



**Neutrino Mass and Baryon Number Non-Conservation  
in Superstring Models**

**R.N. Mohapatra\***

Department of Physics and Astronomy  
University of Maryland  
College Park, MD 20742, U.S.A.

and

**J.W.F. Valle\*\***

Dept. de Fisica Teorica  
Univ. Autonoma de Barcelona  
Bellaterra, Barcelona, Spain

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Abstract

We propose new mechanisms for understanding neutrino masses in superstring models that contain  $E_6$ -singlet zero mass fields after compactification. We show that the low energy gauge group of these models can be phenomenologically acceptable. We then comment on  $\Delta B = 1$  and  $\Delta B = 2$  baryon number violating processes in these models.

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1. Recently, there has been a great deal of activity in superstring theories with the gauge group  $E_8 \times E_8'$ .<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup> The zero slope limit of these theories leads to an anomaly free ten dimensional  $E_8 \times E_8'$  Yang-Mills theory coupled to  $N = 1$  supergravity. When six extradimensions are compactified<sup>3</sup> to a Calabi-Yau manifold with  $SU(3)$ -holonomy, an  $N = 1$  locally supersymmetric four dimensional grandunified theory based on gauge group  $E_8' \times E_6$  emerges with  $N_g$  copies of massless  $\{27\}$  dimensional (under  $E_6$ ) and  $b_{1,1}$  pairs of  $\{27\} + \overline{\{27\}}$  chiral superfields (where  $b_{1,1}$  is the Betti-Hodge number). By an appropriate choice of<sup>3,4,5</sup> the Calabi-Yau space, one can have  $N_g = 3$  or  $4$ . One can then assume the observed matter fields (quarks and leptons) to belong to the  $\{27\}$  -dimensional representations of  $E_6$ . This model, therefore, has all the right ingredients for being a candidate theory that unifies all matter and all interactions in nature.<sup>6</sup>

Even though this program of unification appears very attractive, several potential difficulties appear as soon as one starts to study its detailed phenomenological implications: too fast proton decay, potentially large neutrino masses, problem of light Higgs multiplets, and lack of a proper mechanism for supersymmetry breaking. In this paper, we will concern ourselves with only the first three problems. We will exhibit mechanisms for understanding small neutrino masses using light  $E_6$ -singlet fields. These models require the existence of light Higgs fields with specific quantum numbers. We show that this requirement can be satisfied for phenomenologically acceptable low energy gauge groups. In some of these models, the  $SU(2)_L$  doublet Higgs responsible for symmetry breaking must arise from matter superfields. This leads us to discuss the question of baryon non-conservation such as proton-decay and neutron-anti-neutron oscillation in these models. We comment on the possibility that neutron-anti-neutron oscillation may be observable in this class of

models under certain circumstances while avoiding catastrophic proton decay.

To exhibit the problem with the neutrino masses, we note that these theories contain both the left and the right-handed neutrinos; as a result, a large Dirac mass (of order of the charged lepton mass) for neutrinos arises naturally after the breaking of  $SU(2)_L \times U(1)_Y$  gauge symmetry. The usual solution for this problem is to employ the "see saw" mechanism,<sup>7</sup> where, by appropriate choice of the Higgs multiplets and symmetry breaking, a large Majorana mass is generated for the right-handed neutrinos. Unfortunately, in superstring models, the Higgs multiplet that can lead to a large Majorana mass for the right-handed neutrino is absent. As a result, new mechanisms have recently been considered to solve this problem.<sup>8,9,10</sup> They can be divided into three categories: (i) Low scale B-L breaking<sup>8</sup> via non-zero v.e.v. for the superpartner of  $\nu_R$ ; (ii) Intermediate scale B-L breaking and use of higher dimensional operators;<sup>9</sup> (iii) Use of  $E_6$ -singlet Higgs superfields.<sup>10</sup> It is the purpose of this paper to exhibit a detailed model that uses the scenario (iii) and then show that all these models can lead to observable neutron-anti-neutron oscillation, while at the same time avoiding a rapid proton decay.

2. The first difficulty in obtaining an acceptable pattern of neutrino masses in superstring models arises from the presence of new exotic neutral fermions beyond the usual left- and right-handed neutrinos. This can be seen from the decomposition of {27} - dimensional representation of  $E_6$  under the  $[SO(10), SU(5)]$  subgroups:

$$\begin{aligned}
\{27\} = & \quad [16,10] \quad + \quad [16,\bar{5}] \quad + \quad [16,1] \\
& \quad (u,d;u^c,e^c) \quad + \quad (d^c;v,e) \quad + \quad v^c \\
& \quad + [10,\bar{5}] \quad + \quad [10,5] \quad + \quad [1,1] \\
& \quad (D^c,N,E^-) \quad + \quad [D,N^c,E^+] \quad + \quad n_0
\end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

The various particles are identified below each group representation. In what follows, we represent a matter multiplet by  $\psi$  and a Higgs multiplet by  $H$ . The five neutral leptons are:  $(\nu, \nu^c, N, N^c, n_0)$ . The new neutral leptons  $(N, N^c)$  must be massive enough so that their contribution to the present energy density of the universe is below the critical density. As far as  $n_0$  is concerned, it can be massless or superheavy depending on whether it couples to superheavy or light gauge bosons. Assuming that  $N, N^c$  and  $n_0$  decouple from low energies, we are still left with a Dirac neutrino obtained by combining  $\nu_L$  and  $\nu_L^c$  with a mass  $m_D \approx O(m_e) \approx O(\text{MeV})$ . The simplest way to avoid this problem would be to set  $m_D = 0$  by choosing the appropriate Yukawa coupling to vanish. This would, of course, be, theoretically, unnatural but even phenomenologically, it will put a lower limit the scale of the B-L breaking (or the mass of the second  $Z'$ -boson) from considerations of nucleosynthesis,<sup>11</sup> which may be too constraining from the point of view of a "natural" gauge hierarchy.

To solve this problem, we seek ways by which  $\nu^c$  acquires a large mass. A Majorana mass for  $\nu^c$  would require breaking (B-L) by two units and is therefore not possible to have at the tree level. They can, however, be induced in either of the following ways:

(i) A higher dimensional term<sup>9</sup> of the form  $\frac{1}{M} \{27\}_\psi \{\bar{27}\}_H \cdot \{27\}_\psi \cdot \{\bar{27}\}_H$  leads to an effective Majorana mass for the right-handed neutrino  $\nu^c$ :

$$M_{\nu^c} = V_{BL}^2 / M \quad (2)$$

where

$$\langle \tilde{\nu}_H^c \rangle = V_{BL} .$$

This leads to a light neutrino mass

$$m_\nu \approx m_D^2 M / V_{BL}^2 . \quad (3)$$

Choosing  $M \approx M_{\text{Planck}} \approx 10^{18}$  GeV ,  $m_D \approx 1$  MeV requires that  $V_{BL} \approx 10^{11}$  GeV leads to  $m_\nu \approx .1$  eV .

(ii) The second possibility is to use another neutral fermion which is B-L neutral to form a  $\Delta(B-L) = 1$  Dirac mass term. This mechanism was used in ref. 8; where the extra neutral fermion chosen was the gaugino corresponding to B-L symmetry. In this paper, we replace the gaugino by an  $E_6$ -neutral fermion (denoted by  $S$ ), that may be present in superstring models. The scenario outlined below realizes this mechanism.

3. In this section, we present two models for neutrino masses. We first outline the details of the models that are relevant only to the discussion of neutrino masses and in a subsequent section discuss the associated low energy gauge group. Both the models we present will require  $b_{1,1} = 2$  i.e. two pairs of  $\{27\} + \overline{\{27\}}$  representations that act as Higgs fields denoted by  $H$  and  $J$  respectively. We will then assume that the  $SO(10)$  singlet components (denoted by  $n_0$ ) and  $[SO(10), SU(5)]$  representation  $[16,1]$  (denoted by  $\nu^c$ ) remain light. The reason for this is that we would like to give them intermediate scale vev (without breaking supersymmetry i.e. maintaining a D-flat direction).

a) Model I:

To write down the most general low energy superpotential in this theory, we first denote the various superfields in the model as follows: using

[SO(10), SU(5)] notation: ( $0 = (u, d)$  ;  $\ell = (v, e^-)$ )

$$[16, 10]: 0, u^c, e^c$$

$$[16, \bar{5}]: d^c, \ell$$

$$[16, 1]: v^c$$

$$[10, 5]: D, (N^c, E^+) \equiv E$$

$$[10, \bar{5}]: D^c, (N, E^-) = E^c$$

$$[1, 1]: n_0.$$

Denoting the components of the Higgs field by a subscript J and H and suppressing all generation indices, we can write the super potential as follows:  $P_I = P_0 + P_I'$  where

$$\begin{aligned} P_0 = & \lambda_1 00D + \lambda_2 0u^c E + \lambda_3 0d^c E^c \\ & + \lambda_4 0D^c \ell + \lambda_5 u^c d^c D^c + \lambda_6 u^c D e^c \\ & + \sum_{a=\text{matter}, H} \lambda_7^a d^c D v_a^c + \sum_{a=\text{matter}, H} \lambda_8^a D^c D n_{0,a} + \sum_{a=\text{matter}, H} \lambda_9^a \ell E v_a^c \\ & + \sum_{a=\text{matter}, H} \lambda_{10}^a E E^c n_{0,a} + \lambda_{11} \ell E^c e^c \\ & + \beta_1 v_H^c \bar{v}_J^c S + \beta_2 n_{0,H} \bar{n}_{0,J} S \end{aligned} \quad (4a)$$

and

$$P_I' = \lambda_{12} n_0 \bar{n}_{0,J} S + \lambda_{13} v^c \bar{v}_J^c S \quad (4b)$$

In  $P_I'$ , Higgs field H contributions are eliminated by imposing a discrete symmetry under which the  $E_6$ -singlet  $S$  and  $J, \bar{J}$  are odd and all other fields are even. We first assume that the  $SO(10)$  singlet component of  $H$  acquires a v.e.v.  $V_6$  along a D-flat direction; subsequently, two components of  $\bar{J}$ , one along the  $SO(10)$  singlet and another along the  $[16,1]$  (or  $v^c$  direction) acquire the following effective v.e.v.:

$$\langle \bar{J}(n_0) \rangle = \mu \quad \text{and} \quad \langle \bar{J}(v^c) \rangle = V_{BL} \quad (5)$$

with

$$\mu \ll V_{BL} \ll V_6 .$$

The neutral fermions  $N$  and  $N^c$  pick up large mass  $V_6$  and decouple from low energies. Also, it gives large mass to the D-quark, which decouples from the low energy sector. We further assume  $\beta_1 \ll \lambda_{13}$ . Defining,  $v^{c'} = v^c + (\beta_1/\lambda_{13}) v_H^c$  and  $n'_0 = (\beta_2 n_{0H} + \lambda_{12} n_0)/(\beta_2^2 + \lambda_{12}^2)^{1/2}$ , we find (the combinations orthogonal to  $v^{c'}$  and  $n'_0$  remain massless and invisible), the  $4 \times 4$  mass matrix for the remaining neutral fermions  $v, v^{c'}, n'_0, S$ , to be of the form:

$$\begin{array}{c} \\ \\ \\ \\ \end{array} \begin{array}{ccccc} & v & n'_0 & v^{c'} & S \\ \begin{array}{c} v \\ n'_0 \\ v^{c'} \\ S \end{array} & \left( \begin{array}{ccccc} 0 & 0 & m_D & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 & \mu \\ m_D & 0 & 0 & V_{BL} \\ 0 & \mu & V_{BL} & 0 \end{array} \right) & & & \end{array} \quad (6)$$

It is easy to see that on diagonalizing this matrix, we obtain two Dirac

particles with masses:

$$m_1 = \frac{m_{D^\mu}}{V_{BL}}$$

and

$$M_2 = V_{BL} . \quad (6a)$$

If we choose  $V_{BL} \approx 10^{12}$  GeV , this implies that for  $\mu < 10^6$  GeV ,  $m_1 < 1$  eV . Thus, in this picture neutrino is a Dirac particle with a naturally small mass. We point out that this is a completely new mechanism for generating light Dirac neutrinos and could be useful in general supersymmetric models. In this model, neutrinoless double beta decay will be forbidden. Furthermore, we envisage this large intermediate scale having its origin in dimension four terms in the superpotential.

b. Model II

This model differs from model I in two respects. First, we add two  $E_6$ -singlet fields  $S_1$  and  $S_2$  and impose the discrete symmetry under which  $J$ ,  $\bar{J}$  and  $S_2$  fields are odd and all other fields are even. The superpotential for this model has the form

$$P_{II} = P_0 + P'_{II} \quad (7)$$

where

$$P'_{II} = \lambda_{14} n_0 \bar{n}_{0,J} S_2 + \lambda_{15} v^c \bar{v}_J^c S_2 + \lambda_{16} n_0 \bar{n}_{0,H} S_1 + \lambda_{17} v^c \bar{v}_H^c S_1 . \quad (7a)$$

The second difference from Model I is in the pattern of symmetry breaking which we assume to be as follows:

$$\langle n_{0,H} \rangle = \langle \bar{n}_{0,H} \rangle = v_6$$

and



$$\langle v_J^c \rangle = \langle v_{\bar{J}}^c \rangle = V_{BL} . \quad (8)$$

As a result,  $N$ ,  $N^c$  and  $n_0$  disappear from the low energy spectrum, leaving a  $3 \times 3$  mass matrix of the following type (assuming  $\beta_1 \ll \lambda_{15}$ )

$$\begin{array}{c} \nu \\ \nu^c \\ S_2 \end{array} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & m_D & 0 \\ m_D & 0 & V_{BL} \\ 0 & V_{BL} & 0 \end{pmatrix} . \quad (9)$$

This gives a massless Majorana neutrino:

$$\nu_{\text{phys}} \approx \nu - \frac{m_D}{V_{BL}} S_2 \quad (10)$$

and a heavy Dirac neutrino with mass  $\approx V_{BL}$ . In this approximation, the amplitude for neutrinoless double beta-decay vanishes identically. However, supersymmetry breaking could induce a Majorana mass for  $S_2$ ,  $m_S$  leading to a small Majorana mass for the neutrino,  $m_\nu \approx m_S \cdot (m_D/V_{BL})^2$ . For  $m_D \approx 1$  MeV for the first generation,  $V_{BL} \gtrsim 1$  TeV, a value of  $m_S \approx 10^2 - 10^3$  GeV would lead to  $m_{\nu_e} \lesssim .1$  to  $1$  eV, which is consistent with all observations. Again, this mechanism can be trivially extended to higher generations by adding two  $E_6$ -singlets per generation. It may be noted that this mechanism is similar to that discussed in ref. 8.

It is also worth pointing out that one can construct a variant of this model without  $S_1$ , with the same result for neutrino masses. The only new feature is that  $n_0$  remains massless. However, since it does not couple to any light gauge bosons, it remains invisible. This will also not contribute to the expansion of the universe at the nucleosynthesis epoch.

4. In the previous section, we have assumed certain light Higgs multiplets to obtain realistic neutrino masses . We have to show that this can happen without enlarging the gauge group to an unacceptable level. The procedure for deciding this has been outlined in ref. 12. One has to make sure that, under the discrete group  $\mathcal{H} \subset E_6$  which is a subgroup of the discrete group in the Calabi-Yau manifold,  $K$ , the light fields must remain invariant, i.e.

$$\phi(gx) = U_g \phi(x) \equiv \psi(x) \quad (11)$$

where  $x \in K$  and  $U_g \in \mathcal{H}$ . It is known that, in order to leave  $SU(3)_c \times SU(2)_L$  as an unbroken subgroup following the "flux-loop" breaking mechanism,<sup>13</sup> the  $U_g$  is parametrized by six numbers  $(x_1, \dots, x_6)$  (i.e.  $U_g = e^{ix_i H_i}$  where  $H_i$  belong to the Cartan subalgebra of  $E_6$ ) with  $(x_1, \dots, x_6) = (-c, c, a, b, c, 0)$ . It is then straightforward to check that for  $v^c$  and  $n_0$  components to remain light, we must have  $a = -c$  and  $b = 3c$ . The unbroken low energy group after flux breaking mechanism is then given by  $SU(3)_c \times SU(2)_L \times SU(2) \times U(1) \times U(1)$ , if the discrete group  $\mathcal{H}$  is  $Z_n$ ,  $n \geq 7$ , and  $SU(3)_c \times SU(3)_L \times SU(3)_R$ , if  $\mathcal{H} = Z_3$ . In table I, we list the low energy groups for other discrete symmetries. An important point to note is that the low energy electroweak gauge group after the intermediate scale is phenomenologically acceptable in all cases except the ones corresponding to  $Z_2$ ,  $Z_4$  and  $Z_5$  symmetry, where  $SU(5)$  or  $SU(6)$  gauge group survives below the Planck scale. Moreover, the nature of these groups is important in determining the couplings of any extra light Z-boson (as in model II) at low energies.

The next question to ask is where do the light Higgs doublets that break  $SU(2)_L \times U(1)_Y$  symmetry and give mass to fermions come from? This depends on

the discrete symmetry in question. If the discrete symmetry is  $Z_3$ , we find that two  $SU(2)_L$  doublets  $(N, E^-)$  and  $(E^+, N^C)$  from the  $\{27\} + \overline{\{27\}}$  Higgs multiplets remain light and can, therefore, serve as light doublets that break  $SU(2)_L \times U(1)_Y$  symmetry. These models are similar to the ones discussed by del Aguila et al. (ref. 6). In this case, the constraints of  $\sin^2 \theta_W$  require that  $v_{BL} \approx v_6 \approx 10^{11}$  GeV.

On the other hand, in other cases, where no light  $SU(2)_L$ -doublet survives from  $\{27\} + \overline{\{27\}}$  pair we propose that they come from matter multiplets; more specifically we have in mind the two doublets (per generation)  $(N, E^-)$  and  $(N^C, E^+)$ . One can assign vev's to  $\tilde{N}$  and  $\tilde{N}^C$  to break  $SU(2)_L \times U(1)$ . From eqn. (4a), we see that the  $\lambda_2, \lambda_3, \lambda_9$  and  $\lambda_{11}$  terms can then lead to fermion masses. In this class of models, where light Higgs doublets  $(E, E^C)$  arise as part of the matter multiplets, we assume as before that both axial B-L and vector B-L symmetry are broken at an intermediate scale. We then have to tune  $\lambda_{10} \approx 0$  to keep the  $E$  and  $E^C$  light. This is a situation we would like to avoid and our hope is that some day, a discrete symmetry will emerge from an appropriate Calabi-Yau space that will justify the vanishing of  $\lambda_{10}$ .

5. We now discuss baryon number violation in these models. A typical diagram that makes a dominant contribution to proton decay is shown in fig. 1 and we estimate the  $\Delta B = 1$  amplitude

$$A_{\Delta B \approx 1} \approx \frac{\lambda_1 \lambda_4 m_{\tilde{g}}}{M_D M_{Sq}^2} \left( \frac{\alpha_s}{4\pi} \right) . \quad (12)$$

where  $m_{\tilde{g}}$ ,  $M_{Sq}$  and  $M_D$  represent the gluino, squark and D-quark masses respectively and  $\lambda_i$  are coupling constants in eqn. (4). Choosing  $M_D \approx 10^{12}$  GeV,  $m_{\tilde{g}} \approx 10$  GeV, we find,  $A_{\Delta B \approx 1} \approx 10^{-19} \lambda_1 \lambda_4 \text{ GeV}^{-2}$ . Since the couplings

$\lambda_i$  in our superpotential eqn. (4a) are related at the Planck scale, it is reasonable to expect them to be  $\approx 10^{-5}-10^{-6}$ . Choosing  $\lambda_1 \approx \lambda_4 \approx 10^{-6}$ , we find  $A_{\Delta B=1} \approx 10^{-31} \text{ GeV}^{-2}$ , which is consistent with present experiments. We expect the photino to be heavier than the proton so that proton decay via photino emission is avoided.

Turning now to  $\Delta B = 2$  transitions, we first note that it requires  $\langle v_H^c \rangle$ , or  $\langle v_\psi^c \rangle \neq 0$ . Therefore, in the two models for neutrino mass that we have presented here, since  $\langle v_H^c \rangle = 0 = \langle v_\psi^c \rangle$ ,  $\Delta B = 2$  transition is forbidden. On the other hand, in our model II (as well as in other models discussed in literature<sup>9</sup>), one might expect  $\langle v_H^c \rangle = v_{BL}^H \neq 0$  or  $\langle v_\psi^c \rangle \neq 0$ . In such a case, a non-zero  $\Delta B = 2$  amplitude arises from the diagram<sup>14</sup> in Fig. 2. Its magnitude is

$$A_{\Delta B=2} \approx \left( \frac{\lambda_5 \lambda_7 V_{BL}^a}{M_D} \right)^2 \frac{4\pi\alpha_s}{M_{sq}^4 m_{\tilde{g}}}, \quad a = H \text{ or } \psi. \quad (13)$$

The corresponding  $n-\bar{n}$  mixing strength is given by  $\delta m_{n-\bar{n}} \approx A_{\Delta B=2} |\phi(0)|^4$ . In our model II, we prefer  $V_{BL}^H \ll M_D$  in order not to spoil the neutrino mass results. For instance, if we choose,  $V_{BL}^H \leq 10^6 \text{ GeV}$ , using  $|\phi(0)|^4 \approx 10^{-3} \text{ GeV}^6$ , we find,  $\delta m_{n-\bar{n}} \approx 10^{-25} \lambda_5^2 \lambda_7^2 \text{ GeV}$ , which for  $\lambda_5 \approx \lambda_7 \approx 10^{-2}$  can lead to mixing times,  $\tau_{n-\bar{n}} \approx 6 \times 10^9 \text{ sec}$ . This may be barely accessible in future experiments with intense cold neutron beams. In the type II models of neutrino masses,<sup>9</sup>  $V_{BL}^H \approx 10^{12} \text{ GeV}$ . In such models, smaller values of  $\lambda$  ( $\sim 10^{-5}$ ) can also lead to observable  $n-\bar{n}$  oscillation. Finally, it is possible that all three fields in the matter field self coupling in eqn. (4) do not belong to the same generation, thereby weakening the constraints on  $\lambda_1$  and  $\lambda_4$ . This may improve the situation with respect to  $n-\bar{n}$  oscillation.

In conclusion, we have outlined scenarios for understanding small neu-

trino masses in realistic superstring models. In these models, catastrophic proton decays are avoided. Furthermore, under certain circumstances, they may lead to barely observable neutron-antineutron oscillation.

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#### Figure Captions

Fig. 1. Box diagram for  $\Delta(B-L) = 0$  decay mode of the proton.

Fig. 2. Tree diagram for  $\Delta B = 2$  transitions such as  $N-\bar{N}$  oscillation.

Discrete Symmetry

Gauge Groups Below  
Planck Scale (prior to  
intermediate scale breaking)

$Z_2$	$SU(6) \times SU(2)_L$
$Z_3$	$SU(3)_C \times SU(3)_L \times SU(3)_R$
$Z_4$	$SU(5) \times SU(2)_L \times U(1)$
$Z_5$	$SU(5) \times SU(2)_N \times U(1)$
$Z_6$	$SU(3)_C \times U(1)_L \times SU(2)_L \times SU(3)_R$
$Z_n, n \geq 7$	$SU(3)_C \times SU(2)_L \times SU(2)_N \times U(1) \times U(1)$

Table I: Low energy gauge groups below Planck scale for different choice of discrete symmetries.



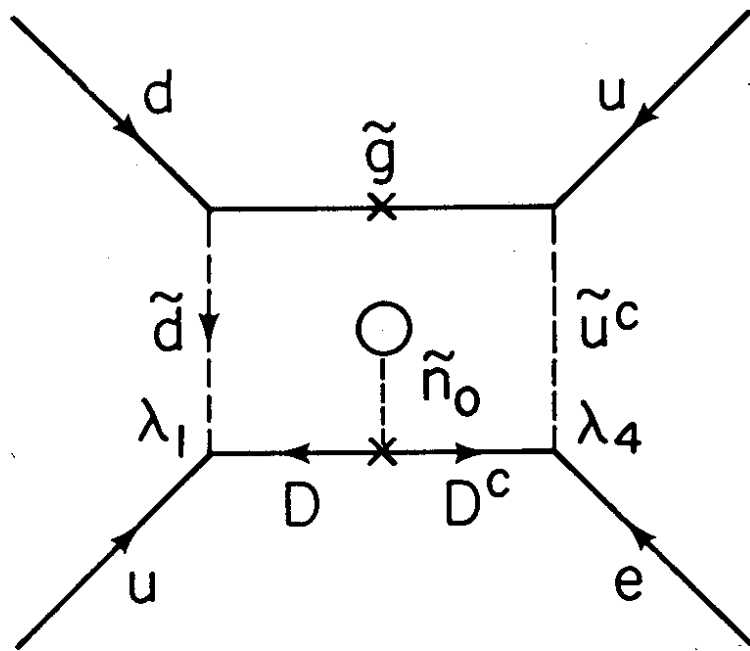


Fig. 1

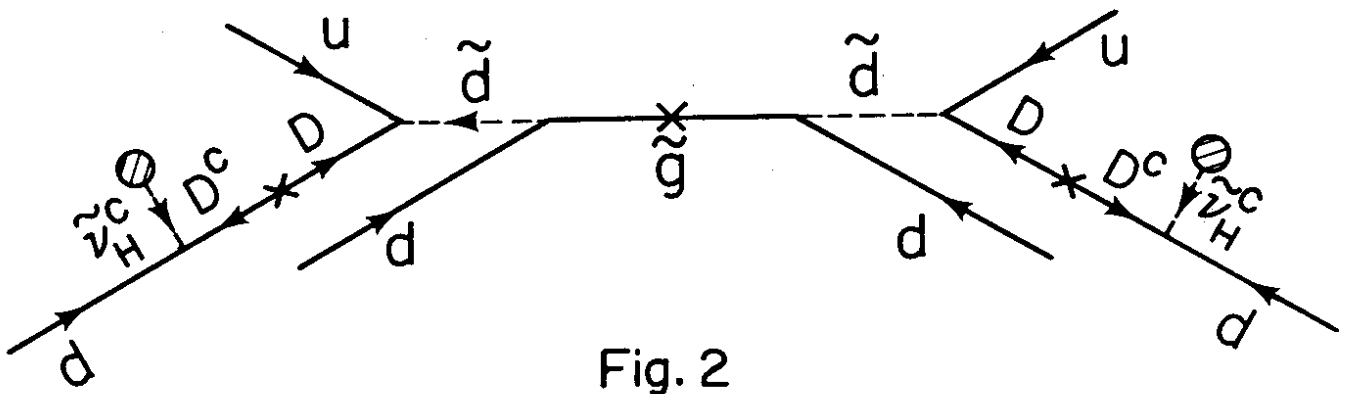


Fig. 2