

3 Perturbation theory

3.1 Interaction picture

Fock space construction in the previous chapter 2.3 (c) in Heisenberg picture

$$i\partial_t |f\rangle = 0$$

$$i\partial_t O(t) = [O(t), H] \quad (3.1)$$

with $O(t) = e^{iHt} O e^{-iHt}$

The field operator $\phi(x)$ indeed follows

from $\phi(\vec{x})$ by $\phi(x) = e^{iHt} \phi(\vec{x}) e^{-iHt}$:

real scalar: $\phi(x) = e^{iHt} \int \frac{d^3p}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{p}}} \left\{ a(\vec{p}) e^{i\vec{p}\vec{x}} + a^\dagger(\vec{p}) e^{-i\vec{p}\vec{x}} \right\} e^{-iHt}$

$$= \int \frac{d^3p}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{p}}} \left\{ a(\vec{p}) e^{-i\omega_{\vec{p}}t + i\vec{p}\vec{x}} + a^\dagger(\vec{p}) e^{i\omega_{\vec{p}}t - i\vec{p}\vec{x}} \right\} \quad (3.2)$$

with $e^{iHt} a(\vec{p}) e^{-iHt} = a(\vec{p}) e^{-i\omega_{\vec{p}}t}$

$$(3.3)$$

Eq. (3.3) follows with

$$H a(\vec{p}) = a(\vec{p}) (H - \omega_{\vec{p}}) \quad (3.4)$$

with $H = \frac{1}{2} \int \frac{d^3 p}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{p}}} a^\dagger(\vec{p}) a(\vec{p})$

$$\begin{aligned} \Rightarrow e^{iHt} a(\vec{p}) e^{-iHt} &= a(\vec{p}) e^{i(H - \omega_{\vec{p}})t} e^{-iHt} \\ &= a(\vec{p}) e^{-i\omega_{\vec{p}}t} \end{aligned} \quad (3.5)$$

Similarly: $e^{iHt} a^\dagger(\vec{p}) e^{-iHt} = a^\dagger(\vec{p}) e^{i\omega_{\vec{p}}t}$

Schrödinger picture:

$$i \partial_t |f(t)\rangle = H |f\rangle$$

$$i \partial_t \sigma = 0$$

with $|f(t)\rangle = e^{-iHt} |f\rangle$

Time evolution op. $U(t, t') := e^{-iH(t-t')}$

acting either on states (Schrödinger) or on operators (Heisenberg)

Remark: Causality is encoded in the op. $\phi(x)$:

$$[\phi(x), \phi(y)] = 0 \quad \text{for } (x-y)^2 < 0$$

(space-like)

(3.6)

This follows with $\phi = \int \frac{d^3 p}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{p}}} \left\{ a(\vec{p}) e^{-ipx} + a^\dagger(\vec{p}) e^{ipx} \right\}$

$$\begin{aligned} [\phi(x), \phi(y)] &= \int \frac{d^3 p}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{d^3 q}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{\omega_{\vec{p}}} \frac{1}{\omega_{\vec{q}}} \left\{ [a(\vec{p}), a^\dagger(\vec{q})] e^{-ipx+iqy} \right. \\ &\quad \left. + [a^\dagger(\vec{p}), a(\vec{q})] e^{ipx-iqy} \right\} \\ &= \int \frac{d^3 p}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{p}}} e^{-ip(x-y)} - \int \frac{d^3 p}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{p}}} e^{ip(x-y)} \end{aligned}$$

e.g. 2.93, p. 32 \rightarrow $= \int \frac{d^4 p}{(2\pi)^3} \delta(p^2 - m^2) \Theta(p^0) e^{-ip(x-y)}$ (3.7)

$$- \int \frac{d^4 p}{(2\pi)^3} \delta(p^2 - m^2) \Theta(p^0) e^{ip(x-y)}$$

$$\Rightarrow \boxed{[\phi(x), \phi(y)] = 0 \quad \text{for } (x-y)^2 < 0}$$

(3.8)

Proof of (3.8):

$$\int \frac{d^4 p}{(2\pi)^3} \delta(p^2 - m^2) \Theta(p^0) e^{i p \cdot (x-y)} \quad (3.9)$$

$$= \int \frac{d^4 p}{(2\pi)^4} \delta(p^2 - m^2) \Theta(p^0) e^{i p \cdot \Lambda(x-y)}$$

with $\Lambda \in SO(1,3) : p^2 > 0 \ \& \ p^0 > 0 : (\Lambda p)^0 > 0$

For space-like $x-y$ there exist $\Lambda \in SO(1,3)$,

with

$$\Lambda(x-y) = -(x-y)$$

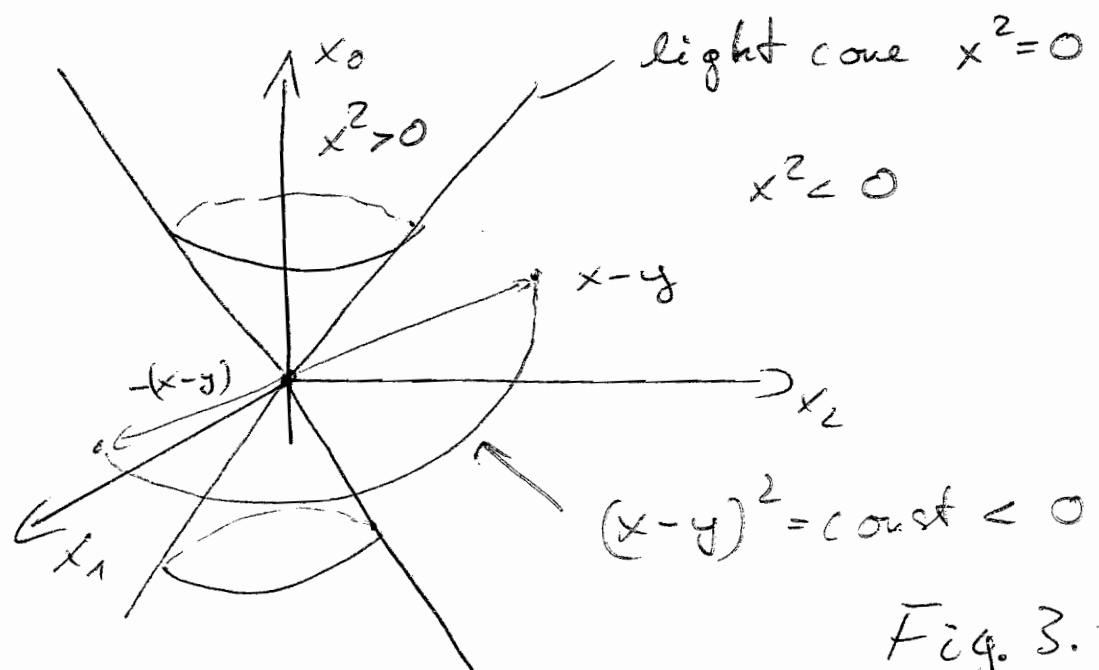


Fig. 3.1

Note that for $(x-y)^2 > 0$ there exist

no $\Lambda \in SO(1,3)$ with $\Lambda(x-y) = -(x-y)$!

Proof: See Fig. 3.1

Lagrangian density:

$$\mathcal{L}(\phi) = \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} \phi(x) (-\partial^2 - m^2) \phi(x)}_{\mathcal{L}_0(\phi)} + \underbrace{\mathcal{L}_{\text{int}}(\phi)}_{\substack{\uparrow \\ \text{interaction} \\ (3.10)}}$$

here $\mathcal{L}_{\text{int}}(\phi) = -V(\phi)$ polynomial
in ϕ

\Rightarrow Hamiltonian density:

$$\mathcal{H}(\pi, \phi) = \underbrace{\frac{1}{2} \pi(x)^2 + \frac{1}{2} m^2 \phi^2}_{\mathcal{H}_0} + \mathcal{H}_{\text{int}}(\phi) \quad (3.11)$$

with $\mathcal{H}_{\text{int}}(\phi) = V(\phi)$

Hamiltonian bounded from below:

$$\boxed{V(\phi) = \frac{\lambda}{4!} \phi(x)^4} \quad (3.12)$$

- higher terms excluded by renormalisability (in 4d)
- ϕ^3 term spoils symmetry $\phi \rightarrow -\phi$
- ϕ^4 -theory is 'working horse' of QFT

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Standard method in QFT: perturbation theory

- consider $\lambda \ll 1$ and expand observables, e.g. scattering amplitudes, in orders of λ : interaction is perturbation of free case!

⇒ Interaction picture:

- operators $O(t)$ evolve in time with free Hamiltonian $H_0 = \int d^3x \mathcal{H}_0$
 $i\partial_t O = [O, H_0] \Rightarrow O(t) = e^{iH_0 t} O e^{-iH_0 t}$ (3.13)

- states $|f\rangle$ evolve with
 $i\partial_t |f\rangle = H_{int} |f\rangle$ (3.14)

Note that $[H_0, H_{int}] \neq 0$!

$$\Rightarrow \partial_t H_{int} \neq 0 \quad \because H_{int} = H_{int}(t)$$

Hence we have

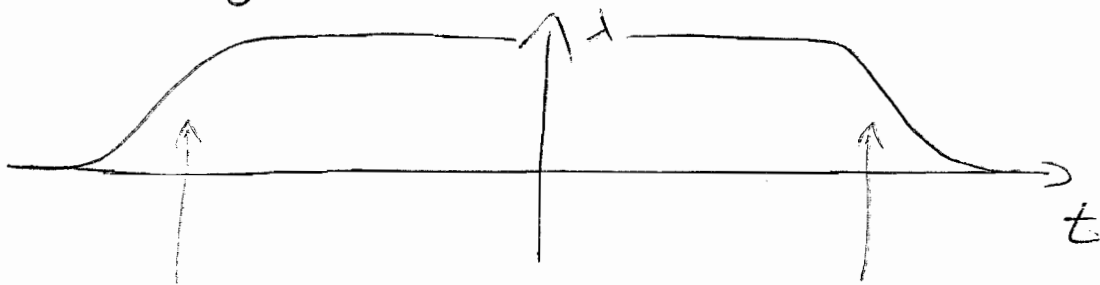
$$|f(t)\rangle = U(t, t_0) |f(t_0)\rangle \quad (3.15)$$

with
$$i \partial_t U(t, t_0) = H_{int}(t) U(t, t_0)$$

Unitary time-evolution op. defines
the S-matrix

$$S = \lim_{\substack{t_0 \rightarrow -\infty \\ t \rightarrow +\infty}} U(t, t_0) \quad (3.16)$$

Strictly speaking



λ is adiabatically switched on/off

$$\Rightarrow | \text{state } t \rightarrow -\infty \rangle = |i\rangle \leftarrow \text{free}$$

$$| \text{state } t \rightarrow +\infty \rangle = |f\rangle \leftarrow$$

Proper treatment: LSZ-formalism

Construction of $U(t, t_0)$:

Infinitesimal form of eq. (3.14), p. 4-1

$$\begin{aligned} |f(t+\Delta t)\rangle &= |f(t)\rangle - i\Delta t H_{int}(t) |f(t)\rangle \\ &= (1 - i\Delta t H_{int}(t)) |f(t)\rangle \\ &= (1 - i\Delta t H_{int}(t)) (1 - i\Delta t H_{int}(t-\Delta t)) |f(t-\Delta t)\rangle \end{aligned}$$

Iteration: (3.17)

$$\Rightarrow |f(t+\Delta t)\rangle = \underbrace{\prod_{n=0}^N (1 - i\Delta t H_{int}(t - n\Delta t))}_{U(t+\Delta t, t - N\Delta t)} |f(t - N\Delta t)\rangle \quad (3.18)$$

Expansion in powers of Δt :

$$\begin{aligned} U(t+\Delta t, t - N\Delta t) &= 1 + (-i)\Delta t \sum_{m=0}^N H_{int}(t - m\Delta t) \\ &\quad + (-i)^2 (\Delta t)^2 \sum_{n < m} H_{int}(t - n\Delta t) H_{int}(t - m\Delta t) \\ &\quad + \dots \end{aligned}$$

$\Delta t \rightarrow 0$ with $N\Delta t = t - t_0$

$$\begin{aligned} \Rightarrow & 1 + (-i) \int_{t_0}^t dt' H_{int}(t') \\ & + (-i)^2 \int_{t_0}^t dt' \int_{t_0}^{t'} dt'' H_{int}(t'') H_{int}(t') \\ & + \dots \end{aligned} \quad (3.19)$$

Finally

$$\boxed{U(t, t_0) = T \exp \left\{ -i \int_{t_0}^t dt' H_{\text{int}}(t') \right\}}$$

(3.20)

with $T A(t) B(t') = A(t) B(t') \Theta(t-t') + B(t') A(t) \Theta(t'-t)$

For example

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{1}{2} T \int_{t_0}^t dt' H_{\text{int}}(t') \int_{t_0}^t dt'' H_{\text{int}}(t'') \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \left\{ \int_{t_0}^t dt' H_{\text{int}}(t') \int_{t_0}^{t'} dt'' H_{\text{int}}(t'') \right. \\ & \quad \left. + \int_{t_0}^t dt'' H_{\text{int}}(t'') \int_{t_0}^{t''} dt' H_{\text{int}}(t') \right\} \\ &= \int_{t_0}^t dt' H_{\text{int}}(t') \int_{t_0}^{t'} dt'' H_{\text{int}}(t'') \end{aligned} \quad (3.21)$$

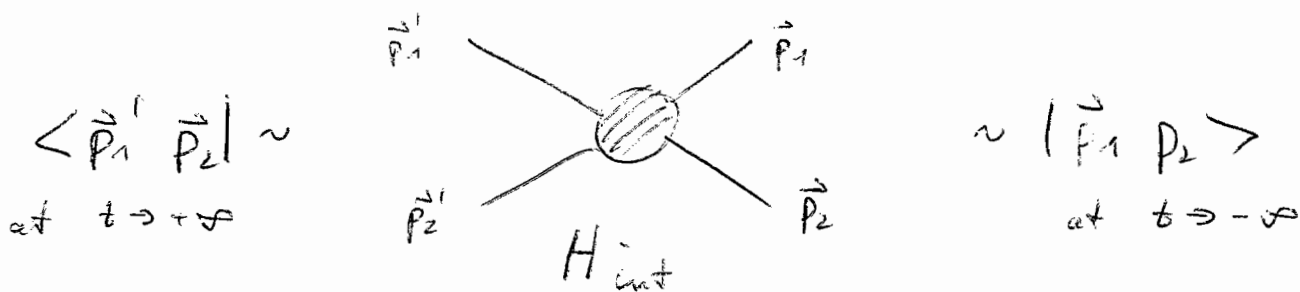
Remark: $H_{\text{int}} = \int d^3x \phi^4(x) \sim a^2 a^{\dagger 2}$

creates 2 particles and annihilates

them: $\langle 0 | H_{\text{int}} | 0 \rangle$ infinite

vacuum processes

Example: 2 to 2 scattering



no scattering

S-matrix: $S = \mathbb{1} + iT$

$\leftarrow O(\lambda)$

In our case

$$iT_{fi} \underset{\substack{\uparrow \\ \text{infinities}}}{\approx} -i \langle 0 | a(\vec{p}_1') a(\vec{p}_2') \lambda/4! \int d^4x \phi^4(x) a^\dagger(\vec{p}_1) a^\dagger(\vec{p}_2) | 0 \rangle$$

$$\text{with } \phi(x) = \int \frac{d^3p}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{p}}} \left\{ a(\vec{p}) e^{-ipx} + a^\dagger(\vec{p}) e^{ipx} \right\} \quad (3.22)$$

We use $[a(\vec{p}), a^\dagger(\vec{q})] = (2\pi)^3 2\omega_{\vec{p}} \delta(\vec{p} - \vec{q})$ to

pull the a 's in H_{int} to the right: $\int d^4x \phi^4(x) \sim a^{\dagger 2} a^2$

$$\Rightarrow iT_{fi} \approx -i\lambda \left[(2\pi)^4 \delta^4(p_1 + p_2 - p_1' - p_2') \right]$$

\uparrow
 Matrix element \mathcal{M}

\uparrow
 energy-momentum conservation

(3.23)

$$iT_{fi} =: i\mathcal{M} (2\pi)^4 \delta^4(p_1 + p_2 - p_1' - p_2')$$

$$\text{with } i\mathcal{M} = -i\lambda$$

(i) Normal ordering:

$$: a(\vec{p}_1) a^\dagger(\vec{p}_2) : = a^\dagger(\vec{p}_2) a(\vec{p}_1) \quad (3.24)$$

e.g. Hamiltonian in free scalar theory

eq. 2.62, p. 23:

$$\begin{aligned} : H_0 : &= \frac{1}{2} \int \frac{d^3 p}{(2\pi)^3} : \frac{1}{2} a^\dagger(\vec{p}) a(\vec{p}) + \frac{1}{2} a(\vec{p}) a^\dagger(\vec{p}) : \\ &= \frac{1}{2} \int \frac{d^3 p}{(2\pi)^3} a^\dagger(\vec{p}) a(\vec{p}) \quad (3.25) \end{aligned}$$

no infinite vacuum terms

(ii) normal ordered Hint already gives eq. (3.23).

$$\begin{aligned} \lambda/4! \int d^4 x : \phi^4(x) : &\sim \lambda/4! : a^{\dagger 2} a^2 + a^\dagger a a^\dagger a + a a^\dagger a a \\ &\quad + a^\dagger a^2 a^\dagger + a a^{\dagger 2} a + a^2 a^{\dagger 2} : \\ &\sim \lambda/4 a^{\dagger 2} a^2 \quad (3.26) \end{aligned}$$

(iii) Difference gives 'vacuum contributions'

$$\begin{aligned} H_{\text{int}} &= : H_{\text{int}} : + \lambda/8 \int d^4 x \left(\int \frac{d^3 p}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{p}}} \right)^2 \quad (3.27) \\ &\quad + (a^\dagger a, a a^\dagger)\text{-terms} \quad [a, a^\dagger]^2 \quad \searrow \quad ()^2 \end{aligned}$$

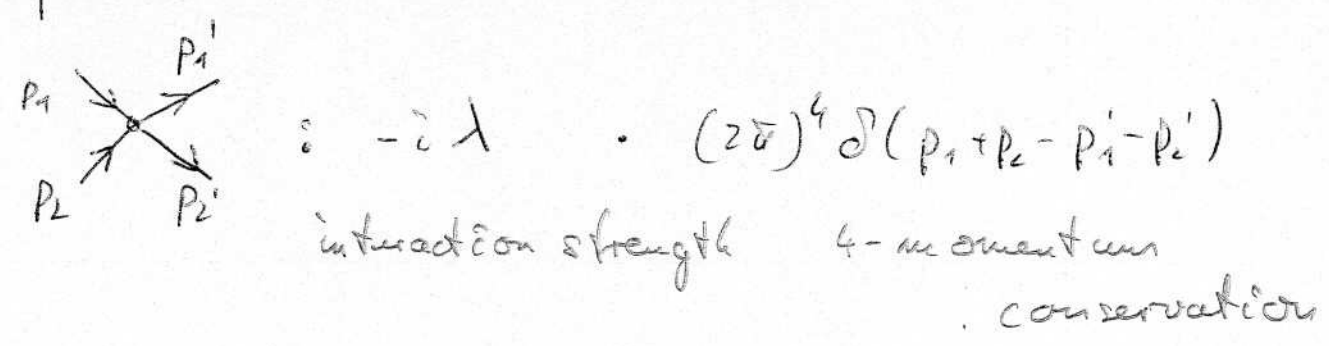
Computation of (3.23) : eq. (3.26)

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{\lambda}{4} \prod_i \int \frac{d^3 q_i}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{q}_i}} e^{-i x \cdot (\vec{q}_3 + \vec{q}_4 - \vec{q}_2 - \vec{q}_1)} \langle 0 | a(\vec{p}_1) a(\vec{p}_2) a^\dagger(\vec{q}_1) a^\dagger(\vec{q}_2) a(\vec{q}_3) a(\vec{q}_4) a^\dagger(\vec{p}_1) a^\dagger(\vec{p}_2) | 0 \rangle \\ &= 4 \frac{\lambda}{4} \prod_i \int \frac{d^3 q_i}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{2\omega_{\vec{q}_i}}{2\omega_{\vec{q}_i}} \delta^3(\vec{p}_1 - \vec{q}_1) \delta^3(\vec{p}_2 - \vec{q}_2) \delta^3(\vec{p}_1 - \vec{q}_3) \delta^3(\vec{p}_2 - \vec{q}_4) \\ &= \lambda e^{-i x \cdot (p_1 + p_2 - p_1' - p_2')} \cdot e^{-i x \cdot (q_1 + -q_4)} \end{aligned}$$

and

$$\int d^4 x e^{-i x \cdot (p_1 + p_2 - p_1' - p_2')} = (2\pi)^4 \delta^4(p_1 + p_2 - p_1' - p_2')$$

Interpretation:



vacuum parts:

$$\langle 0 | a(\vec{p}_1) a(\vec{p}_2) a^\dagger(\vec{p}_1') a^\dagger(\vec{p}_2') | 0 \rangle$$

$$-i\lambda \left(\begin{array}{c} p_1 \quad p_2' \\ \text{---} \\ p_1 \quad p_2' \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} p_1 \quad p_1' \\ \text{---} \\ p_1 \quad p_2' \end{array} \right) \cdot \int d^4x \phi^2$$

$$-i\lambda \left[\begin{array}{c} p_1 \quad p_1' \\ \text{---} \\ p_1 \quad p_1' \end{array} \cdot \begin{array}{c} \text{loop} \\ p_2 \quad p_2' \end{array} + (p_1 \leftrightarrow p_2) + (p_1' \leftrightarrow p_2') + (p_1 \leftrightarrow p_2, p_1' \leftrightarrow p_2') \right]$$

loop contribution

First term:

$$\langle 0 | a(\vec{p}_1) a(\vec{p}_2) a^\dagger(\vec{p}_1') a^\dagger(\vec{p}_2') | 0 \rangle \underbrace{(1 - i\lambda \int d^4x \phi^2)}_{\text{exp}\{-i\lambda \int d^4x \phi^2\}} + \mathcal{O}(\lambda^2)$$

Phase/loops are infinite: call for appropriate treatment

Core example:

two-point fct. : propagator

(i) Start in Heisenberg picture:

vacuum of full theory : $|\Omega\rangle$

$$\text{with } i\partial_t |\Omega\rangle = 0 \quad (3.28)$$

Operators evolve with full Hamiltonian, i.e.

$$i\partial_t \phi_H = [\phi_H, H]$$

$$\text{with } \phi_H = e^{-iHt} \phi(0, \vec{x}) e^{iHt}$$

(3.29)

Link to interaction picture:

interaction picture states $|f\rangle_I$ evolve with H_{int}

$$|f(t)\rangle_I = U(t, 0) |f(0)\rangle_I \quad (3.30)$$

operators

$$i\partial_t \phi_I = [\phi_I, H_{int}] \quad (3.31)$$

It follows: (4th tutorial: $U(t,0) = e^{iH_0 t} e^{-iH t}$)

$$\phi_H(x) = U(0, x_0) \phi_I(x) U(x_0, 0) \quad (3.32)$$

with $\phi_H(x) |f\rangle_H = U(0, x_0) \phi_I(x) U(x_0, 0) |f\rangle_H$

and $i \partial_t U(x_0, 0) |f\rangle_H = H_{int} U(x_0, 0) |f\rangle_H$

It is tempting to identify $U(x_0, 0) |f\rangle_H$ with the interaction picture states $|f(t)\rangle_I$.

At $t \rightarrow \pm \infty$, λ is switched off adiabatically, and $|f\rangle_I$ tend to free in/out states. We

have

$$\langle \Omega | U(0, x_0) = \langle \Omega | \overset{U(x_0, 0)^{-1}}{U(0, \infty)} U(\infty, x_0)$$

adiabaticity: $\langle \Omega | U(0, \infty) |n\rangle_I \langle n | U(-\infty, x_0)$

$i n\text{-particle}_{free}(t = -\infty) \xrightarrow{U} |n\text{-particle}\rangle_{full}$

$$= \langle \Omega | U(0, \infty) |0\rangle \langle 0 | U(-\infty, x_0)$$

Please, see p. 51a

Also:

$$U(x_0, 0) |\Omega\rangle = U(x_0, -\infty) |0\rangle \langle 0 | U(-\infty, 0) |\Omega\rangle$$

Note that the denominator in (3.36) is (a product of two) phases, see p. 51a. We again use the adiabaticity, as in (3.34), and get

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \langle \Omega | u(0, \infty) | 0 \rangle^{-1} \langle 0 | u(-\infty, 0) | \Omega \rangle^{-1} \\
 \text{p. 51a} \rightarrow & = \langle 0 | u(\infty, 0) | \Omega \rangle \langle \Omega | u(0, -\infty) | 0 \rangle \\
 \text{3.34} \rightarrow & = \langle 0 | u(-\infty, \infty) | 0 \rangle \\
 & = \langle 0 | T \exp \left\{ -i \int dt H_{int}(t) \right\} | 0 \rangle \quad (3.38)
 \end{aligned}$$

We also have for the numerator of (3.36)

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \langle 0 | u(\infty, x^0) \phi_I(x) u(x^0, y^0) \phi_I(y) u(y^0, \infty) | 0 \rangle \\
 & = \langle 0 | T \phi_I(x) \phi_I(y) \exp \left\{ -i \int dt H_{int}(t) \right\} | 0 \rangle \quad (3.37)
 \end{aligned}$$

Finally, with $\phi_I = \phi$ and the analogous result for $y^0 > x^0$,

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \langle \Omega | T \phi_H(x) \phi_H(y) | \Omega \rangle \\
 & = \frac{\langle 0 | T \phi(x) \phi(y) \exp \left\{ -i \int dt H_{int}(t) \right\} | 0 \rangle}{\langle 0 | T \exp \left\{ -i \int dt H_{int}(t) \right\} | 0 \rangle} \quad (3.38)
 \end{aligned}$$

$$|\langle \Omega | u(0, \varphi) | 0 \rangle| = 1 :$$

$$(i) \quad |\langle \Omega | u(0, x^0) | \rangle| = 1 \quad \text{from } u \text{ being unitary:}$$

$$\begin{aligned} |\langle \Omega | u(0, x^0) | \rangle|^2 &= \langle \Omega | u(0, x^0) u^\dagger(0, x^0) | \Omega \rangle \\ &= \langle \Omega | \Omega \rangle = 1 \end{aligned}$$

$$(ii) \quad |\langle 0 | u(-\varphi, x^0) | \rangle|^2 = 1 \quad \text{from } u \text{ being unitary}$$

and $\langle 0 | 0 \rangle = 1$

From (i) and (ii) it follows that

$$|\langle \Omega | u(0, \varphi) | 0 \rangle| = 1. \quad \text{Hence}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \Omega | u(0, \varphi) | 0 \rangle^{-1} &= \langle \Omega | u(0, \varphi) | 0 \rangle^* \\ &= \langle 0 | u^\dagger(0, \varphi) | \Omega \rangle \end{aligned}$$

Eq. (3.38) is straight forwardly extended to

$$\begin{aligned} & \langle \Omega | T \phi_H(x_1) \dots \phi_H(x_n) | \Omega \rangle \\ &= \frac{\langle 0 | T \phi(x_1) \dots \phi(x_n) e^{-i \int dt H_{int}} | 0 \rangle}{\langle 0 | T e^{-i \int dt H_{int}} | 0 \rangle} \end{aligned} \quad (3.39)$$

Remarks:

(i) The denominator in (3.38), (3.39) is a phase. For example, the linear term in λ is

$$\begin{aligned} -i \langle 0 | \int dt H_{int} | 0 \rangle &= -i \lambda \langle 0 | \int d^4x \phi^4 | 0 \rangle \\ &= -i \lambda \int d^4x \left(\int \frac{d^3q}{(2\pi)^3} \frac{1}{2\omega_{\vec{q}}} \right)^2 \end{aligned} \quad (3.40)$$

\Rightarrow cancels vacuum term in (3.27)

(ii) The phase factor is infinite, as

are the vacuum contributions in

the numerator: the infinities cancel!