

PROPERTIES OF HADRONS FROM A NON-PERTURBATIVE APPROACH

Manuel Eduardo Carrillo Serrano

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Special Research Centre for the Subatomic Structure of Matter
and
Department of Physics



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Statement of Originality

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Abstract

The composition and structure of matter remains a fundamental problem in physics. The closest theory that tries to deal with this problem is the Standard Model of particle physics, which encodes the electromagnetic, weak and strong interactions. The strong interaction is the main ingredient in the description of hadronic properties such as their masses, distribution of charge and magnetisation, decay parameters, and interactions between them. These properties have the common feature that they are modelled at low four momentum transfer. At those conditions the theory of the strong interactions becomes impossible to use and the best approach is to calculate the hadronic properties using expensive numerical simulations called lattice QCD. Because lattice QCD requires a lot of computational resources, models close to the theory of strong interactions are still of great importance.

The work presented in this thesis uses different quark models (in particular the NJL model), in the calculation of the masses, electromagnetic form factors and weak decay properties of some light mass hadrons. In addition, it explores (in the context of the NJL model and others) the consequences that possible changes in fundamental constants could have for the binding energies of certain nuclei.

Throughout the whole thesis the results are compared with other models, existing experimental data, and extrapolations of the lattice QCD simulations. In general terms, the agreement in those comparisons is outstanding. In some cases the quark models give predictions for and insights into what is expected for future experiments and lattice calculations.

The main thrust of this thesis is to investigate the validity of the NJL model and the other models used here, because they can be crucial in the computation of physical properties of more complex structures such as many hadron systems or systems at very extreme conditions. Lattice QCD in those cases will still require a lot of work, time and computational resources. So far, it is fair to say that the models used here are to a very good extent, a good approximation to first principle calculations in the properties that were calculated in this thesis.

Resumen

(Abstract in Spanish)

La composición y la estructura de la materia aún son considerados un problema fundamental de la Física. La teoría más cercana para resolver este problema es el Modelo Estandar de partículas, que agrupa el electromagnetismo y las interacciones fuerte y débil. En particular la interacción fuerte es el ingrediente principal en la descripción de las propiedades de los hadrones tales como sus masas, distribuciones de carga y magnetización, parámetros de decaimiento, e interacciones entre ellos. Estas propiedades tienen como común denominador que son modeladas a bajo cuadri-momento transferido. En esas condiciones la teoría de la interacción fuerte se vuelve prácticamente imposible de usar, por esta razón el mejor enfoque es calcular las propiedades de los hadrones usando simulaciones numéricas, llamadas lattice QCD, que requieren un alto costo de generación. El hecho de que lattice QCD requiera altos recursos computacionales, hace que los modelos que se aproximan a la teoría de la interacción fuerte sigan siendo de gran importancia.

El trabajo presentado en esta tesis usa en particular un modelo de quark constituyente, el modelo NJL, en el cálculo de las masas de los hadrones, sus factores de forma electromagnéticos y sus parámetros de decaimiento. Además explora (con la ayuda de otros modelos aparte del NJL), las posibles consecuencias en las energías de acoplamiento de algunos nucleos, por cambios en constantes fundamentales.

A través de toda la tesis los resultados son comparados con otros modelos, datos experimentales existentes y extrapolaciones de las simulaciones de lattice QCD. En términos generales, la concordancia con los otros métodos es excepcional. En algunos casos los modelos de quark predicen y generan hipótesis de lo que se puede esperar en futuros experimentos o simulaciones con lattice QCD.

El resultado principal de esta tesis es mostrar el nivel de validez del modelo NJL y de los otros modelos usados en el presente trabajo. Estos modelos pueden ser cruciales en el cálculo de propiedades físicas de estructuras mas complejas como son sistemas de muchos hadrones o sistemas en condiciones extremas. Las simulaciones con lattice QCD en éstos casos aún requerirán de una gran cantidad de trabajo, tiempo y recursos computacionales. Hasta el momento se puede decir que a través de los resultados de esta tesis, el modelo NJL y demás modelos de quark son hasta

cierto punto una buena aproximación a los cálculos esperados mediante primeros principios de las propiedades descritas acá.

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