

## Self-organized quantization and oscillations on continuous fixed-energy sandpiles

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Atmospheric self-organization and activator-inhibitor dynamics in biology provide examples of checkerboard-like spatio-temporal organization. We study a simple model for local activation-inhibition processes. Our model, first introduced in the context of atmospheric moisture dynamics, is a continuous-energy and non-Abelian version of the fixed-energy sandpile model. Each lattice site is populated by a non-negative real number, its energy. Upon each timestep all sites with energy exceeding a unit threshold re-distribute their energy at equal parts to their nearest neighbors. The limit cycle dynamics gives rise to a complex phase diagram in dependence on the mean energy  $\mu$ : For low  $\mu$ , all dynamics ceases after few re-distribution events. For large  $\mu$ , the dynamics is well-described as a diffusion process, where the order parameter, spatial variance  $\sigma$ , is removed. States at intermediate  $\mu$  are dominated by checkerboard-like period-two phases which are however inter-spersed by much more complex phases of far longer periods. Phases are separated by discontinuous jumps in  $\sigma$  or  $\partial\sigma/\partial\mu$ —akin to first and higher-order phase transitions. Overall, the energy landscape is dominated by few energy levels which occur as sharp spikes in the single-site density of states and are robust to noise.

**Authors:** Dr JENSEN, Gorm Gruner (Niels Bohr Institute); HAERTER, Jan (Niels Bohr Institute, Copenhagen University)

**Presenter:** HAERTER, Jan (Niels Bohr Institute, Copenhagen University)

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