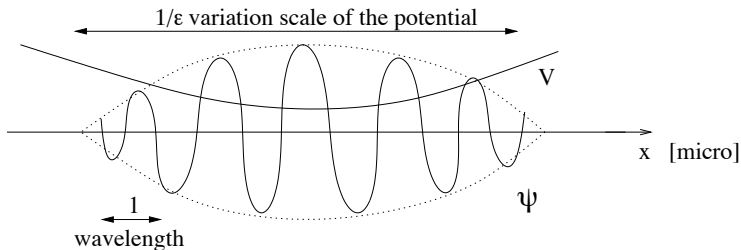
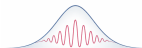
An important instance of this phenomenon appears in the *semiclassical regime*, where quantum dynamics develops *oscillations* at *small scale*.

FOCUS: SEMICLASSICAL REGIME



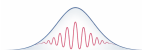
A quantum mechanical system is in the semiclassical regime whenever all the data live on a much bigger scale than the quantum wavelength

SCALE SEPARATION BETWEEN THE WAVELENGTH
AND ANY OTHER LENGTH SCALES



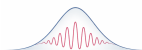
MATHEMATICAL DIFFICULTIES:

- ★ multiscale problem (coexistence of scales)
- ★ oscillations $\leftrightarrow$ correlations and/or cancellations
- ★ singular limit $\leftrightarrow i\epsilon \partial_t \psi = H\psi \implies \partial_t \psi = \frac{1}{i\epsilon} H\psi$



CLASSICAL MECHANICS

- ★ the state of a particle is a point in the phase space, i.e. $(x, v) \in \mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{R}^d$
- ★ observables are functions $f(x, v)$ on the phase space

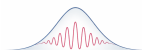


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- ★ the state of a particle is an element of a Hilbert space $\mathfrak{h}$
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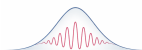
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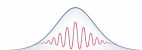
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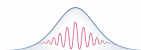
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$$f(x, v) \longleftrightarrow \rho_f := \text{Op}_\varepsilon^W(f)$$

A simple example:

$$f(x, v) = v^2 + x^2 \longleftrightarrow \rho_f = -\frac{\varepsilon^2}{2} \Delta + x^2$$



Theorem 1 (Egorov '69)

Let h be a smooth classical Hamiltonian, $H := \rho_h$ its Weyl quantization and $U(t) := e^{-itH/\varepsilon}$ be the corresponding quantum evolution.

If f is a smooth classical observable and ρ_f its Weyl quantization, then

$$U(t)^* \rho_f U(t) = \rho_{f \circ \Phi_t} + O(\varepsilon)$$

for fixed t , where Φ_t is the Hamiltonian flow generated by h .

Interpretation

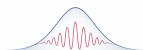
- ★ Classical observables evolve by transport along the Hamiltonian flow

$$f \mapsto f \circ \Phi_t$$

- ★ Quantum observables evolve by conjugation

$$\rho_f \mapsto U(t)^* \rho_f U(t)$$

- ★ Egorov's theorem $\Rightarrow$ these two evolutions agree up to an error of order ε .



The proof exploits the correspondence principle of quantum mechanics:

$$\frac{i}{\varepsilon} [\boldsymbol{\rho}_f, \boldsymbol{\rho}_g] \simeq \{f, g\}$$

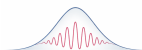
where $\{f, g\}$ denote the Poisson brackets between f and g .

Simple example:

$$\frac{i}{\varepsilon} [x_j, i\varepsilon \partial_{x_k}] = \{x_j, v_k\} = \delta_{j,k}$$

Moreover:

$$\left[\frac{x}{i\varepsilon}, \boldsymbol{\rho}_f \right] \simeq \{x, f\} = \nabla_v f \quad [\nabla, \boldsymbol{\rho}_f] \simeq \{-v, f\} = \nabla_x f$$



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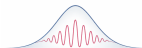
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HOW CLOSE ARE QUANTUM AND CLASSICAL DYNAMICS?

For which initial states?

On which time scales?

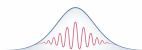


Pseudo-Differential Calculus + Fourier Integral Operators + PDEs

[C.S. '19-'20, Lafleche, C.S. '23-'24, Chong, Lafleche, C.S. '23-'24-'25]

- ▶ Quantized problem and topology
- ▶ Reduction to a stability problem in quantized form + error term
 - Unitary transformation (inspired by Bogoliubov transformation)
- ▶ Stability of solutions of the limiting PDE in a chosen topology
 - Correspondence principle of Quantum Mechanics
- ▶ Control on the error term (PDO and/or FIO)

A SIMPLE EXAMPLE



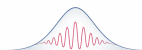
THE HARTREE EQUATION

$$i \varepsilon \partial_t \boldsymbol{\rho} = \left[-\frac{\varepsilon^2}{2} \Delta + V * \text{diag}(\boldsymbol{\rho}), \boldsymbol{\rho} \right]$$

THE VLASOV EQUATION

$$\partial_t f + v \cdot \nabla_x f + (\nabla V * \varrho_f) \cdot \nabla_v f = 0$$

[Narhofer, Sewell '81; Spohn '81; Lions, Paul '93; Figalli, Ligabò, Paul '14, ...]



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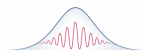
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WEYL QUANTIZATION

$$\rho_f(x, y) = (2\pi\varepsilon)^{-3} \int f\left(\frac{x+y}{2}, v\right) e^{iv \cdot \frac{(x-y)}{\varepsilon}} dv$$

A SIMPLE EXAMPLE



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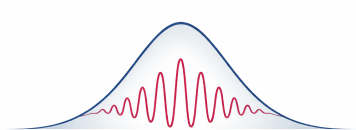
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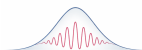
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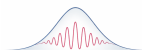
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WEYL QUANTIZED VLASOV EQUATION

$$i \varepsilon \partial_t \rho_f = \left[-\frac{\varepsilon^2}{2} \Delta, \rho_f \right] + A_{\rho_f}$$



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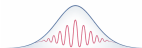
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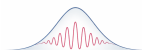
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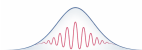
$$\|\rho - \rho_f\|_{\mathcal{L}^1} \quad \text{with} \quad \|\rho\|_{\mathcal{L}^p} = \varepsilon^{3/p} \text{tr} (|\rho|^p)^{1/p}$$



- ▶ Quantized problem and topology
- ▶ Reduction to a uniqueness problem in quantized form + error term
 - Unitary transformation (inspired by Bogoliubov transformation)

$$i\varepsilon \partial_t U(t) = H_{\rho} U(t) \quad i\varepsilon \partial_t \{U^*(t) (\rho - \rho_f) U(t)\} = \dots$$

Duhamel + trace norm



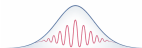
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- ▶ Uniqueness of solutions of the limiting PDE (Vlasov) in corresp. topology

$$\|f_1 - f_2\|_{L^1_{x,v}} \leq \|f_1^{\text{in}} - f_2^{\text{in}}\|_{L^1_{x,v}} e^{\Lambda(t)}$$



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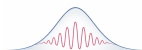
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- Correspondence principle of Quantum Mechanics

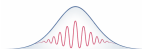
$$\|\rho - \rho_f\|_{\mathcal{L}^1} \leq \left(\|\rho^{\text{in}} - \rho_{f^{\text{in}}}\|_{\mathcal{L}^1} + \text{error term} \right) e^{\Lambda(t)}$$



- ▶ Quantized problem and topology
- ▶ Reduction to a uniqueness problem in quantized form + error term
 - Unitary transformation (inspired by Bogoliubov transformation)
- ▶ Uniqueness of solutions of the limiting PDE (Vlasov) in corresp. topology
 - Correspondence principle of Quantum Mechanics

$$\|\rho - \rho_f\|_{\mathcal{L}^1} \leq \left(\|\rho^{\text{in}} - \rho_{f^{\text{in}}}\|_{\mathcal{L}^1} + \text{error term} \right) e^{\Lambda(t)}$$

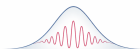
- ▶ Control on the error term (PDO and/or FIO)



THEOREM [Laflèche, C.S. '23; Chong, Laflèche, C.S. '23-'24]

Let ρ be a solution to the Hartree equation and ρ_f be the Weyl quantization of a solution f to the Vlasov equation with initial data ρ^{in} and f^{in} , respectively. Under assumptions on f^{in} , there exists $\Lambda(\cdot) \in C(\mathbb{R}; \mathbb{R}_+)$ such that

$$\|\rho - \rho_f\|_{\mathcal{L}^p} \leq \left(\|\rho^{\text{in}} - \rho_{f^{\text{in}}}\|_{\mathcal{L}^p} + \varepsilon \right) e^{\Lambda(t)}$$



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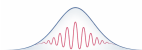
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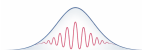
$$W_{2,\varepsilon}(\rho, f) \leq \left(W_{2,\varepsilon}(\rho^{\text{in}}, f^{\text{in}}) + \varepsilon \right) e^{\Lambda(t)}$$

$W_{2,\varepsilon}$ quantum Wasserstein distance [Golse, Mouhot, Paul '15]



CLASSICAL 2-WASSERSTEIN DISTANCE

$$W_2(f_1, f_2) = \left\{ \inf_{\gamma \in \Gamma(f_1, f_2)} \int |z_1 - z_2|^2 d\gamma(z_1, z_2) \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}}$$



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QUANTUM WASSERSTEIN PSEUDO-DISTANCE [Golse, Mouhot, Paul '15]

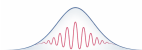
$$W_{2,\hbar}(f, \rho) = \left\{ \inf_{\gamma \in \Gamma(f, \rho)} \int \hbar^3 \text{tr} (\mathbf{c}_\hbar(z) \rho) dz \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}}$$

where $\mathbf{c}_\hbar$ is the operator acting on functions φ as

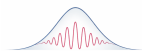
$$\mathbf{c}_\hbar(z) \varphi(y) = (|x - y|^2 + |v - (-i\hbar \nabla_y)|^2) \varphi(y)$$

with $z = (x, v) \in \mathbb{R}^{2d}$, and γ operator valued function such that

$$\hbar^3 \text{tr} (\gamma(z)) = f(z) \quad \int_{\mathbb{R}^6} \gamma(z) dz = \rho$$

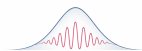


- ▶ constructive method for dynamical problems
 - time-dependent unitary transformation reminiscent of Bogoliubov transformation in many-body quantum mechanics
- ▶ control at the level of observables
 - low (*pure*) and high (*mixed*) regularity states
 - general initial data
- ▶ optimal error bounds
 - ε
- ▶ time dependence: problem- and data-dependent
 - dispersive properties
 - mixing properties (see quantum Landau damping [Smith '25])
- ▶ applications to other problems/areas



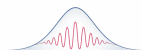
► MANY-BODY QUANTUM SYSTEMS

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- Dirac equation [Golse, Leopold, Mauser, Moeller, C.S. '26]



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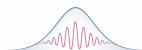
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► WEYL LAW

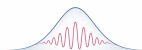
- [Benedikter et al. '25]
- [Cardenas '25]
- [Chong, Lafleche, C.S. '26]

► QUANTUM LANDAU DAMPING

- [You '24; Smith '25; Nguyen, You '26]



- ▶ More on the Dirac equation (decoherence)
- ▶ Mathematical theory of superconductivity (BCS–BEC cross-over)
- ▶ Collisional models
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THANKS!

