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Multiple Time Scale Dynamics

 Springer

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Preface

This book aims to provide an introduction to dynamical systems with multiple time scales. As in any overview book, several topics are covered only quite briefly. My aim was to focus on topics that seem to be less available in introductory form. However, I try to give a global view of the subject by covering a broad spectrum of ideas and tools. The detailed bibliography aims to direct the reader to further topics. To explain it with a simple metaphor: using this book should make you more familiar with a country's map, culture, and main attractions rather than imparting details of every street in just one city. Both things are useful at times.

The term “multiple time scale dynamics” is rather modern. The subject and many of its core ideas are much older. For example, “singular perturbation theory” or “multiscale systems” encompass a larger variety of topics than what I present here. On the one hand, no serious multidimensional spatial problems are considered in this book. Furthermore, there are many singularly perturbed problems that have very little to do with dynamical systems. On the other hand, ordinary differential equations (ODEs) with multiple time scales already contain motivation, technique, and intuition for more complicated scenarios.

Classical singular perturbation theory for multiple time scale systems provides many asymptotic techniques centered on series expansions, matching, and averaging. These methods are still indispensable today, and this book gives an overview of them. However, the details are not covered, since many excellent introductory texts are available. The last two decades have brought major additional progress with a particular focus on geometric ideas as well as powerful numerical algorithms. A major goal of this book was to merge several viewpoints with a wide variety of different techniques into a unified framework. Another reason for the broad choice of topics was to make it easier for students and researchers new to the field to get a much quicker overview.

Again, I would like to warn the reader that this book is obviously not a mathematical monograph aiming at a complete treatment of the entire field of multiple time scales. Some readers, particularly students, may wonder how a book of over 700 pages can be only an “introduction,” but let me point out that most chapters, and even many five-page sections, in this book in fact deserve their own mathematical monograph of 300 pages or more. A few such books have

been written, while many exist only in a distant, happier future. I encourage my colleagues working in the field—you know who you are—to begin work on such projects and fill in the missing mathematical details that I decided to leave out in order to make the subject much more accessible to beginners. Despite the simplifications, there seem to be several advantages of the style of presentation. The great diversity of the subject, ranging from mathematical theory in dynamics, analysis, geometry, topology, stochastics, and numerics to virtually all fields in science and engineering applications, easily becomes visible. The unity and interconnections between different approaches to multiple time scale problems can be identified much more readily. Also, scientists with particular applications in mind should find it easier to spot many potential tools right away, while a “purer” mathematician can use this text as a source book of open mathematical problems. The target audience of the book is senior undergraduates, graduate students, as well as researchers interested in using the theory of multiple time scale dynamics in nonlinear science, either from a theoretical or a mathematical modeling perspective. Section 1.1 provides a more detailed guide to the book.

Now I have the pleasure of thanking several colleagues, collaborators, and institutions that have helped to get this book started, keep it on track, and eventually push it over the finish line. First and foremost, I would like to thank my thesis adviser, John Guckenheimer, for introducing me to the field during my time as a graduate student. Undoubtedly, he shaped my view of the field, and without his support and encouragement, I would never have attempted to undertake a book project on multiple time scale systems. Important influences on this book during my postdoctoral years have come from my colleagues Thilo Gross, Peter Szmolyan, Nils Berglund, and Barbara Gentz. Thilo helped me to form bridges from multiscale dynamics to such seemingly distant areas as ecology, networks, systems biology, and statistical physics. I would like to thank Peter for sharing his tremendous insights into all aspects of geometric multiscale dynamics. Nils and Barbara have been constant sources of inspiration on everything stochastic. Although it is clear that I am responsible for all potential errors that may remain within this version, I would like to thank several colleagues who responded with valuable feedback—alerting me to anything from tiny typos to blatant blunders—in various draft versions of this book: Nils Berglund, Alan Champneys, Hayato Chiba, Mike Cortez, Peter De Maesschalck, John Guckenheimer, Pavel Gurevich, Annalisa Iuorio, Mike Jeffrey, Hans Kaper, Daniel Karrasch, Chris Jones, Ilona Kosiuk, Steven Lade, Gabriel Lord, Anatoly Neishtadt, Clare Perryman, Sofia Piltz, Nikola Popovic, Jens Rademacher, Martin Rasmussen, Martin Riedler, Stephen Schecter, Jan Sieber, Eric Siero, Peter Szmolyan, Frits Veerman, Martin Wechselberger, and Antonios Zagaris.

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During the writing of this book I have also benefited from the generous hospitality and financial support of various institutions, including Cornell University, the Max Planck Institute for Physics of Complex Systems, and the Vienna University of Technology. Furthermore, I would like to thank the Austrian Academy of Sciences for support via the “Austrian Programme for Advanced Research and Technology” and the European Commission for support via a “Marie Curie International Reintegration Grant.” The final push of this project has been supported through the program “Oberwolfach Leibniz Fellows” by the Mathematisches Forschungsinstitut Oberwolfach.

Although it is obvious for an overview book on a topic, let me stress that I do not make any claims to novelty of its content. I have tried to summarize and condense the extensive literature on multiple time scale dynamics into a more accessible expository format. However, I can certainly say that during the writing of this book, several very natural new ideas arose. I hope that the research-oriented reader will have a similar experience and that this book will provide a starting point for new ideas in multiscale dynamics.

Vienna, Austria
2014

Christian Kuehn

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