

Ultrarelativistic limit of gravity, cosmological singularities and E_{10}

Marc Henneaux

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$$\begin{aligned} [M_i, M_j] &= \epsilon_{ijk} M_k, & [M_i, B_j] &= \epsilon_{ijk} B_k, & [B_i, B_j] &= -\epsilon_{ijk} M_k, \\ [M_i, P_j] &= \epsilon_{ijk} P_k, & [P_i, B_j] &= \delta_{ij} E, & [M_i, E] &= 0 & [E, B_i] &= P_i, \end{aligned}$$

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has (at least) two interesting contractions.

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One is the familiar Galilean algebra ($c \rightarrow \infty$, $B_i \rightarrow \frac{1}{c} B_i$, $E \rightarrow cE$)

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while the other is the Carroll algebra ($c \rightarrow 0$, $B_i \rightarrow cB_i$, $E \rightarrow cE$),

$$\begin{aligned}[M_i, M_j] &= \epsilon_{ijk} M_k, & [M_i, B_j] &= \epsilon_{ijk} B_k, & [B_i, B_j] &= 0, \\ [M_i, P_j] &= \epsilon_{ijk} P_k, & [P_i, B_j] &= \delta_{ij} E, & [M_i, E] &= 0 & [E, B_i] &= 0.\end{aligned}$$

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The Galilean algebra (or rather, its central extension, the Bargmann algebra, which has $[P_i, B_j] = \delta_{ij}M$ rather than $[P_i, B_j] = 0$) is relevant for the nonrelativistic limit of Einstein theory (Newton-Cartan gravity)

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The ultrarelativistic limit controls the dynamics of the gravitational field near a spacelike singularity (BKL limit),

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The purpose of this talk is to describe Carroll-invariant theories and review their connection with the BKL behaviour.

Causality in Galilean-invariant and Carroll-invariant theories

We discuss first Carroll versus Galilean causality.

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The main point can be illustrated with the Klein-Gordon equation in Minkowski space, which is Poincaré invariant,

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$$\square\phi = \frac{1}{c^2} \frac{\partial^2 \phi}{(\partial t)^2} - \Delta\phi = 0.$$

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The light cones completely open to the hyperplanes $x^0 = \text{const.}$

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The light cones have now collapsed to the lines $x^k = \text{const}$ generated by $\frac{\partial}{\partial t}$.

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The light cones have now collapsed to the lines $x^k = \text{const}$ generated by $\frac{\partial}{\partial t}$.

The field at time t depends only on the field and its first derivative $\partial_t \phi$ at time $t = 0$ at the same spatial point.

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(“ultrarelativistic = ultralocal”)

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More generally, dynamical Carroll-invariant field equations reduce to ordinary differential equations with respect to time.

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We are really discussing here the “electric limit” of the Klein-Gordon equation.

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We are really discussing here the “electric limit” of the Klein-Gordon equation.

There exists also a “magnetic limit” with similar causality features.

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Generalization to p -forms, gravity, higher spins in arbitrary dimension : M. Henneaux and P. Salgado-Rebolledo, [arXiv :2109.06708 [hep-th]] (see also J. de Boer, J. Hartong, N. A. Obers, W. Sybesma and S. Vandoren [arXiv :2110.02319 [hep-th]])

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The limits are most conveniently taken in the Hamiltonian formulation of the theories.

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The Hamiltonian action reads

$$\begin{aligned} S[A_{a_1 \dots a_p}, \pi^{a_1 \dots a_p}, A_{0a_1 \dots a_{p-1}}] \\ = \int d^D x \left(\pi^{a_1 \dots a_p} \dot{A}_{a_1 \dots a_p} - A_{0a_2 \dots a_p} \mathcal{G}^{a_2 \dots a_p} - \mathcal{H} \right), \end{aligned}$$

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where

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{H} &= \mathcal{E}^E + \mathcal{E}^M, \\ \mathcal{E}^E &= \frac{p! c^2}{2} \pi_{a_1 \dots a_p} \pi^{a_1 \dots a_p}, \quad \mathcal{E}^M = \frac{1}{2(p+1)!} F_{a_1 \dots a_{p+1}} F^{a_1 \dots a_{p+1}}, \end{aligned}$$

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$$\begin{aligned} S[A_{a_1 \dots a_p}, \pi^{a_1 \dots a_p}, A_{0a_1 \dots a_{p-1}}] \\ = \int d^D x \left(\pi^{a_1 \dots a_p} \dot{A}_{a_1 \dots a_p} - A_{0a_2 \dots a_p} \mathcal{G}^{a_2 \dots a_p} - \mathcal{H} \right), \end{aligned}$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{H} &= \mathcal{E}^E + \mathcal{E}^M, \\ \mathcal{E}^E &= \frac{p! c^2}{2} \pi_{a_1 \dots a_p} \pi^{a_1 \dots a_p}, \quad \mathcal{E}^M = \frac{1}{2(p+1)!} F_{a_1 \dots a_{p+1}} F^{a_1 \dots a_{p+1}}, \end{aligned}$$

and

$$\mathcal{G}^{a_1 \dots a_{p-1}} = -p \partial_a \pi^{aa_1 \dots a_{p-1}}.$$

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$$A_{\mu_1 \dots \mu_p} \rightarrow c A_{\mu_1 \dots \mu_p}, \quad \pi^{a_1 \dots a_p} \rightarrow \frac{1}{c} \pi^{a_1 \dots a_p}$$

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and then taking the limit $c \rightarrow 0$, leading to

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Note that both limits are compatible with gauge invariance.

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The characteristic feature of Carroll-invariant field theories is the
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$$[\mathcal{E}^E(x), \mathcal{E}^E(y)] = 0 \quad (\text{or } [\mathcal{E}^M(x), \mathcal{E}^M(y)] = 0)$$

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between the energy density at two different spatial points.

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between the energy density at two different spatial points.

This implies straightforwardly

$$[E, B_k] = 0 \quad [B_k, B_m] = 0$$

for $E = \int d^3x \mathcal{E}$ and $B_k = \int d^3x x_k \mathcal{E}$ (with $\mathcal{E} = \mathcal{E}^E$ or \mathcal{E}^M).

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The (Dirac-ADM) Hamiltonian action for Einstein gravity reads

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The (Dirac-ADM) Hamiltonian action for Einstein gravity reads

$$S[g_{ij}, \pi^{ij}, N, N^i] = \int dx^0 \int d^d x (\pi^{ij} \dot{g}_{ij} - N \mathcal{H} - N^i \mathcal{H}_i)$$

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Here, $\mathcal{H} \approx 0$ is the Hamiltonian constraint and $\mathcal{H}_i \approx 0$ is the momentum constraint with the following explicit expressions (in appropriate units and with appropriate rescalings, see below)

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$$\mathcal{H} = G_{ijkl} \pi^{ij} \pi^{kl} - c^6 R \sqrt{g}, \quad \mathcal{H}_i = -2\pi^j_{i|j}.$$

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One can consistently take the limit $c \rightarrow 0$ since the constraints remain first class in the limit,

$$[\mathcal{H}^E(x), \mathcal{H}^E(x')] = 0,$$

$$[\mathcal{H}^E(x), \mathcal{H}_k(x')] = (\mathcal{H}^E(x) + \mathcal{H}^E(x'))\delta_{,k}(x - x')$$

$$[\mathcal{H}_m(x), \mathcal{H}_k(x')] = \mathcal{H}_m(x')\delta_{,k}(x - x') + \mathcal{H}_k(x)\delta_{,m}(x - x')$$

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Putting back all the constants and rescaling the lapse, one gets $N\mathcal{H} = N^{\text{resc}}\mathcal{H}^{\text{resc}}$ with

$$N^{\text{resc}} = \frac{16\pi G}{c^2}N \quad \mathcal{H}^{\text{resc}} = G_{ijkl}\pi^{ij}\pi^{mn} + \epsilon \frac{c^6}{(16\pi G)^2}R\sqrt{g}$$

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and one sees therefore that $c \rightarrow 0$ (Carroll limit) is equivalent to $G \rightarrow \infty$ (strong coupling limit, Isham 1975) or $\epsilon = 0$ (zero Hamiltonian signature limit -Teitelboim 1978), keeping N^{resc} finite.

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(Henneaux 1979)

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(Henneaux 1979)

There is also a magnetic limit (Henneaux and Salgado-Rebolledo 2021).

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time derivatives dominate

and the description of the dynamics at each spatial point can be expressed in terms of (generalized) Kasner solutions,

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In the vicinity of a spacelike singularity,

the description of the gravitational field coupled to p -forms (as in extended supergravity models)

can be described in very simple terms :

time derivatives dominate

and the description of the dynamics at each spatial point can be expressed in terms of (generalized) Kasner solutions,

for which spatial gradients are set to zero (homogeneous solutions).

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which leads to a billiard description in hyperbolic space of the dynamics.

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But this is also precisely the ultrarelativistic (Carrollian) limit!

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The Carrollian limit is thus the relevant limit in the vicinity of a spacelike singularity when p -forms are included.

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The Carrollian limit is thus the relevant limit in the vicinity of a spacelike singularity when p -forms are included.

(For pure gravity, spacelike gradients cannot be set equal to zero for all times as one goes to the singularity, but are equivalent to effective terms that depend on the fields only.)

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In the presence of p -forms, the “curvature walls” are subdominant and can be dropped,

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While the BKL limit corresponds to a Carrollian description where one takes the electric limit for gravity, the appropriate limit for p -forms can be either electric or magnetic.

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The (bosonic) field content of 11-dimensional supergravity is composed of the metric and a 3-form.

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The (bosonic) field content of 11-dimensional supergravity is composed of the metric and a 3-form.

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$$S \sim \int dt \int d^{10}x \left(\pi^{ij} \dot{g}_{ij} + \pi^{ijk} \dot{A}_{ijk} - N(G_{ijkl} \pi^{ij} \pi^{kl} + (\pi^{ijk})^2) \right).$$

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(+ terms $\sim c^2(R + B^2)$ that go to zero in the Carrollian limit)

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(+ terms $\sim c^2(R + B^2)$ that go to zero in the Carrollian limit)

(Note : The Chern-Simons term is in fact compatible with Carroll invariance and survives in the Carroll limit.)

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This dynamics in that limit has been shown to have remarkable properties.

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This dynamics in that limit has been shown to have remarkable properties.

It is the billiard motion in the fundamental Weyl chamber of E_{10} ,

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This dynamics in that limit has been shown to have remarkable properties.

It is the billiard motion in the fundamental Weyl chamber of E_{10} , a limit that exhibits therefore remarkable connections with hidden symmetries!

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The non-relativistic limit has been known for a long time to be useful in general relativity,

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The non-relativistic limit has been known for a long time to be useful in general relativity,

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The non-relativistic limit has been known for a long time to be useful in general relativity,

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The opposite, “ultrarelativistic limit” is also useful.

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It also appears in other gravity-related contexts (recent example in cosmology : J. de Boer, J. Hartong, N. A. Obers, W. Sybesma and S. Vandoren [arXiv :2110.02319 [hep-th]]).

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A systematic expansion in powers of c remains to be more fully investigated.

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THANK YOU!