Updates on the relativistic nuclear field theory: Refining dynamical kernels of the nuclear response



Elena Litvinova



Western Michigan University



MICHIGAN STATE





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- Nuclear structure theory has strived for decades to achieve accurate computation of nuclear spectra, but this is still difficult
- We address this problem by developing the model-independent Equation of Motion (EOM) framework in the universal QFT language, quantifying fermionic correlation functions (FCFs)
- The theory (i) is transferrable across the energy scales, (ii) capable of identifying the bottlenecks of the existing nuclear structure approaches, and (iii) opens the door to spectroscopic accuracy
- In this formulation, dynamical interaction kernels of the FCF EOMs are the source of the richness of the nuclear wave functions in terms of their configuration complexity and the major ingredient for an accurate description with quantified uncertainties
- Benchmarks and predictions: selected highlights for nuclear excited states below m_{π}
- ★ Open problems

Exact "ab initio" (EOM) for the two-fermion correlation function with an unspecified NN interaction

 $R_{12,1'2'}(t-t') = -i\langle T(\bar{\psi}_1\psi_2)(t)(\bar{\psi}_{2'}\psi_{1'})(t')\rangle$

$$H = \sum_{12} \bar{\psi}_1 (-i\gamma \cdot \nabla + M)_{12} \psi_2 + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{1234} \bar{\psi}_1 \bar{\psi}_2 \bar{v}_{1234} \psi_4 \psi_3 + \dots = T + V^{(2)} + \dots$$
Bare (Relativistic) Hamiltonian

Particle-hole correlator two-time propagator, (response function):

EVALUATION): EOM: Bethe-Salpeter-(Dyson) Eq. (**)

 $R(\omega) = R^{(0)}(\omega) + R^{(0)}(\omega)F(\omega)R(\omega)$

Instantaneous term ("bosonic" mean field): Short-range correlations





Self-consistent mean field F⁽⁰⁾, where

 $\rho_{12,1'2'} = \delta_{22'}\rho_{11'} - i \lim_{t' \to t+0} R_{2'1,21'}(t-t')$ contains the full solution of (**) including the dynamical term!

Irreducible kernel (exact): in-medium "interaction"

In-medium scattering amplitude

spectra of excitations, decays, ...

$$F(t - t') = F^{(0)}\delta(t - t') + F^{(r)}(t - t')$$





E.L. & P. Schuck, PRC 100, 064320 (2019)

Language remarks

Ab initio...

- Ab initio = "from the beginning" (lat.), in science and engineering "from first principles"
- First-principle physics theory does not exist Even the Standard Model (SM) is an effective (field) theory:



~20 parameters: masses, coupling constants, etc.

Open questions (besides GR):

- ✤ What is the origin of the Higgs potential?





Higgs mechanism of mass generation

$$\mathcal{L} = (\partial_{\mu}\phi)^{\dagger}(\partial^{\mu}\phi) - V(\phi),$$
$$V(\phi) = \mu^{2}\phi^{\dagger}\phi + \lambda(\phi^{\dagger}\phi)^{2}$$

The Standard Model





- In Theoretical Physics: knowing the bare (vacuum) interaction between two particles, quantitatively describe the many-particle system
- * "Ab initio = UV-complete" as opposed to "effective"
- Interactions adjusted to many-particle systems (e.g., finite nuclei) are not ab initio but effective

Language remarks

The narratives (i) "There is an ab initio nuclear theory as opposed to "traditional" nuclear theory" (ii) There are "models" and there is "the theory"



- In Theoretical Physics: knowing the bare (vacuum) interaction between two particles, quantitatively describe the many-particle system
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Formulation of the theory and its implementation

* There is a long way from formulation to implementation. We can formulate an ab initio theory, but it is difficult to implement accurately. However, we still need an ab initio theory to constrain concrete implementations, e.g., for maintaining their algebraic structure.

• All "traditional" microscopic many-body models employing effective interactions can be derived ab initio and represent various approximations to the static and dynamical kernels of the same EOMs.

 Paraphrasing Steven Weinberg, saying "all non-renormalizable theories are as renormalizable as renormalizable theories", we find that "traditional" theories are as ab initio as ab initio theories :)

Linking the nucleon-nucleon (NN) interaction and the many-body theory



Dynamical kernels: bridging the scales

Quantum many-body problem in a nutshell: Direct EOM for G⁽ⁿ⁾ generates G⁽ⁿ⁺²⁾ in the (symmetric) dynamical kernels and further high-rank correlation functions (CFs); an equivalent of the BBGKY hierarchy or Schwinger-Dyson equations. N_{Equations} ~ N_{Particles} & Coupled or ?!!
 Non-perturbative solutions:

Cluster decomposition [QFT, S. Weinberg]

Leading at:

 $G^{(3)}$

 $G^{(4)}$



Nucl. Phys. A567, 78 (1994)

•\$•

-G^{_(pp)}

Exact mapping: particle-hole (2q) quasibound states

 $R^{(ph)}$

 \approx

Sound modes \overline{v} $R^{(ph)}$ \overline{v} \overline{v} $R^{(ph)}$ \overline{v} \overline{v} \overline{v} Quasiparticle-vibration coupling (qPVC) in nuclei. Cf. NFT

Diquarks in hadrons

Cf. C. Popovici, P. Watson, and H. Reinhardt [PRD83, 025013 (2011)]

Emergence of effective "bosons" (phonons, vibrations):

Beyond

weak

coupling:

Emergence of superfluidity:

Emergence of effective degrees of freedom at intermediate coupling



Can be treated in a unified way (superfluid theory): qPVC in nuclei, correlations in hadrons / matter / solid state

Emergent phonon vertices and propagators: calculable from the underlying H, which does not contain phonon degrees of freedom

"Ab-initio"

$$H = \sum_{12} h_{12} \psi_1^{\dagger} \psi_2 + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{1234} \bar{v}_{1234} \psi_1^{\dagger} \psi_2^{\dagger} \psi_4 \psi_3$$

"Effective" qPVC

$$H = \sum_{12} \tilde{h}_{12} \psi_1^{\dagger} \psi_2 + \sum_{\lambda \lambda'} \mathcal{W}_{\lambda \lambda'} Q_{\lambda}^{\dagger} Q_{\lambda'} + \sum_{12\lambda} \left[\Theta_{12}^{\lambda} \psi_1^{\dagger} Q_{\lambda}^{\dagger} \psi_2 + h.c. \right]$$

Cf. Nuclear Field Theory

R.A. Broglia, D. Bes, P.-F. Bortignon, R. Liotta, G. Colò, E. Vigezzi, F. Barranco, G. Potel, et al.

Cf.: The Standard Model elementary interaction vertices: boson-exchange interaction is the input:

$$\gamma, g, W^{\pm}, Z^0$$

E.L., P. Schuck, PRC 100, 064320 (2019) E.L., Y. Zhang, PRC 104, 044303 (2021)

"Ab-initio" qPVC in superfluid systems

Superfluid dynamical kernel: adding particle-number violating contributions Mapping on the qPVC in the canonical basis



Quasiparticle dynamical self-energy (matrix): normal and pairing phonons are unified



Bogoliubov transformation

E.L., Y. Zhang, PRC 104, 044303 (2021) Y. Zhang et al., PRC 105, 044326 (2022) Currently formulated in the HFB basis keeping 4x4 block matrix structure at finite temperature: S. Bhattacharjee, E.L., arXiv:2412.20751

Toward concrete implementations: the elefant(s) in the room



Nuclear response: toward a complete theory



Toward spectroscopically accurate theory: the relativistic EOM (REOM^{1,2,3})



- On each iteration, the complex configurations enforce fragmentation and spreading toward higher and lower energies
- Exp. Data: V.A. Erokhova et al., Bull. Rus. Acad. Phys. 67, 1636 (2003)
- RQTBA³ demonstrates an overall systematic improvement of the description of nuclear excited states as compared to RQTBA² in a broad energy range

E.L., P. Schuck, PRC 100, 064320 (2019)

Basis: relativistic mean field (P. Ring et al.)

A hierarchy of the

dynamical kernels:

Each elementary 2q mode produces a multitude of states via fragmentation that repeats on the 4q level and so on. Cf.: Fractal self-similarity (nesting)



Heavy and deformed nucle



Nuclear response at low energy: Sm and Nd, ongoing

Low-lying dipole strength in Sm and Nd isotopes



Pygmy dipole resonance: structural properties on the REOM² level



M. Markova, P. von Neumann-Cosel, E. L., PLB 860, 139216 (2025)

Data analysis indicate the two-component structure of the low-energy dipole strength

RQRPA does not describe the data well but remains a good reference point.

• 2q+phonon/RQTBA/REOM² is sensitive to the details of the superfluid pairing, particularly the pairing gap, especially at low energies.

Pairing is the anomalous part of the mean field and also poorly constrained.

Nevertheless, we could document the formation of the two-peak structure and reasonable total strength below Sn with theoretical uncertanties.







Low-energy dipole strength (LEDS): structural properties



$$\mathcal{F}_{mn} = \langle m | \mathcal{F} | n \rangle = f_{ij} (\mathcal{X}_{ik}^{m*} \mathcal{X}_{jk}^{n} + \mathcal{Y}_{jk}^{m*} \mathcal{Y}_{ik}^{n})$$

$$F_{LM} = e \sum_{i=1}^{Z} r_i^{\ L} Y_{LM}(\hat{\mathbf{r}}_i), \qquad L \ge 2$$

 $F_{1M} = \frac{eN}{A} \sum_{i=1}^{Z} r_i Y_{1M}(\hat{\mathbf{r}}_i) - \frac{eZ}{A} \sum_{i=1}^{N} r_i Y_{1M}(\hat{\mathbf{r}}_i)$

Couples exclusively to protons

Explicit transitions between excited states in REOM³ : Dipole transitions 2⁺ <=> 3⁻ and 2⁺ <=> 2⁻



Nuclei at the limits of existence: Finite-temperature response with the ph+phonon dynamical kernel

 $R_{12,1'2'}(t-t') = -i\langle \mathcal{T}(\bar{\psi}_1\psi_2)(t)(\bar{\psi}_{2'}\psi_{1'})(t')\rangle \to -i\langle \mathcal{T}(\bar{\psi}_1\psi_2)(t)(\bar{\psi}_{2'}\psi_{1'})(t')\rangle_T$

$$< ... > \equiv < 0 |... | 0 > \rightarrow < ... >_T \equiv \sum_n exp\left(\frac{\Omega - E_n - \mu N}{T}\right) < n |... | n > T$$



T > 0:

Leading-order 1p1h+phonon dynamical kernel:

T = 0:

$$\begin{split} \Phi_{14,23}^{(ph)}(\omega,T) &= \frac{1}{n_{43}(T)} \sum_{\mu,\eta_{\mu}=\pm 1} \eta_{\mu} \Big[\delta_{13} \sum_{6} \gamma_{\mu;62}^{\eta_{\mu}} \gamma_{\mu;64}^{\eta_{\mu}} \times \\ &\times \frac{\left(N(\eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}) + n_{6}(T) \right) \left(n(\varepsilon_{6} - \eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}, T) - n_{1}(T) \right)}{\omega - \varepsilon_{1} + \varepsilon_{6} - \eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}} + \\ &+ \delta_{24} \sum_{5} \gamma_{\mu;15}^{\eta_{\mu}} \gamma_{\mu;35}^{\eta_{\mu}} \times \\ &\times \frac{\left(N(\eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}) + n_{2}(T) \right) \left(n(\varepsilon_{2} - \eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}, T) - n_{5}(T) \right)}{\omega - \varepsilon_{5} + \varepsilon_{2} - \eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}} - \\ &- \gamma_{\mu;13}^{\eta_{\mu}} \gamma_{\mu;24}^{\eta_{\mu}} \times \\ &\times \frac{\left(N(\eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}) + n_{2}(T) \right) \left(n(\varepsilon_{2} - \eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}, T) - n_{3}(T) \right)}{\omega - \varepsilon_{3} + \varepsilon_{2} - \eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}} - \\ &- \gamma_{\mu;31}^{\eta_{\mu}} \gamma_{\mu;42}^{\eta_{\mu}} \times \\ &\times \frac{\left(N(\eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}) + n_{4}(T) \right) \left(n(\varepsilon_{4} - \eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}, T) - n_{1}(T) \right)}{\omega - \varepsilon_{1} + \varepsilon_{4} - \eta_{\mu}\Omega_{\mu}} \Big], \end{split}$$



The GDR collectivity puzzle:

Dipole strength at finite temperature (T>0): 48Ca and 132Sn



Thermal unblocking mechanism (simplified):



Oth approximation: Uncorrelated propagator $\tilde{R}^0_{14,23}(\omega) = \delta_{13}\delta_{24}\frac{n_2 - n_1}{\omega - \varepsilon_1 + \varepsilon_2}$

- ·⊱New transitions due to the thermal unblocking effects
- More collective and non-collective modes contribute to the PVC self-energy (~400 modes at T=5-6 MeV)
- Broadening of the resulting GDR spectrum
- The spurious translation mode is properly decoupled as the mean field is modified consistently
- The role of dynamical correlations and fragmentation remain significant in the high-energy part
 - E.L., H. Wibowo, Phys. Rev. Lett. 121, 082501 (2018) H. Wibowo, E.L., Phys. Rev. C 100, 024307 (2019)

The GDR collectivity puzzle: Dipole Strength at T>0: 48Ca and 132Sn



Spin-Isospin response and beta decay in stellar environments (T>0)



E.L., C. Robin, PRC 103, 024326 (2021)

10

15

20

25

E [MeV]

30

35

40

1 1.5

T [MeV]

2

0 0.5

Isoscalar giant monopole resonance (ISGMR): The "fluffiness" puzzle



Finite-temperature superfluid formalism (preliminary)

Theory is formulated in the HFB basis keeping 4x4 block matrix structure

Correlated 2q-propagator

 $+ \frac{1}{4} \sum_{\gamma \gamma' \delta \delta'} \hat{\mathcal{R}}^{0}_{\mu \mu' \gamma \gamma'}(\omega_n) \hat{\mathcal{K}}_{\gamma \gamma' \delta \delta'}(\omega_n) \hat{\mathcal{R}}_{\delta \delta' \nu \nu'}(\omega_n)$

S. Bhattacharjee, E.L., arXiv:2412.20751

with Matsubara frequencies

 $\hat{\mathcal{R}}_{\mu\mu'\nu\nu'}(\omega_n) = \hat{\mathcal{R}}^0_{\mu\mu'\nu\nu'}(\omega_n) +$

 $\mathcal{R}^{[lk]}_{\mu\mu'\nu\nu'}(\omega) = \sum_{fi} \sum_{\sigma=\pm} \sigma p_i \frac{\mathcal{Z}^{if[l\sigma]}_{\mu\mu'} \mathcal{Z}^{if[k\sigma]*}_{\nu\nu'}}{\omega - \sigma \omega_{fi}}$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{Z}_{\mu\mu'}^{if[1+]} &= \mathcal{X}_{\mu\mu'}^{if} & \mathcal{Z}_{\mu\mu'}^{if[2+]} &= \mathcal{Y}_{\mu\mu'}^{if} \\ \mathcal{Z}_{\mu\mu'}^{if[3+]} &= \mathcal{U}_{\mu\mu'}^{if} & \mathcal{Z}_{\mu\mu'}^{if[4+]} &= \mathcal{V}_{\mu\mu'}^{if} \\ \mathcal{Z}_{\mu\mu'}^{if[1-]} &= \mathcal{Y}_{\mu\mu'}^{if*} & \mathcal{Z}_{\mu\mu'}^{if[2-]} &= \mathcal{X}_{\mu\mu'}^{if*} \\ \mathcal{Z}_{\mu\mu'}^{if[3-]} &= \mathcal{V}_{\mu\mu'}^{if*} & \mathcal{Z}_{\mu\mu'}^{if[4-]} &= \mathcal{U}_{\mu\mu'}^{if*} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{X}_{\mu\mu'}^{if} &= \langle i | \alpha_{\mu'} \alpha_{\mu} | f \rangle \qquad \mathcal{Y}_{\mu\mu'}^{if} &= \langle i | \alpha_{\mu}^{\dagger} \alpha_{\mu'}^{\dagger} | f \rangle \\ \mathcal{U}_{\mu\mu'}^{if} &= \langle i | \alpha_{\mu}^{\dagger} \alpha_{\mu'} | f \rangle \qquad \mathcal{V}_{\mu\mu'}^{if} &= \langle i | \alpha_{\mu'}^{\dagger} \alpha_{\mu} | f \rangle \end{aligned}$$

$$\mathcal{K}_{\mu\mu'\nu\nu'}^{r[11]cc(a)}(\omega_k) = \sum_{\gamma\delta nm} p_{i_n} p_{i_m} \left(1 - e^{-(\omega_n + \omega_m)/T}\right)$$

$$\times \left[\frac{\left(\Gamma_{\mu\gamma}^{(11)n} \mathcal{X}_{\mu'\gamma}^m + \Gamma_{\mu\gamma}^{(02)\bar{n}*} \mathcal{U}_{\mu'\gamma}^m\right) (\mathcal{X}_{\nu'\delta}^{m*} \Gamma_{\nu\delta}^{(11)n*} + \mathcal{U}_{\nu'\delta}^{\bar{m}*} \Gamma_{\nu\delta}^{(02)\bar{n}}\right)}{\omega_k - \omega_n - \omega_m} - \frac{\left(\Gamma_{\gamma\mu}^{(11)n*} \mathcal{Y}_{\mu'\gamma}^{m*} + \Gamma_{\gamma\mu}^{(02)\bar{n}} \mathcal{Y}_{\mu'\gamma}^{\bar{m}*}\right) (\mathcal{Y}_{\nu'\delta}^m \Gamma_{\delta\nu}^{(11)n} + \mathcal{Y}_{\nu'\delta}^m \Gamma_{\delta\nu}^{(02)\bar{n}*})}{\omega_k + \omega_n + \omega_m}\right]$$

Uncorrelated 2q-propagator

$$\hat{\mathcal{R}}^0_{\mu\mu'\nu\nu'}(\omega_n) = [\omega_n - \hat{\Sigma}_3 \hat{E}_{\mu\mu'}]^{-1} \hat{\mathcal{N}}_{\mu\mu'\nu\nu'}$$

The norm matrix

$$\begin{split} \hat{\mathcal{N}}_{\mu\mu'\nu\nu'} &= \\ \begin{pmatrix} [A_{\mu\mu'}, A_{\nu\nu'}^{\dagger}] & [A_{\mu\mu'}, A_{\nu\nu'}] & [A_{\mu\mu'}, C_{\nu\nu'}^{\dagger}] & [A_{\mu\mu'}, C_{\nu\nu'}] \\ [A_{\mu\mu'}^{\dagger}, A_{\nu\nu'}^{\dagger}] & [A_{\mu\mu'}^{\dagger}, A_{\nu\nu'}] & [A_{\mu\mu'}^{\dagger}, C_{\nu\nu'}] & [A_{\mu\mu'}^{\dagger}, C_{\nu\nu'}] \\ [C_{\mu\mu'}, A_{\nu\nu'}^{\dagger}] & [C_{\mu\mu'}, A_{\nu\nu'}] & [C_{\mu\mu'}, C_{\nu\nu'}^{\dagger}] & [C_{\mu\mu'}, C_{\nu\nu'}] \\ [C_{\mu\mu'}^{\dagger}, A_{\nu\nu'}] & [C_{\mu\mu'}^{\dagger}, C_{\nu\nu'}] & [C_{\mu\mu'}^{\dagger}, C_{\nu\nu'}] \end{pmatrix} \rangle \\ \langle O \rangle &= \sum_{i} p_{i} \langle i | O | i \rangle \qquad p_{i} = \frac{e^{-E_{i}/T}}{\sum_{j} e^{-E_{j}/T}} \\ The dynamical kernel in the factorized form: \end{split}$$

Temperature evolution of the "fluffiness" puzzle



Decreases with temperature

U. Garg, G. Colò, Progress in Particle and Nuclear Physics 101 (2018) 55–95

Summary:

Outlook

- The emergent collective effects associated with the dynamical kernels of the fermionic EOMs renormalize interactions in correlated media, underly the spectral fragmentation mechanisms, affect superfluidity and weak decay rates.
- A hierarchy of converging growing-complexity approximations generates solutions of growing accuracy and quantify the uncertainties of the many-body theory.
- The recently enabled capabilities are higher configuration complexity, finite temperature, and quantum algorithms.

Open theoretical problems:

- Correct separation of and delicate relationship between the static and dynamical kernels in the practical approximate solutions.
- Artificial poles and virtual "particles" in approximate solutions.

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- Consistency between direct and pairing channels in the dynamical kernels in practical implementations.
- Ambiguities of numerical implementations on the 2p2h and 3p3h levels of complexity.
- An adequate assessment of the quantitative role of fully connected multi-fermion correlators (~ irreducible three- and many-body "forces" in the medium).

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And beyond



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Sumit Bhattacharjee





qPVC -induced ground state correlations: the leading mechanism of the β+ strength in neutron-rich nuclei; couple to two-body currents

Ground state correlations (GSC) induced by qPVC: backward-going diagrams

qPVC-GSC unblocking mechanism:



B⁺

Emergent "time machine"





The backward-going diagrams are the leading mechanism of the β + strength formation in neutron-rich nuclei



C. Robin, E.L., Phys. Rev. Lett. 123, 202501 (2019)