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Sumiyoshi Abe Yuko Okamoto (Eds.)

Nonextensive Statistical Mechanics and Its Applications



Springer

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Preface

It is known that in spite of its great success Boltzmann–Gibbs statistical mechanics is actually not completely universal. A class of physical ensembles involving long-range interactions, long-time memories, or (multi-)fractal structures can hardly be treated within the traditional statistical-mechanical framework. A recent nonextensive generalization of Boltzmann–Gibbs theory, which is referred to as nonextensive statistical mechanics, enables one to analyze such systems. This new stream in the foundation of statistical mechanics was initiated by Tsallis’ proposal of a nonextensive entropy in 1988. Subsequently it turned out that consistent generalized thermodynamics can be constructed on the basis of the Tsallis entropy, and since then we have witnessed an explosion in research works on this subject.

Nonextensive statistical mechanics is still a rapidly growing field, even at a fundamental level. However, some remarkable structures and a variety of interesting applications have already appeared. Therefore, it seems quite timely now to summarize these developments.

This volume is primarily based on The IMS Winter School on Statistical Mechanics: Nonextensive Generalization of Boltzmann–Gibbs Statistical Mechanics and Its Applications (February 15-18, 1999, Institute for Molecular Science, Okazaki, Japan), which was supported, in part, by IMS and the Japanese Society for the Promotion of Science. The volume consists of a set of four self-contained lectures, together with additional short contributions. The topics covered are quite broad, ranging from astrophysics to biophysics. Some of the latest developments since the School are also included herein.

We would like to thank Professors W. Beiglböck and H.A. Weidenmüller for their advice and encouragement.

Funabashi,
Okazaki,
November 2000

Sumiyoshi Abe
Yuko Okamoto

Contents

Part 1 Lectures on Nonextensive Statistical Mechanics

I. Nonextensive Statistical Mechanics and Thermodynamics: Historical Background and Present Status

<i>C. Tsallis</i>	3
1 Introduction	3
2 Formalism	6
3 Theoretical Evidence and Connections	24
4 Experimental Evidence and Connections	38
5 Computational Evidence and Connections	55
6 Final Remarks	80

II. Quantum Density Matrix Description of Nonextensive Systems

<i>A.K. Rajagopal</i>	99
1 General Remarks	99
2 Theory of Entangled States and Its Implications: Jaynes–Cummings Model	110
3 Variational Principle	124
4 Time-Dependence: Unitary Dynamics	132
5 Time-Dependence: Nonunitary Dynamics	147
6 Concluding Remarks	149
References	154

III. Tsallis Theory, the Maximum Entropy Principle, and Evolution Equations

<i>A.R. Plastino</i>	157
1 Introduction	157
2 Jaynes Maximum Entropy Principle	159
3 General Thermostatistical Formalisms	161
4 Time Dependent MaxEnt	168
5 Time-Dependent Tsallis MaxEnt Solutions of the Nonlinear Fokker–Planck Equation	170
6 Tsallis Nonextensive Thermostatistics and the Vlasov–Poisson Equations	178
7 Conclusions	188
References	189

**IV. Computational Methods for the Simulation
of Classical and Quantum Many Body Systems Sprung
from Nonextensive Thermostatistics**

<i>I. Andricioaei and J.E. Straub</i>	193
1 Background and Focus	193
2 Basic Properties of Tsallis Statistics	195
3 General Properties of Mass Action and Kinetics	203
4 Tsallis Statistics and Simulated Annealing	209
5 Tsallis Statistics and Monte Carlo Methods	214
6 Tsallis Statistics and Molecular Dynamics	219
7 Optimizing the Monte Carlo or Molecular Dynamics Algorithm Using the Ergodic Measure	222
8 Tsallis Statistics and Feynman Path Integral Quantum Mechanics	223
9 Simulated Annealing Using Cauchy–Lorentz “Density Packet” Dynamics	228

Part 2 Further Topics

**V. Correlation Induced by Nonextensivity
and the Zeroth Law of Thermodynamics**

<i>S. Abe</i>	237
References	242

**VI. Dynamic and Thermodynamic Stability
of Nonextensive Systems**

<i>J. Naudts and M. Czachor</i>	243
1 Introduction	243
2 Nonextensive Thermodynamics	243
3 Nonlinear von Neumann Equation	244
4 Dynamic Stability	246
5 Thermodynamic Stability	247
6 Proof of Theorem 1	248
7 Minima of $\mathcal{F}^{(3)}$	249
8 Proof of Theorem 2	251
9 Conclusions	251
References	252

**VII. Generalized Simulated Annealing Algorithms Using Tsallis
Statistics: Application to $\pm J$ Spin Glass Model**

<i>J. Ktos and S. Kobe</i>	253
1 Generalized Acceptance Probabilities	253
2 Model and Simulations	254
3 Results	255
4 Summary	257

**VIII. Protein Folding Simulations by a Generalized-Ensemble
Algorithm Based on Tsallis Statistics**

Y. Okamoto and U.H.E. Hansmann 259

1 Introduction 259

2 Methods 260

3 Results 263

4 Conclusions 273

References 273

Subject Index 275