

# A mean-field game model for pedestrian flow with minimal time

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joint work with Filippo Santambrogio

VII Partial differential equations,  
optimal design and numerics  
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# Outline

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Existence of an equilibrium
- 3 The MFG system
- 4 Open problems and ongoing work
- 5 Simulations

# Introduction

## Macroscopic models for pedestrian flow

- Goal: propose and study a nice **mean-field game (MFG)** model for **pedestrian flow** in a certain domain  $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^d$  (or also a graph, a manifold, etc.)
- Macroscopic models for pedestrian flow:
 
$$\partial_t \rho + \operatorname{div}(\rho v) = 0.$$
  - $\rho(t, x)$ : density of people at position  $x \in \Omega$  in time  $t$ .
  - $v(t, x, \rho)$ : velocity.
  - Conservation law for pedestrians (recall Tuesday's talk by R. Colombo).
- How do people choose  $v$ ?
- The MFG approach: people solve an **optimal control problem**, which depends on the **average behavior** of other people.

# Introduction

## Mean field games

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- **continuum of players**: macroscopic model, density  $\rho$ .
- **differential games**: players' dynamics given by a controlled differential equation  $\dot{\gamma}(t) = f(t, \gamma(t), u(t))$ .
- **rationality**: players minimize some **cost**.
- **indistinguishability**:  $f$  and the cost are the same for all players.
- **average behavior**:  $f$  and the cost depend on the current player's state  $\gamma(t)$  and on  $\rho$ .

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- **average behavior**:  $f$  and the cost depend on the current player's state  $\gamma(t)$  and on  $\rho$ .

Fixed point: given  $\rho$ , players evolve according to optimal trajectories, and this evolution gives  $\rho$ .

# Introduction

## Mean field games

Origins of MFGs: [Lasry, Lions; 2006], [Lasry, Lions; 2006], [Lasry, Lions; 2007], [Huang, Malhamé, Caines; 2006], [Huang, Caines, Malhamé; 2007]. Motivation from problems in economics and engineering.

Goal: provide an approximation for Nash equilibria of games with  $N$  symmetric players for large  $N$ .

# Introduction

## Minimal time mean field games

MFG model for pedestrian flow:

- People move in  $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^d$ , non-empty, open, and bounded.
- Goal: leave  $\Omega$  through  $\Gamma \subset \partial\Omega$ , non-empty and closed.
- Initially:  $\rho_0 \in \mathcal{P}(\overline{\Omega})$ .
- Dynamics: people choose their speed up to a maximal value  
 $\dot{\gamma}(t) = f(\rho_t, \gamma(t))u(t), \quad u(t) \in \overline{B}(0, 1) = \text{closed unit ball}.$



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Typically:

$$f(\rho, x) = K \left[ \int_{\overline{\Omega}} \chi(x - y) d\rho(y) \right],$$

- $\chi$ : convolution kernel,
- $K$ : positive decreasing function.

# Introduction

## Minimal time mean field games

Most MFGs in the literature consider optimization criteria in fixed time  $T$  (same for all agents).

Our model:

- Optimization criterion: agents want to leave  $\Omega$  through  $\Gamma$  in **minimal time**.

$$\inf\{T \geq 0 \mid \dot{\gamma}(t) = f(\rho_t, \gamma(t))u(t), u : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \bar{B}(0, 1),$$

$$\gamma(0) = x, \gamma(T) \in \Gamma, \gamma(t) \in \bar{\Omega} \text{ for } t \in [0, T],$$

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- For simplicity,  $\Gamma = \partial\Omega$  in this talk (room with no walls).

Main question: characterize the evolution of the density  $\rho$ .

# Existence of an equilibrium

## The Lagrangian approach

- **Eulerian approach:**  $\rho : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(\overline{\Omega})$  is a **curve on the set of measures**. Motion is described by the density and the velocity field of the population.

# Existence of an equilibrium

## The Lagrangian approach

- **Eulerian approach:**  $\rho : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \mathcal{P}(\overline{\Omega})$  is a **curve on the set of measures**. Motion is described by the density and the velocity field of the population.
- **Lagrangian approach:**  $Q \in \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{C})$ , where  $\mathcal{C} = \mathcal{C}(\mathbb{R}_+, \overline{\Omega})$ , is a **measure on the set of curves**. Motion is described by the trajectory of each agent.

Lagrangian framework for mean field games already used in the literature, cf. e.g. the survey in [Benamou, Carlier, Santambrogio; 2017].

Link between Eulerian and Lagrangian:  $\rho_t = e_{t\#}Q$ , where  $e_t : \mathcal{C} \rightarrow \overline{\Omega}$  is the evaluation at time  $t$  of a curve,  $e_t(\gamma) = \gamma(t)$ .

# Existence of an equilibrium

## The Lagrangian approach

### Definition

A measure  $Q \in \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{C})$  is a **Lagrangian equilibrium** of the mean field game if  $e_{0\#}Q = \rho_0$  and  $Q$ -almost every  $\gamma \in \mathcal{C}$  is optimal for

$$\inf\{T \geq 0 \mid \dot{\gamma}(t) = f(e_{t\#}Q, \gamma(t))u(t), u : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \overline{B}(0, 1),$$

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In the sequel, we consider

- the **existence** of a Lagrangian equilibrium;
- the **characterization** of equilibria by the MFG system;
- open problems and **simulations**.

# Existence of an equilibrium

## Main result

### Theorem

Assume that  $f : \mathcal{P}(\overline{\Omega}) \times \overline{\Omega} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_+$  is Lipschitz continuous and

$$f_{\max} = \sup_{\substack{\mu \in \mathcal{P}(\overline{\Omega}) \\ x \in \overline{\Omega}}} f(\mu, x) < +\infty, \quad f_{\min} = \inf_{\substack{\mu \in \mathcal{P}(\overline{\Omega}) \\ x \in \overline{\Omega}}} f(\mu, x) > 0.$$

Then *there exists a Lagrangian equilibrium*  $Q \in \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{C})$  for this game.

With no loss of generality (change in time scale):  $f_{\max} = 1$ .

# Existence of an equilibrium

## Main result

### Theorem

Assume that  $f : \mathcal{P}(\overline{\Omega}) \times \overline{\Omega} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_+$  is *Lipschitz continuous* and

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Distance in  $\mathcal{P}(\overline{\Omega})$ : *Wasserstein distance*

$$W_1(\mu, \nu) = \min_{\substack{\gamma \in \mathcal{P}(\overline{\Omega} \times \overline{\Omega}) \\ \pi_{1\#}\gamma = \mu, \pi_{2\#}\gamma = \nu}} \int_{\overline{\Omega} \times \overline{\Omega}} |x - y| \, d\gamma(x, y).$$



# Existence of an equilibrium

## Strategy of the proof

Strategy of the proof:

- For fixed  $Q \in \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{C})$ , let  $\Gamma_Q \subset \mathcal{C}$  be the set of all optimal trajectories for the measure  $Q$ . Define

$$F(Q) = \{\tilde{Q} \mid e_{0\#}\tilde{Q} = \rho_0 \text{ and } \tilde{Q}(\Gamma_Q) = 1\}.$$

Equilibrium  $\iff$  fixed point of the set-valued map  $F$ , i.e.,  
 $Q \in F(Q)$ .

- Prove required properties of  $F$  to apply Kakutani fixed point theorem. Needs some properties of the **value function**

$$\begin{aligned} \tau_Q(t_0, x_0) &= \inf\{T \geq 0 \mid \dot{\gamma}(t) = f(e_{t\#}Q, \gamma(t))u(t), u : \mathbb{R}_+ \rightarrow \bar{B}(0, 1), \\ &\gamma(t_0) = x_0, \gamma(t_0 + T) \in \partial\Omega, \gamma(t) \in \bar{\Omega} \text{ for } t \in [t_0, t_0 + T], \\ &\dot{\gamma}(t) = 0 \text{ for } t > t_0 + T\}. \end{aligned}$$

# Existence of an equilibrium

## Strategy of the proof

Dynamics:  $\dot{\gamma}(t) = f(e_{t\#}Q, \gamma(t))u(t)$  with  $f$  and  $u$  bounded by 1  $\implies$   
optimal trajectories are 1-Lipschitz continuous.

We consider only  $Q \in \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{C})$  supported on 1-Lipschitz continuous trajectories. Let  $\mathcal{Q}$  be the set of such  $Q$ .

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We consider only  $Q \in \mathcal{P}(\mathcal{C})$  supported on 1-Lipschitz continuous trajectories. Let  $\mathcal{Q}$  be the set of such  $Q$ .

### Proposition

- *The inf in  $\tau_Q$  is a min,  $\tau_Q$  is bounded and globally Lipschitz continuous, and  $\mathcal{Q} \ni Q \mapsto \tau_Q(t, x)$  is Lipschitz continuous, uniformly in  $x$  and locally uniformly in  $t$ ;*
- *The set of optimal trajectories  $\Gamma_Q$  is compact  $\forall Q \in \mathcal{Q}$  and  $\mathcal{Q} \ni Q \mapsto \Gamma_Q$  is upper semi-continuous;*
- *$F(Q)$  is non-empty, compact, and convex  $\forall Q \in \mathcal{Q}$ , and  $F$  is upper semi-continuous.*

These properties yield the existence of a fixed point for  $F$ .

# The MFG system

## The Lagrangian approach

We have proved the existence of a **Lagrangian** equilibrium to the minimal time mean field game.

- **Advantage:** easier than to prove than in the Eulerian approach. Application of Kakutani fixed point theorem requires fewer properties of the optimal trajectories.
- **Drawback:** we have no information on  $\rho_t = e_{t\#}Q$ .

**Goal:** characterize  $\tau_Q$  and  $\rho$  as solutions of a system of PDEs.

# The MFG system

## Hypotheses

We use extra assumptions:

### Hypotheses

- $f : \mathcal{P}(\bar{\Omega}) \times \bar{\Omega} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}_+^*$  is given by  $f(\mu, x) = K[E(\mu, x)]$ , with

$$E(\mu, x) = \int_{\bar{\Omega}} \chi(x-y)\eta(y)d\mu(y),$$

$K \in \mathcal{C}^{1,1}(\mathbb{R}_+, \mathbb{R}_+^*)$  is bounded,  $\chi \in \mathcal{C}^{1,1}(\mathbb{R}^d, \mathbb{R}_+)$ , and  $\eta \in \mathcal{C}^{1,1}(\mathbb{R}^d, \mathbb{R}_+)$  with  $\eta(x) = 0$  and  $\nabla\eta(x) = 0$  for  $x \in \partial\Omega$ .

- $\Omega$  satisfies the uniform exterior sphere condition:  $\mathbb{R}^d \setminus \Omega$  is a union of closed balls with the same radius.

# The MFG system

## Main result

### Theorem

Under the previous assumptions,  $\tau_Q$  and  $\rho$  solve the *MFG system*

$$\begin{cases} \partial_t \rho(t, x) - \operatorname{div}_x \left[ f(\rho_t, x) \frac{\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)}{|\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)|} \rho(t, x) \right] = 0, & \mathbb{R}_+ \times \Omega, \\ -\partial_t \tau_Q(t, x) + |\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)| f(\rho_t, x) - 1 = 0, & \mathbb{R}_+ \times \Omega, \\ \rho(0, x) = \rho_0(x), & \overline{\Omega}, \\ \tau_Q(t, x) = 0, & \mathbb{R}_+ \times \partial\Omega. \end{cases}$$

**Continuity equation** satisfied in the sense of distributions,  
**Hamilton–Jacobi equation** satisfied in the viscosity sense.

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**Continuity equation** satisfied in the sense of distributions,  
**Hamilton–Jacobi equation** satisfied in the viscosity sense.

Velocity field:  $v(t, x, \rho_t) = -f(\rho_t, x) \frac{\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)}{|\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)|}$ .

# The MFG system

## Strategy of the proof

**Hamilton–Jacobi equation** can be obtained by standard techniques on optimal control using a dynamic programming principle. But the situation is more subtle for the **continuity equation**. We need some properties of  $\tau_Q$ .



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**Hamilton–Jacobi equation** can be obtained by standard techniques on optimal control using a dynamic programming principle. But the situation is more subtle for the **continuity equation**. We need some properties of  $\tau_Q$ .

$$-\partial_t \tau_Q(t, x) + |\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)| f(\rho_t, x) - 1 = 0.$$

### Proposition

- *There exists  $c > 0$  such that, if  $\partial_t \tau_Q(t, x)$  exists, then  $\partial_t \tau_Q(t, x) \geq c - 1$ .*
- *If  $\tau_Q$  is differentiable at  $(t, x)$ , then  $|\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)| \geq c > 0$ .*
- *$\tau_Q(t + h, \gamma(t + h)) + h = \tau_Q(t, \gamma(t))$  for every  $\gamma \in \Gamma_Q$  (= optimal).*

# The MFG system

## Strategy of the proof

### Corollary

If  $\gamma \in \Gamma_Q$  and  $\tau_Q$  is differentiable at  $(t, \gamma(t))$ , then

$$\dot{\gamma}(t) = -f(p_t, \gamma(t)) \frac{\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, \gamma(t))}{|\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, \gamma(t))|}.$$

$\tau_Q$  is Lipschitz, hence differentiable a.e., but it may be nowhere differentiable along a particular trajectory... we still need more properties of  $\tau_Q$  and the optimal trajectories, which we obtain by applying **Pontryagin Maximum Principle**.

# The MFG system

## Strategy of the proof

### Proposition

If  $\gamma \in \Gamma_Q$ , then  $\gamma \in \mathcal{C}^{1,1}([0, \tau_Q(0, \gamma(0))], \Omega)$ , the optimal control  $u \in \mathcal{C}^{1,1}([0, \tau_Q(0, \gamma(0))], \mathbb{S}^{d-1})$ , and

$$\begin{cases} \dot{\gamma}(t) = f(\rho_t, \gamma(t))u(t), \\ \dot{u}(t) = -\text{Proj}_{T_{u(t)}\mathbb{S}^{d-1}} \nabla_x f(\rho_t, \gamma(t)). \end{cases}$$

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Recall:  $f(\mu, x) = K[E(\mu, x)]$ ,  $E(\mu, x) = \int_{\Omega} \chi(x-y)\eta(y)d\mu(y)$ .

### Proposition

Suppose  $Q \in \mathcal{Q}$  is a Lagrangian equilibrium.

- $(t, x) \mapsto f(e_{t\#}Q, x)$  is also  $\mathcal{C}^{1,1}$ .
- $\tau_Q$  is **locally semiconcave**.

w **semiconcave**:  $x \mapsto w(x) - C|x|^2$  is concave for some  $C > 0$ .

# The MFG system

## Strategy of the proof

### Proposition

Let  $Q \in \mathcal{Q}$  be a Lagrangian equilibrium and  $\gamma \in \Gamma_Q$  (*= optimal*). Then, for every  $t \in (0, \tau_Q(0, \gamma(0)))$ ,  $\tau_Q$  admits a normalized gradient at  $(t, \gamma(t))$  and the optimal trajectory satisfies

$$\dot{\gamma}(t) = -f(e_{t\#}Q, \gamma(t)) \frac{\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, \gamma(t))}{|\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, \gamma(t))|}.$$

$\implies$  Continuity equation with velocity  $-f(e_{t\#}Q, x) \frac{\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)}{|\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)|}$ .

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$\implies$  Continuity equation with velocity  $-f(e_{t\#}Q, x) \frac{\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)}{|\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)|}$ .

### Definition

We say that  $\tau_Q$  admits a **normalized gradient** at  $(t, x)$  if the set

$$\left\{ \frac{p_1}{|p_1|} \in \mathbb{S}^{d-1} \mid p_1 \neq 0 \text{ and } \exists p_0 \in \mathbb{R} \text{ s.t. } (p_0, p_1) \in D^+ \tau_Q(t, x) \right\}$$

contains exactly one element ( $D^+ \tau_Q$  is the super-differential of  $\tau_Q$ ).

The unique element of this set is denoted by  $\frac{\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)}{|\nabla_x \tau_Q(t, x)|}$ .

# Open problems and ongoing work

## Ongoing work:

- $\Gamma \subsetneq \partial\Omega$ . Existence of Lagrangian equilibrium and Hamilton–Jacobi equation with no extra difficulty. But the optimization problem now has state constraints.
- (with Samer Dweik) Regularity properties of  $\rho$ :  
 $\rho_0 \in L^p \stackrel{?}{\Rightarrow} \rho_t \in L^p$ .

## Open problems:

- Uniqueness.
- More general costs with free final time.
- Obtain this model as limit of microscopic models with large population.
- Numerical methods for this model.
- Stochastic dynamics (more classical in MFGs).

# Simulations

## One-dimensional case



$$\Omega = (0, 1);$$

$$\Gamma = \partial\Omega;$$

$$\rho_0 = \delta_l;$$

$$l \in (0, 1).$$

$$\chi(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{1 + \cos\left(\frac{\pi x}{\varepsilon}\right)}{2\varepsilon}, & \text{if } |x| < \varepsilon, \\ 0, & \text{if } |x| \geq \varepsilon, \end{cases}$$

$$\eta(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{1 - \cos\left(\frac{\pi d(x, \partial\Omega)}{\varepsilon}\right)}{2}, & \text{if } d(x, \partial\Omega) < \varepsilon, \\ 1, & \text{if } d(x, \partial\Omega) \geq \varepsilon, \end{cases}$$

$$K(x) = \frac{1}{1 + \left(\frac{2x}{15}\right)^4},$$

$$\varepsilon = \frac{1}{10}.$$



# Simulations

## One-dimensional case



$$\Omega = (0, 1);$$

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$$\rho_0 = \delta_\ell;$$

$$\ell \in (0, 1).$$

$$\rho_t = m\delta_{x(t)} + (1 - m)\delta_{y(t)};$$

$x(t)$ : going left;

$y(t)$ : going right;

$$m \in [0, 1].$$

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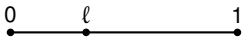
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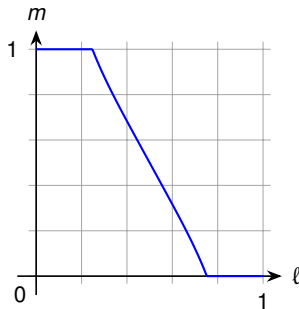
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# Simulations

## One-dimensional case



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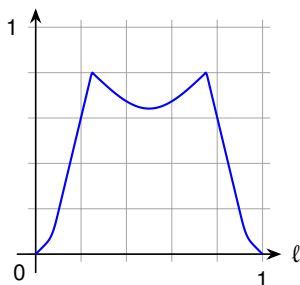
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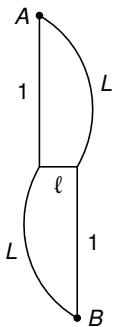
$$\varepsilon = \frac{1}{10}.$$

Exit time



# Simulations

## Braess-type paradox



$\Omega$ : the network;

$\Gamma = \{B\}$ ;

$\rho_0 = \delta_A$ ;

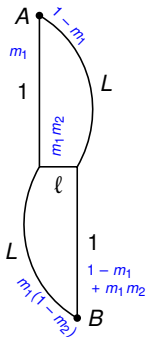
$L \in (1, +\infty)$ ,  $\ell \in (0, 1)$ ;

$\chi$ ,  $K$ , and  $\varepsilon$  as before;

$\eta(y) = 1$  for all  $y \in \Omega$ .

# Simulations

## Braess-type paradox



$\Omega$ : the network;

$\Gamma = \{B\}$ ;

$\rho_0 = \delta_A$ ;

$L \in (1, +\infty)$ ,  $l \in (0, 1)$ ;

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If  $0 < t < T_1$ :

$$\rho_t = m_1 \delta_{x(t)} + (1 - m_1) \delta_{y(t)}.$$

If  $T_1 < t < T_2$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \rho_t = & m_1(1 - m_2) \delta_{x(t)} + m_1 m_2 \delta_{z(t)} \\ & + (1 - m_1) \delta_{y(t)}. \end{aligned}$$

If  $t > T_2$ :

$$\begin{aligned} \rho_t = & m_1(1 - m_2) \delta_{x(t)} \\ & + (1 - m_1 + m_1 m_2) \delta_{y(t)}. \end{aligned}$$

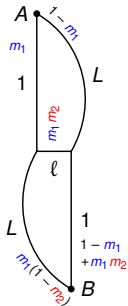
# Simulations

## Braess-type paradox

By symmetry,

$$m_1 = 1 - m_1 + m_1 m_2 \quad \text{and} \quad 1 - m_1 = m_1(1 - m_2)$$

$$\implies m_1 = \frac{1}{2 - m_2}.$$



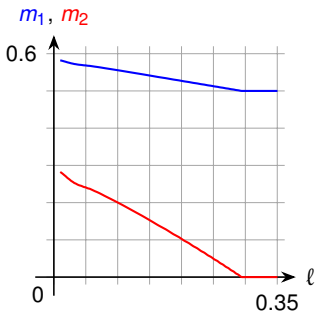
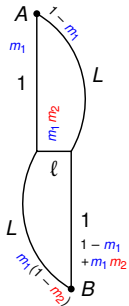
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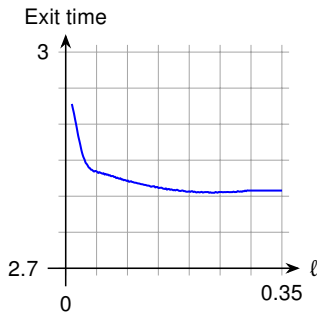
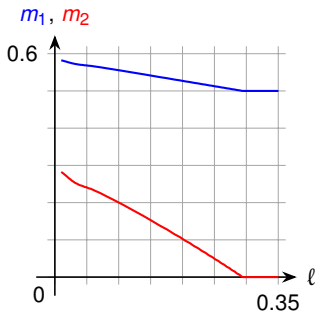
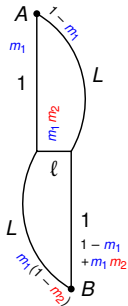
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Introduction  
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Existence of an equilibrium  
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The MFG system  
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Open problems and ongoing work

Simulations  
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