

A new leading contribution to neutrinoless double beta decay

Ubirajara van Kolck
IPN Orsay

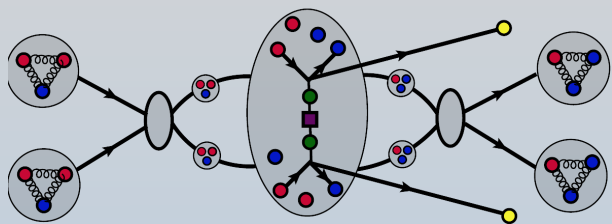
salle des séminaires du CENBG

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The Standard Model (SM) of particle physics accidentally conserves lepton number (L) at the classical level. In the absence of unobserved light particles, the simplest deviation from the SM is expected to come from the only dimension-five operator that can be constructed from SM fields. This operator provides a natural explanation for the small values of neutrino masses, which give rise to neutrino flavor oscillations. Essentially the only practical way to test the concomitant L violation is the neutrinoless double-beta ($0\nu 2\beta$) decay of heavy nuclei, for which extensive experimental efforts exist world-wide. The level at which this process occurs for given neutrino masses and mixings depends on the strong interactions that govern nuclear physics. I will show that in addition to the well-known uncertainty



stemming from the many-body problem, there is a leading-order contribution from the QCD scale that has not been included in most calculations of the $0\nu 2\beta$ amplitude.