

Suitably impressive thesis title

Robin Timmis

Your College

University of Oxford

*A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy*

Michaelmas 2014

Abstract

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Acknowledgements

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A List of Symbols and Abbreviations

e	Absolute charge of an electron = 1.602×10^{-19} C
ϵ_0	Permittivity of free space = 8.854×10^{-12} F m ⁻¹
λ_D	Debye length $\equiv \sqrt{\frac{\epsilon_0 K T_e}{n_e e^2}}$
n_e	Plasma electron number density as a function of position
n_i	Plasma ion number density as a function of position
T_e	Plasma electron temperature
Z	Ion charge state in units of e
1D, 2D, 3D . .	One-, two- or three-dimension(al)
Otter	One of the finest of water mammals.
Hedgehog . . .	Quite a nice prickly friend.

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There is no one who loves pain itself, who seeks after it and wants to have it, simply because it is pain...

— Cicero's *de Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*

1

Introduction

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1.1 A plan

Actually the very first thing to say will be the stuff about light i think, about diagnostic tools essentially always being about controlling the various properties of light (ie electromagnetic waves)

sections to include start with the laser and our entrance into the multi-petawatt regime with no signs of stopping - ref 40 in alex savin thesis - it looks like that is saying huge growth in laser power check that and maybe write in thesis but don't include the figure. Also include description of CPA and OPCPA what is a plasma modelling plasma with PIC codes intense lasers and absorption mechanisms?? yes for sure but dont do all just those just below ZVP simulation units and similarity parameter

what is the story? Based on first section by Alex after the abstract Plasma is ubiquitous in our known universe and plasma provides us huge opportunities as a tool to improve our lives (From chen) what we can see in the sky is a result of that stuff being in the plasma state. Lasers can do so much now and are only getting more powerful all the time thanks to CPA and since developments (discuss) Simultaneously our ability to understand the physics has been aided by an explosion in computing power (peter HEDP paper) In this thesis we discuss some of the opportunities that relativistic laser plasma physics offers us with solid density targets - note that note about solids v gases at this point. Perhaps even before the debye length, define what we mean by the temperature of the plasma??

An unused statement about ion immobility Assume for now that the ion-electron mass ratio is infinite, that is to say the ions are approximately immobile for the timescales under consideration, generally true for a fair few relativistic laser pulse cycles (In later sections the mobility of plasma ions will prove very important but for now this is ignored.).

1.2 The definition of a plasma

As outlined in F. Chen's definitive textbook 'Introduction to Plasma Physics and Controlled Fusion' [chen20116], a plasma must fulfil three criteria, namely,

1. Ionisation: a plasma must consist of both charged and neutral particles, of course this alone cannot define a plasma, any gas will contain some degree of ionisation;
2. Quasineutrality: while locally there can be (often extreme) electromagnetic forces and charge concentrations at work, over the length scales of the plasma, such forces are screened out and the plasma bulk remains net neutral in charge;
3. Collective behaviour: unlike in a gas where collisions dominate, the particles in a plasma generate electromagnetic fields that interact at a distance and

thus a particle's motion depends not only on its immediate vicinity but on the surrounding plasma conditions, indeed often it is the so-called 'collisionless' plasmas where collisions can be safely neglected that are of most interest, as is the focus of this thesis.

1.2.1 The Debye length

The Debye length describes the extent to which a plasma can shield electromagnetic fields within and so remain quasineutral. Consider an infinitely extending plasma with a test charge placed at some point, then what would be the potential $\phi(\mathbf{x})$? If the plasma had no kinetic energy, the charged particles would arrange themselves immediately adjacent to the test charge and once this equilibrium state was reached there would be no electromagnetic fields present. Realistically the plasma will have some temperature, likely a very large temperature and so some particles will be able to escape the potential of the test charge and thus leak electromagnetic fields into the plasma bulk. Poisson's equation reads

$$\epsilon_0 \nabla^2 \phi = -e(Zn_i - n_e), \quad (1.1)$$

where $\epsilon_0 = 8.854 \times 10^{-12} \text{ F m}^{-1}$ is the permittivity of free space, $e = 1.602 \times 10^{-19} \text{ C}$ is the charge of an electron, Z is the plasma ion charge in units of e and n_i and n_e are the number densities of plasma ions and electrons.

Since the electrons are significantly more mobile than the ions due to their lower mass, it is in general the electrons and not the ions that respond to the test charge and the ions can be assumed to provide a constant background of positive charge density. If the number density of electrons follows a Boltzmann temperature distribution in the presence of a potential energy $-e\phi$, then

$$n_e = n_{e,0} e^{e\phi/KT_e}, \quad (1.2)$$

where $n_{e,0}$ is the electron number density far from the test charge, $n_i = n_{e,0}/Z$ and KT_e is the electron temperature.

Substituting equation 1.2 into equation 1.1 and Taylor expanding the exponential term in the limit that the plasma is weakly coupled ($e\phi \ll KT_e$), obtains

$$\nabla^2 \phi = \frac{\phi}{\lambda_D^2}, \quad (1.3)$$

where

$$\lambda_D \equiv \sqrt{\frac{\epsilon_0 KT_e}{n_e e^2}}, \quad (1.4)$$

is the *Debye length* and describes the thickness of the charge sheath surrounding the test charge. For quasineutrality to hold for the plasma bulk, its spatial dimensions must extend beyond a few Debye lengths.

1.2.2 The plasma parameter

In order for the above description to be statistically valid, there must be a large number of charged particles within the shielding sheath. The number of particles within the Debye sphere can be computed as

$$N_D = \frac{4}{3}\pi\lambda_D^3 n. \quad (1.5)$$

Note that, as discussed above, in most cases it is most suitable to choose the number density n to be the number density of electrons. To ensure the plasma is suitably ionised (criterion 1) and that the plasma engages in collective behaviour (criterion 3),

$$N_D \gg 1. \quad (1.6)$$

1.2.3 Collisionality and the plasma frequency

Collective behaviour not only depends on the ability for large numbers of particles to interact via electromagnetic forces but that these forces dominate over collisions in describing particle trajectories. Taking ω as the typical frequency of plasma oscillations and τ as the average time between collisions, for a plasma (as opposed to a gas) must satisfy

$$\omega\tau > 1. \quad (1.7)$$

It now remains to determine what is the typical frequency of collisions in a given plasma. As in this thesis electromagnetic waves are the focus this is what is most relevant.

1.3 Motivation

The rapid advance of minimally-invasive cardiac procedures promises improvements in patient safety, procedure efficacy, and access to treatment. While percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) has become routine and highly effective [bravata_systematic_2007], catheter procedures in areas such as electrophysiology (EP) and valve replacement are still coming of age. This progress is driven by demographics and the improvement in general cardiac care, as patients surviving initial cardiac events go on to require treatment for sequelae [foot_demographics_2000]. The growing need for advanced treatment is being answered by developments in catheter technology and procedures. These tools are continually advancing to access and manipulate an ever-broader range of anatomy [sousa_new_2005].

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1.4 Contribution

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2

The Zero Vector Potential Absorption Mechanism

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2.1 Introduction

Now is presented the Zero Vector Potential mechanism of attosecond absorption, proposed by Baeva et al [baeva2011] and later developed by Savin et al [savin2017, savin2019zvp]. Laser energy absorption in dense plasmas was first proposed by Wilks and Kruer [wilks1997], a ponderomotive mechanism where plasma electrons are heated directly by the laser pulse via the so-called $\mathbf{J} \times \mathbf{B}$ force.

This thesis focuses on the so-called ‘post-ponderomotive’ regime where the frequency of the plasma oscillations ($\omega_p \sim \sqrt{n_e}$) are greater than the $\mathbf{J} \times \mathbf{B}$ induced plasma electron oscillations at $2\omega_L$. The plasma electrons are then fast enough to compensate the ponderomotive pressure of the laser pulse with the formation of electrostatic fields between electrons and ions and so respond adiabatically to the $\mathbf{J} \times \mathbf{B}$ force. Hence plasma electrons cannot be heated directly by the laser pulse. Note that this requires a sufficiently steep density gradient around the

relativistic critical density surface (where $S = 1$) to shift the main interaction to a region where this condition on the overdensity is satisfied. Interestingly working through the condition between ω_p and ω_L in normalised units suggests the criterion for this regime is $S > 4$, slightly more constraining than $S > 1$ as is typically stated [**savin2019thesis**].

Condition is $\bar{n}_e > 4$. Ie we need four time sthe critical density surface, $S=1$ is the rel critical dens surface - so we need $a_0 > 4$?? Hmm confused...

So we have entered a regime of adiabaticity where the plasma skin layer is confined within a potential well formed of the ponderomotive pressure and the Coulomb potential.

Appendices

Cor animalium, fundamentum est vitæ, princeps omnium, Microcofimi Sol, a quo omnis vegetatio dependet, vigor omnis & robur emanat.

The heart of animals is the foundation of their life, the sovereign of everything within them, the sun of their microcosm, that upon which all growth depends, from which all power proceeds.

— William Harvey [harvey__exercitatio_1628]



Review of Cardiac Physiology and Electrophysiology

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Appendices are just like chapters. Their sections and subsections get numbered and included in the table of contents; figures and equations and tables added up, etc. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Sed et dui sem. Aliquam dictum et ante ut semper. Donec sollicitudin sed quam at aliquet. Sed maximus diam elementum justo auctor, eget volutpat elit eleifend. Curabitur hendrerit ligula in erat feugiat, at rutrum risus suscipit. Pellentesque habitant morbi tristique senectus et netus et malesuada fames ac turpis egestas. Integer risus nulla, facilisis eget lacinia a, pretium mattis metus. Vestibulum aliquam varius ligula nec consectetur. Maecenas ac ipsum odio. Cras ac elit consequat, eleifend ipsum sodales, euismod nunc. Nam vitae tempor enim, sit amet eleifend nisi. Etiam at erat vel neque consequat.

A.1 Anatomy

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A.2 Mechanical Cycle

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A.3 Electrical Cycle

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A.4 Cellular Electromechanical Coupling

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