

Chapter 1 : CiteSeerX Citation Query Some mathematical methods of physics

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The theory of atomic spectra and, later, quantum mechanics developed almost concurrently with the mathematical fields of linear algebra, the spectral theory of operators, operator algebras and more broadly, functional analysis. Quantum information theory is another subspecialty. Relativity and quantum relativistic theories[edit] Main articles: Theory of relativity and Quantum field theory The special and general theories of relativity require a rather different type of mathematics. This was group theory, which played an important role in both quantum field theory and differential geometry. This was, however, gradually supplemented by topology and functional analysis in the mathematical description of cosmological as well as quantum field theory phenomena. In this area both homological algebra and category theory are important nowadays. Statistical mechanics Statistical mechanics forms a separate field, which includes the theory of phase transitions. It relies upon the Hamiltonian mechanics or its quantum version and it is closely related with the more mathematical ergodic theory and some parts of probability theory. There are increasing interactions between combinatorics and physics, in particular statistical physics. Usage[edit] The usage of the term "mathematical physics" is sometimes idiosyncratic. Certain parts of mathematics that initially arose from the development of physics are not, in fact, considered parts of mathematical physics, while other closely related fields are. For example, ordinary differential equations and symplectic geometry are generally viewed as purely mathematical disciplines, whereas dynamical systems and Hamiltonian mechanics belong to mathematical physics. John Herapath used the term for the title of his text on "mathematical principles of natural philosophy"; the scope at that time being "the causes of heat, gaseous elasticity, gravitation, and other great phenomena of nature". In this sense, mathematical physics covers a very broad academic realm distinguished only by the blending of pure mathematics and physics. Although related to theoretical physics, [3] mathematical physics in this sense emphasizes the mathematical rigour of the same type as found in mathematics. On the other hand, theoretical physics emphasizes the links to observations and experimental physics, which often requires theoretical physicists and mathematical physicists in the more general sense to use heuristic, intuitive, and approximate arguments. Such mathematical physicists primarily expand and elucidate physical theories. Because of the required level of mathematical rigour, these researchers often deal with questions that theoretical physicists have considered to be already solved. Issues about attempts to infer the second law of thermodynamics from statistical mechanics are examples. Other examples concern the subtleties involved with synchronisation procedures in special and general relativity Sagnac effect and Einstein synchronisation The effort to put physical theories on a mathematically rigorous footing has inspired many mathematical developments. For example, the development of quantum mechanics and some aspects of functional analysis parallel each other in many ways. The mathematical study of quantum mechanics, quantum field theory, and quantum statistical mechanics has motivated results in operator algebras. The attempt to construct a rigorous quantum field theory has also brought about progress in fields such as representation theory. Use of geometry and topology plays an important role in string theory. In the first decade of the 16th century, amateur astronomer Nicolaus Copernicus proposed heliocentrism, and published a treatise on it in He retained the Ptolemaic idea of epicycles, and merely sought to simplify astronomy by constructing simpler sets of epicyclic orbits. Epicycles consist of circles upon circles. An enthusiastic atomist, Galileo Galilei in his book *The Assayer* asserted that the "book of nature" is written in mathematics. Descartes sought to formalize mathematical reasoning in science, and developed Cartesian coordinates for geometrically plotting locations in 3D space and marking their progressions along the flow of time. Having ostensibly reduced the Keplerian celestial laws of motion as well as Galilean terrestrial laws of motion to a unifying force, Newton achieved great mathematical rigor, but with theoretical laxity. The Swiss Leonhard Euler did special work in variational calculus, dynamics, fluid dynamics, and other areas. Also notable was the Italian-born Frenchman, Joseph-Louis Lagrange for work in analytical mechanics: A major contribution to the formulation of

Analytical Dynamics called Hamiltonian dynamics was also made by the Irish physicist, astronomer and mathematician, William Rowan Hamilton. Hamiltonian dynamics had played an important role in the formulation of modern theories in physics, including field theory and quantum mechanics. The French mathematical physicist Joseph Fourier introduced the notion of Fourier series to solve the heat equation, giving rise to a new approach to solving partial differential equations by means of integral transforms. In the early 19th century, the French Pierre-Simon Laplace made paramount contributions to mathematical astronomy, potential theory, and probability theory. In Germany, Carl Friedrich Gauss made key contributions to the theoretical foundations of electricity, magnetism, mechanics, and fluid dynamics. In England, George Green published *An Essay on the Application of Mathematical Analysis to the Theories of Electricity and Magnetism* in 1828, which in addition to its significant contributions to mathematics made early progress towards laying down the mathematical foundations of electricity and magnetism. Jean-Augustin Fresnel modeled hypothetical behavior of the aether. Michael Faraday introduced the theoretical concept of a field, not action at a distance. The English physicist Lord Rayleigh worked on sound. Stokes was a leader in optics and fluid dynamics; Kelvin made substantial discoveries in thermodynamics; Hamilton did notable work on analytical mechanics, discovering a new and powerful approach nowadays known as Hamiltonian mechanics. Very relevant contributions to this approach are due to his German colleague Carl Gustav Jacobi in particular referring to canonical transformations. The German Hermann von Helmholtz made substantial contributions in the fields of electromagnetism, waves, fluids, and sound. In the United States, the pioneering work of Josiah Willard Gibbs became the basis for statistical mechanics. Fundamental theoretical results in this area were achieved by the German Ludwig Boltzmann. Together, these individuals laid the foundations of electromagnetic theory, fluid dynamics, and statistical mechanics. And yet no violation of Galilean invariance within physical interactions among objects was detected. The Galilean transformation had been the mathematical process used to translate the positions in one reference frame to predictions of positions in another reference frame, all plotted on Cartesian coordinates, but this process was replaced by Lorentz transformation, modeled by the Dutch Hendrik Lorentz. In 1887, experimentalists Michelson and Morley failed to detect aether drift, however. Einstein initially called this "superfluous learnedness", but later used Minkowski spacetime with great elegance in his general theory of relativity, [11] extending invariance to all reference frames—whether perceived as inertial or as accelerated—and credited this to Minkowski, by then deceased. The gravitational field is Minkowski spacetime itself, the 4D topology of Einstein aether modeled on a Lorentzian manifold that "curves" geometrically, according to the Riemann curvature tensor, in the vicinity of either mass or energy. Under special relativity—a special case of general relativity—even massless energy exerts gravitational effect by its mass equivalence locally "curving" the geometry of the four, unified dimensions of space and time. This revolutionary theoretical framework is based on a probabilistic interpretation of states, and evolution and measurements in terms of self-adjoint operators on an infinite dimensional vector space. That is called Hilbert space, introduced in its elementary form by David Hilbert and Frigyes Riesz, and rigorously defined within the axiomatic modern version by John von Neumann in his celebrated book *Mathematical Foundations of Quantum Mechanics*, where he built up a relevant part of modern functional analysis on Hilbert spaces, the spectral theory in particular. Paul Dirac used algebraic constructions to produce a relativistic model for the electron, predicting its magnetic moment and the existence of its antiparticle, the positron. List of prominent mathematical physicists in the 20th century[edit].

Chapter 2 : Some Mathematical Methods of Physics

This well-rounded, thorough treatment for advanced undergraduates and graduate students introduces basic concepts of mathematical physics involved in the study of linear systems. The text emphasizes eigenvalues, eigenfunctions, and Green's functions. Prerequisites include differential equations and.

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