MATH 146
Current Problems in Applied Mathematics: Dynamical Systems and Quantum Information

Dimitris Giannakis
dimitrios.giannakis@dartmouth.edu

Dartmouth College
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Section 1

Introduction

Ergodic theory

Ergodic theory studies the statistical behavior of measurable actions of groups or semigroups on spaces.

Definition 1.1.
A left action, or flow, of a (semi)group G on a set Ω is a map $\Phi : G \times \Omega \to \Omega$ with the following properties:

1. $\Phi(e, \omega) = \omega$, for the the identity element $e \in G$ and all $\omega \in \Omega$.
2. $\Phi(gh, \omega) = \Phi(g, \Phi(h, \omega))$, for all $g, h \in G$ and $\omega \in \Omega$.

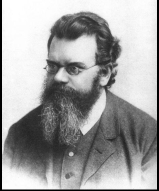
The set Ω is called the state space.

In this course, G will be an abelian group or semigroup that represents the time domain. Common choices include:

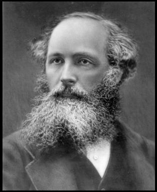
$$\mathbb{N}, \qquad \mathbb{Z}, \qquad \mathbb{R}_+, \qquad \mathbb{R}.$$

We write $\Phi^g \equiv \Phi(g, \cdot)$, $n \in \mathbb{N}, \mathbb{Z}$, and $t \in \mathbb{R}_+, \mathbb{R}$.

Ergodic theory



Ludwig Boltzmann



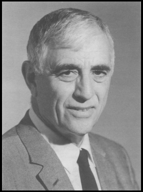
James Clerk Maxwell

Ergodic theory has its origin in the mid 19th century with the work of Boltzmann and Maxwell on statistical mechanics.

The term ergodic is an amalgamation of the Greek words ergo (έργο), which means *work*, and odos (οδός), which means *street*.

Ergodic theory

George David Birkhoff



Bernard Osgood Koopman

John von Neumann

The mathematical foundations of the subject were established by Koopman, von Neumann, Birkhoff, and many others, in work dating to the 1930s.

Modern ergodic theory is a highly diverse subject with connections to functional analysis, harmonic analysis, probability theory, topology, geometry, number theory, and other mathematical disciplines.

Observables and ergodic hypothesis

Rather than studying the flow Φ directly, ergodic theory focuses on its induced action on linear spaces of observables, e.g.,

$$\mathcal{F} = \{f : \Omega \to \mathcal{Y}\},$$

for a vector space $\mathcal{Y}$ (oftentimes, $\mathcal{Y} = \mathbb{R}$ or $\mathbb{C}$).

Drawing on intuition from mechanical systems, Boltzmann postulated that time averages of observables should well-approximate expectation values with respect to a reference distribution, μ.

This is encapsulated in the ergodic hypothesis,

$$\underbrace{\lim_{N\to\infty} \frac{1}{N} \sum_{n=0}^{N-1} f(\Phi^n(\omega))}_{\text{time average}} = \underbrace{\int_\Omega f \, d\mu}_{\text{space average}},$$

which is stipulated to hold for typical initial conditions $\omega \in \Omega$ and observables $f : \Omega \to \mathcal{Y}$ in a suitable class.

Operator-theoretic perspective

Definition 1.2.

1. For every $g \in G$, the composition operator, or Koopman operator, is the linear map $U^g : \mathcal{F} \to \mathcal{F}$ defined as

$$U^g f = f \circ \Phi^g.$$

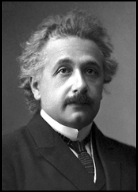
2. The transfer operator $P^g : \mathcal{F}' \to \mathcal{F}'$ is the adjoint of U^g, defined as

$$P^g \nu = \nu \circ U^g.$$

Koopman and transfer operators allow the study of nonlinear dynamics using techniques from linear operator theory.

Quantum mechanics

Niels Bohr

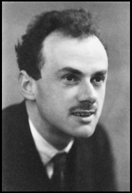


Albert Einstein

Max Planck

Quantum mechanics arose in the late 19th to early 20th century when it was realized that classical physics do not adequately describe phenomena such as the blackbody radiation spectrum, the photoelectric effect, and atomic spectral lines.

Quantum mechanics


Paul Dirac


Werner Heisenberg


Emmy Noether


Erwin Schrödinger

The mathematical formalism of quantum mechanics was developed by Schrödinger, Heisenberg, Dirac, Noether, von Neumann, and many others. The modern formulation of quantum mechanics makes heavy use of operator theory.

Dirac–von Neumann axioms of quantum mechanics

1. States are density operators, i.e., positive, trace-class operators $\rho : H \to H$ on a Hilbert space H, with $\operatorname{tr} \rho = 1$.
2. Observables are self-adjoint operators, $A : D(A) \to H$.
3. Measurement expectation and probability:

$$\mathbb{E}_\rho A = \operatorname{tr}(\rho A), \quad \mathbb{P}_\rho(\Omega) = \mathbb{E}_\rho(E(\Omega)), \quad A = \int_{\mathbb{R}} a \, dE(a).$$

4. Unitary dynamics between measurements:

$$\rho_t = U^{t*} \rho_0 U^t.$$

5. Projective measurement:

$$\rho|_e = \frac{\sqrt{e}\rho\sqrt{e}}{\operatorname{tr}(\sqrt{e}\rho\sqrt{e})}, \quad 0 < e \le I.$$

Interpretation of quantum mechanics

A vast subject in its own right, the interpretation of quantum mechanics can be approached by asking the following question:

- *Does quantum mechanics describe the world, or an observer's knowledge of the world?*

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Quantum informational interpretations take the latter point of view.

- *Quantum information is the study of the information processing tasks that can be accomplished using quantum mechanical systems.*

Connections with ergodic theory

Classical statistical	$P(\mu) \xrightarrow{P^t} P(\mu)$
	$\Gamma \downarrow \qquad \downarrow \Gamma$
Quantum mechanical	$Q(H) \xrightarrow{\mathcal{P}^t} Q(H)$

For a measure-preserving flow $\Phi^t : \Omega \to \Omega$ on a probability space (Ω, Σ, μ):

- The Koopman operator $U^t : H \to H$ is unitary on $H = L^2(\mu)$ and thus defines a quantum system.
- The classical statistical dynamics on the space of probability densities with respect to μ, $P(\mu)$, induced by the transfer operator P^t consistently embeds into the quantum dynamics induced by U^t on the space of density operators $Q(H)$.

Further reading

[1] G. Dell'Antonio, *Lectures on the Mathematics on Quantum Mechanics I*. Amsterdam: Atlantis Press, 2016. DOI: 10.2991/978-94-6239-118-5.

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[3] A. S. Holevo, *Statistical Structure of Quantum Theory* (Lecture Notes in Physics Monographs). Berlin: Springer, 2001, vol. 67.

[4] B. O. Koopman, "Hamiltonian systems and transformation in Hilbert space," *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci.*, vol. 17, no. 5, pp. 315–318, 1931. DOI: 10.1073/pnas.17.5.315.

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