SOME REGULARITY RESULTS FOR A DOUBLE TIME-DELAYED 2D-NAVIER-STOKES MODEL

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Dedicated to Professor Peter E. Kloeden on occasion of his Seventieth Birthday

(Communicated by Xiaoying Han)

Abstract. In this paper we analyze some regularity properties of a double time-delayed 2D-Navier-Stokes model, that includes not only a delay force but also a delay in the convective term. The interesting feature of the model -from the mathematical point of view- is that being in dimension two, it behaves similarly as a 3D-model without delay, and extra conditions in order to have uniqueness were required for well-posedness. This model was previously studied in several papers, being the existence of attractor in the $L^2$-framework obtained by the authors [Discrete Contin. Dyn. Syst. 34 (2014), 4085–4105]. Here regularization properties of the solutions and existence of (regular) attractors for several associated dynamical systems are established. Moreover, relationships among these objects are also provided.

1. Introduction, statement of the problem, and previous results. Consider a bounded domain $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}^2$, $\tau \in \mathbb{R}$, and the following non-autonomous functional Navier-Stokes model

\[
\begin{cases}
\frac{\partial u}{\partial t} - \nu \Delta u + (u(t - \rho(t)) \cdot \nabla)u + \nabla p = f(t) + g(t, u_t) & \text{in } \Omega \times (\tau, \infty), \\
\text{div}u = 0 & \text{in } \Omega \times (\tau, \infty), \\
u = 0 & \text{on } \partial\Omega \times (\tau, \infty), \\
u(x, \tau) = u^\tau(x) & \text{in } \Omega, \\
u(x, \tau + s) = \phi(x, s) & \text{in } \Omega \times (-h, 0),
\end{cases}
\]

2010 Mathematics Subject Classification. Primary: 35Q30, 35Q35, 35B65, 35B41, 37L30.

Key words and phrases. Navier-Stokes equations, nonlinear delay terms, well-posed/ill-posed Navier-Stokes, delayed convective term, regular attractors, tempered universes for non-autonomous dynamical systems.

3929
where \( \nu > 0 \) is the kinematic viscosity, \( u = (u^1, u^2) \) is the velocity field of the fluid, \( p \) is the pressure, \( f \) is a non-delayed external force field, \( g \) is another external force with some hereditary characteristics with memory length bounded by \( h > 0 \), \( u_t \) denotes the delay function \( u_t(s) = u(t + s) \) where it has sense. The delay function \( \rho \) in the convective term is assumed to belong to \( C^1(\mathbb{R}; [0, h]) \) with \( \rho'(t) \leq \rho^* < 1 \) for all \( t \in \mathbb{R} \), and \( u^* \) and \( \phi \) are the initial data in \( \tau \) and \( (\tau - h, \tau) \) respectively.

The study of Navier-Stokes models including delay terms—existence, uniqueness, stationary solutions, exponential decay, existence of attractors, and other issues—is initiated by Caraballo and Real [1, 2, 3], and after that, different questions have been addressed (e.g., [18, 9, 13, 15, 16, 6, 7]).

In particular, the inclusion of a delay term in the convective part is firstly considered in [12] for a Burgers’ equation. Then Planas and collaborators [17, 10, 11] treat problem (1), the analysis of well-posedness (including uniqueness) and an unbounded delay case too. The asymptotic behavior in the sense of attractors in \( L^2 \)-norm is carried out in [4]. It is worth also to mention that in [20] the inclusion of a delay is used as an approximation to a 3D Navier-Stokes model when the length of the delay vanishes. Nevertheless, in the 2D case our interest in the problem is just mathematical, due to the difficulties arising in controlling the norm of the derivatives as cited in the abstract (see also [4]). Our goal in this paper is to improve just mathematical, due to the difficulties arising in controlling the norm of the derivative as cited in the abstract (see also [4]).

Let us first introduce some notation. As usual we will denote by \( H \) and \( V \) the Hilbert spaces that are the closure of \( V \) (infinitely differentiable functions in \( \Omega \) with compact support and free divergence) in the \( L^2 \) and \( H^1 \) norm respectively, and denote their inner products and norms by \( \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle \) and \( \| \cdot \| \) in \( H \), and by \( \| \cdot \|_V \) (product of gradients, thanks to the Poincaré inequality) and \( \| \cdot \|_V \) in \( V \) (see [4] for more details).

We do the identification of the Hilbert space \( H \) with its dual, so we have the chain of dense and compact inclusions \( V \subset H \equiv H' \subset V' \). The duality between elements in \( V' \) and \( V \) will be denoted by \( \langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle \). For short, we introduce the notation \( L^p_X = L^p(-h, 0; X) \), for several choices of \( p \) and \( X \), and its norm will be denoted by \( \| \|_X \). In the same sense, we denote \( C_X = C([-h, 0]; X) \).

Recall that \( A : V \to V' \) given by \( \langle Av, w \rangle = \langle v, w \rangle \), satisfies that \( Au = -P \Delta u \) for all \( u \in D(A) \) (the Stokes operator), where \( P \) is the Leray-Helmholtz projector from \( (L^2(\Omega))^2 \) onto \( H \). The trilinear operator \( b \) associated to Navier-Stokes model is given by

\[
b(u, v, w) = \sum_{i,j=1}^2 \int_{\Omega} u_t \frac{\partial v_j}{\partial x_i} w_j \, dx,
\]

for every functions \( u, v, w : \Omega \to \mathbb{R}^2 \) for which the right-hand side is well defined. In particular, \( b \) is well defined on \( V \times V \times V \), and therefore we can consider the associated bilinear form

\[
B : V \times V \to V'
\]

given by \( B(u, v, w) := b(u, v, w) \). It is well-known (e.g., cf. [19]) that \( b \) satisfies the following inequalities (recall we are in dimension two) for a certain constant \( C > 0 \) depending only on \( \Omega \),

\[
|b(u, v, w)| \leq C|u|^{1/2}||u||^{1/2}||v||^{1/2}||w||^{1/2} \forall u, v, w \in V, \quad (2)
\]

\[
|b(u, v, w)| \leq C|u|^{1/2}|v|^{1/2}||w|^{1/2}||w||^{1/2} \forall u, v, w \in D(A), w \in H. \quad (3)
\]

The delay operator in the right-hand side is \( g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2 \), and we assume that it satisfies the following assumptions:
(H1) for all $\xi \in C_H$, the function $\mathbb{R} \ni t \mapsto g(t, \xi) \in (L^2(\Omega))^2$ is measurable,

(H2) $g(t, 0) = 0$, for all $t \in \mathbb{R}$,

(H3) there exists $L_g > 0$ such that for all $t \in \mathbb{R}$, and for all $\xi, \eta \in C_H$, 

$$|g(t, \xi) - g(t, \eta)| \leq L_g |\xi - \eta|_{C_H},$$

(H4) there exists $C_g > 0$ such that for all $\tau \leq t$ and for all $u, v \in C([\tau - h, t]; H)$, 

$$\int_\tau^t |g(r, u_r) - g(r, v_r)|^2 dr \leq C_g^2 \int_{\tau - h}^t |u(r) - v(r)|^2 dr.$$

Examples of several types of delay operators can be found in [1, Section 3], [3, Sections 3.5 and 3.6] and [9, Section 3].

From (H1)–(H3), for $T > \tau$ and $u \in C([\tau - h, T]; H)$, the function $g_u : [\tau, T] \to (L^2(\Omega))^2$ given by $g_u(t) = g(t, u_t)$ is measurable and belongs to $L^\infty(\tau, T; (L^2(\Omega))^2)$. By using (H4), the mapping 

$$C([\tau - h, T]; H) \ni u \mapsto \tilde{G}(u) := g_u \in L^2(\tau, T; (L^2(\Omega))^2)$$

has a unique extension to a mapping $\tilde{G}$ which is uniformly continuous from $L^2(\tau - h, T; H)$ into $L^2(\tau, T; (L^2(\Omega))^2)$. We will still denote by $g(t, u_t) = \tilde{G}(u)(t)$ for each $u \in L^2(\tau - h, T; H)$, and therefore assumption (H4) will hold for all $u, v \in L^2(\tau - h, T; H)$.

Let us consider that $u^\tau \in H$, $\phi \in L^2_V$, and $f \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}; V')$.

**Definition 1.** A weak solution to (1) is a function $u \in L^\infty(\tau, T; H) \cap L^2(\tau - h, T; V)$ for all $T > \tau$, such that $u(\tau) = u^\tau$, $u_\tau = \phi$, and satisfies 

$$\frac{d}{dt}(u(t), v) + \nu(Au(t), v) + b(u(t - \rho(t)), u(t), v) = (f(t), v) + (g(t, u_t), v) \quad \forall v \in V,$$

where the equation must be understood in the sense of $\mathcal{D}'(\tau, \infty)$.

If $u$ is a weak solution to (1), since there exists a constant $C$ such that for any $v \in V$,

$$|b(u(t - \rho(t)), u(t), v)| \leq C ||u(t - \rho(t)|| ||u(t)||^{1/2} ||v||$$

(where we have used that $b(u, v, w) = -b(u, w, v)$ for all $u, v, w \in V$; (2) and the continuous embedding of $V$ into $H$), we conclude that $B(u(t - \rho(\cdot)), u(\cdot)) \in L^{4/3}(\tau, T; V')$ and $u' \in L^{4/3}(\tau, T; V')$ too. Thus, $u \in C([\tau, \infty); V') \cap C_w(\tau, \infty); H)$. This continuity in time in $V'$ and weakly in $H$ does not seem enough to apply an energy method to gain asymptotic compactness (in the study of the long time behavior). Somehow this indicates the border between an ill-posed and well-posed problems, as we recall now in a new phase-space.

When the initial (memory) data is more regular, namely $\phi \in L^2_V \cap L^2_H$, we can improve the above estimates again using (2).

Some existence results given in those settings (cf. [17, Theorem 2.1] and [4, Theorems 1 and 2]) are summarized in the following result.

**Theorem 1.** Consider $f \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}; V')$, and $g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2$ satisfying assumptions (H1)–(H4). Then, the following statements hold:

(a) If $u^\tau \in H$, $\phi \in L^2_V$, there exists at least one weak solution $u(\cdot; \tau, u^\tau, \phi)$ to (1).
(b) If \( u^\tau \in H \) and \( \phi \in L^2_V \cap L^2_H \), then there exists a unique weak solution to (1), \( u(\cdot; \tau, u^\tau, \phi) \in C([\tau, \infty); H) \), with \( u^\tau \in L^2(\tau; T; V') \) for all \( T > \tau \), and satisfying the energy equality

\[
|u(t)|^2 + 2\nu \int_s^t \|u(r)\|^2 \, dr = |u(s)|^2 + 2 \int_s^t (f(r), u(r)) \, dr + 2 \int_s^t (g(r, u_r), u(r)) \, dr \quad \forall \tau \leq s \leq t. \tag{4}
\]

**Remark 1.** As a by-product of the proof of the above result, it is not difficult to check that the following estimates hold for the weak solution obtained in statement (a) (unique under the assumptions of statement (b)) and also for suitable Galerkin approximations (see (6) below) for any \( T > \tau \):

\[
\|u\|_{L^\infty(\tau, T; H)} \leq (|u^\tau|^2 + C^2_g \|\phi\|^2_{L^2_H} + \nu^{-1}\|f\|_{L^2(\tau, T; V')}^2)\exp((1 + C^2_g)(T - \tau)) =: C_{L^\infty(H)}(\tau, T, u^\tau, \phi),
\]

\[
\|u\|_{L^2(\tau, T; V)}^2 \leq \nu^{-1}(|u^\tau|^2 + C^2_g \|\phi\|^2_{L^2_H} + \nu^{-1}\|f\|_{L^2(\tau, T; V')}^2)
\]

\[+ \nu^{-1}(1 + C^2_g)(T - \tau) C_{L^\infty(H)}(\tau, T, u^\tau, \phi) =: C_{L^2(V)}(\tau, T, u^\tau, \phi). \]

Our goal in this work is to improve some previous results obtained in \([4, 17]\), addressing to the existence of strong solutions and attractors in a higher norm. The structure of the paper is the following: in Section 2 we establish the existence of strong solutions and the regularization effect in 2D. Estimates leading to the continuity of involved processes and absorbing properties are obtained in Section 3. Section 4 is devoted to prove the asymptotic compactness via an energy method. In order to do that, previous uniform estimates in several spaces are deduced. The required computations for these results are more involved than in the non-delayed case due mainly to the extra difficulty of the delay in the convective term. Finally, in Section 5 all the previous results allow us to ensure the existence of several families of pullback attractors in higher norms. Several relationships between them (and also compared with those obtained in \([4]\)) will be pointed out too.

2. **Regularization effect and strong solution.** One can also expect to introduce a concept of strong solution for problem (1).

**Definition 2.** A strong solution to (1) is a weak solution that also satisfies \( u \in L^\infty(\tau, T; V) \cap L^2(\tau, T; D(A)) \) for all \( T > \tau \).

**Remark 2.** Observe that if \( \phi \in L^2_V \cap L^\infty_H \) and \( u \) is a strong solution for (1), from (3) it yields that \( B(u(\cdot - \rho(\cdot)), u(\cdot)) \in L^2(\tau, T; H) \) for all \( T > \tau \). Therefore, if \( f \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}; H) \), then \( u^\tau \in L^2(\tau, T; H) \) for all \( T > \tau \), \( u \in C([\tau, \infty); V) \), and the following energy equality holds,

\[
\|u(t)\|^2 + 2 \int_s^t [\nu|Au(r)|^2 + b(u(r - \rho(r), u(r), Au(r))] \, dr
\]

\[= \|u(s)\|^2 + 2 \int_s^t (f(r) + g(r, u_r), Au(r)) \, dr \quad \forall \tau \leq s \leq t. \tag{5}\]

The following regularizing effect holds for the problem.

**Theorem 2.** Consider \( u^\tau \in H \), \( \phi \in L^2_V \cap L^\infty_H \), \( f \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}; H) \), and \( g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2 \) satisfying assumptions \((H1)-(H4)\). Then, the weak solution \( u \) to
(1) regularizes to a strong solution in the sense that \( u \in L^{\infty}(\tau + \varepsilon, T; V) \cap L^2(\tau + \varepsilon, T; D(A)) \cap C([\tau, \infty); V) \) for all \( T > \tau + \varepsilon > \tau \).

Moreover, if \( u^* \in V \), then \( u \) is indeed a strong solution to (1), so \( u \in C([\tau, \infty); V) \cap L^2_{loc}(\tau, \infty; D(A)) \), and satisfies the energy equality (5).

**Proof.** Consider a special basis of \( H \) formed by normalized eigenfunctions of the Stokes operator, \( \{w_j\}_{j \geq 1} \), with corresponding eigenvalues \( \{\lambda_j\}_{j \geq 1} \) being \( 0 < \lambda_1 \leq \lambda_2 \leq \ldots \) with \( \lim_{j \to \infty} \lambda_j = \infty \). Pose the approximate problems (for each \( k \geq 1 \) of finding \( u^k \in V_k := \text{span}[w_1, \ldots, w_k] \) with \( u^k(t) = \sum_{j=1}^{k} \gamma_{jk}(t)w_j \) such that

\[
\frac{d}{dt}(u^k(t), w_j) + \nu(Au^k(t), w_j) + b(u^k(t - \rho(t)), u^k(t), w_j)
= (f(t), w_j) + (g(t, u^k), w_j), \text{ a.e. } t > \tau, \forall 1 \leq j \leq k,
\]

fulfilled with the initial conditions

\[
u^k(\tau) = P_k u^* \quad \text{and} \quad u^k(\tau + s) = P_k \phi(s) \text{ a.e. } s \in (-h, 0),
\]

where \( P_k \) is the orthogonal projector from \( H \) onto \( V_k \).

Multiplying each equation by \( \lambda_j \gamma_{jk}(t) \), summing from \( j = 1 \) to \( k \), and taking into account (3), we obtain

\[
\frac{1}{2} \frac{d}{dt} \|u^k(t)\|^2 + \nu \|Au^k(t)\|^2 \
\leq C \|u^k(t - \rho(t))\|^{1/2} \|u^k(t - \rho(t))\|^{1/2} \|u^k(t)\|^{1/2} \|Au^k(t)\|^{3/2} \
+ (f(t) + g(t, u^k), Au^k(t)) \text{ a.e. } t > \tau.
\]

Using the Cauchy-Schwartz and Young inequalities

\[
\frac{d}{dt} \|u^k(t)\|^2 + \frac{\nu}{2} \|Au^k(t)\|^2 \leq \tilde{C} \|u^k(t - \rho(t))\|^2 \|u^k(t - \rho(t))\|^2 \|u^k(t)\|^2 \
+ \frac{2}{\nu} |f(t)|^2 + \frac{2}{\nu} |g(t, u^k)|^2 \text{ a.e. } t > \tau,
\]

where \( \tilde{C} = \frac{2 C_4^4}{\nu} \). Integrating in time, using (H4) and Remark 1, we deduce

\[
\|u^k(t)\|^2 + \frac{\nu}{2} \int_t^\tau \|Au^k(r)\|^2 dr \leq \|u^k(s)\|^2 + \tilde{C} \int_s^t \|u^k(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \|u^k(r)\|^2 dr \
+ \frac{2}{\nu} \int_t^\tau |f(r)|^2 dr + \frac{2 C_4^2}{\nu} \int_{\tau-h}^\tau |u^k(r)|^2 dr
\]

for all \( \tau \leq s < t \leq T \), where \( \tilde{C} = \tilde{C} \max\{\|\phi\|_{L^\infty_H}(T), C_{L^\infty(H)}(\tau, T, u^*, \phi)\} \).

In particular, from the above, integrating again with respect to \( s \in [\tau, \tau + \varepsilon] \) (with \( \tau + \varepsilon < T \)), it yields

\[
\|u^k(t)\|^2 \leq \varepsilon^{-1} \int_{\tau}^{\tau+\varepsilon} \|u^k(s)\|^2 ds + \tilde{C} \int_{\tau}^t \|u^k(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \|u^k(r)\|^2 dr \
+ \frac{2}{\nu} \int_t^\tau |f(r)|^2 dr + \frac{2 C_4^2}{\nu} \int_{\tau-h}^\tau |u^k(r)|^2 dr \forall \tau + \varepsilon \leq t \leq T.
\]
Now, applying the Gronwall lemma we obtain that
\[ \|u^k(t)\|^2 \leq \left( e^{-1} \int_{t}^{T} \|u^k(r)\|^2 dr + \frac{2}{v} \int_{t}^{T} |f(r)|^2 dr + \frac{2}{v} C^2 \int_{T-h}^{T} |u^k(r)|^2 dr \right) \exp \left( C \int_{T-h}^{T} \|u^k(r)\|^2 dr \right) \quad \forall t \in [\tau + \varepsilon, T]. \]

From (7) and Remark 1 we conclude that \( \{u^k\} \) is bounded in \( L^\infty(\tau + \varepsilon, T; V) \).
Turning back now to (9) we also obtain that \( \{u^k\} \) is bounded in \( L^2(\tau + \varepsilon, T; D(A)) \).
Passing through the limit in \( k \), we conclude the first claim of the theorem.

Last claim is simpler. If \( u^* \in V \), it only requires integration in (8) in \( [\tau, t] \) and application of the Gronwall lemma. The details are omitted for brevity.

An immediate consequence of the above result is:

**Corollary 1.** Assume that \( f \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}; H) \) and \( g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2 \) fulfills (H1)–(H4). Then, for any bounded set \( B \subset H \times (L^2_V \cap L^\infty_H) \)

(i) The set of weak solutions to (1) \( \{u(\cdot, \tau, u^*), \phi) : (u^*, \phi) \in B\} \) is bounded in \( L^\infty(\tau + \varepsilon, T; V) \cap L^2(\tau + \varepsilon, T; D(A)) \) for any \( \varepsilon > 0 \) and any \( T > \tau + \varepsilon \).

(ii) Moreover, if \( B \) is bounded in \( V \times (L^2_V \cap L^\infty_H) \), then \( \{u(\cdot; \tau, u^*), \phi) : (u^*, \phi) \in B\} \) is bounded in \( L^\infty(\tau, T; V) \cap L^2(\tau, T; D(A)) \) for any \( T > \tau \).

3. **Processes and their continuity and absorbing properties.** In this section we start recalling the biparametric families of mappings \( S \) and \( U \) defined in [4] through the solution to (1) given in Theorem 1, which in fact were proved to be continuous processes.

After that, and thanks to the improved regularity we have several meaningful choices to restrict these mappings to others with higher norms.

Their continuity and absorbing properties will be established.

Recall that
\[ S(t, \tau) : H \times (L^2_V \cap L^\infty_H) \to H \times (L^2_V \cap L^\infty_H) \]
and \( U(t, \tau) : L^2_V \cap C_H \to L^2_V \cap C_H \)
for any \( t \geq \tau \), given by \( S(t, \tau)(u^*, \phi) = (u(t), u_t) \) for any \( (u^*, \phi) \in H \times (L^2_V \cap L^\infty_H) \)
and \( U(t, \tau)\phi = u(\cdot; \tau, \phi) \) for any \( \phi \in L^2_V \cap C_H \) are well-defined mappings after Theorem 1 (cf. [4]).

Actually, each of these mappings form a process (see definitions in [4, Section 3]), which for short we denote
\[ (H \times (L^2_V \cap L^\infty_H), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \text{ and } (L^2_V \cap C_H, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \]
respectively. They are continuous in their corresponding phase-spaces (cf. [4, Corollary 2]) under the assumptions of Theorem 1.

Now, after Theorem 2 we may consider the corresponding restrictions (the notation for the operators will not be modified, since no confusion arises)
\[ (V \times (L^2_V \cap L^\infty_H), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}), (C_V, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}), (C^h_V, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}), \]
\[ (V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}), (L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}), \]
which are well-defined processes, where \( C^h_V = \{\varphi \in C_H : \varphi|_{[-\hat{h}, 0]} \in B([-\hat{h}, 0]; V)\} \)
being \( B([-\hat{h}, 0]; V) \) the space of bounded functions from \([-\hat{h}, 0]\) into \( V \) (with \( \hat{h} \in [0, h] \)).

For the sake of clarity and brevity in the exposition, among all of the above processes we restrict ourselves to the most interesting ones, namely \( (V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \) and \( (L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \).
In order to develop a more regular theory of attractors we start studying the continuity of these new processes. We have the following result.

**Proposition 1.** Consider \( f \in L^2_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}; H) \) and \( g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2 \) fulfilling (H1)–(H4), \((u^\tau, \phi)\) and \((v^\tau, \psi)\) \( \in V \times (L^2_0 \cap L^2_{\text{loc}}) \), and denote \( u = u(\cdot; \tau, u^\tau, \phi) \) and \( v = v(\cdot; \tau, v^\tau, \psi) \) the corresponding solutions to (1) with (respective) initial data. Then,

\[
\|u(s) - v(s)\|^2 \leq \left( \|u^\tau - v^\tau\|^2 + \bar{C} \int_{-\tau}^0 \|\phi(r) - \psi(r)\|^2 \, dr \right) \\
+ \frac{C^4}{2\nu^2} \int_{-\tau}^t |u(r - \rho(r)) - v(r - \rho(r))|^2 \|u(r)\|^2 |Au(r)|^2 \, dr \\
\times \exp \left[ \int_{-\tau}^t \left( \bar{C} + \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^2} |v(r - \rho(r))|^2 \|v(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \right) \, dr \right],
\]

(10)

\[
\frac{\nu}{2} \int_{-\tau}^s |Au(r) - Av(r)|^2 \, dr \leq \|u^\tau - v^\tau\|^2 + \frac{2C^2}{\nu} \int_{-\tau}^s |u(r) - v(r)|^2 \, dr \\
+ 2 \int_{-\tau}^s \|u(r - \rho(r)) - v(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \, dr \\
+ \frac{C^4}{2\nu^2} \int_{-\tau}^s |u(r - \rho(r)) - v(r - \rho(r))|^2 \|u(r)\|^2 |Au(r)|^2 \, dr \\
+ \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^2} \int_{-\tau}^s |v(r - \rho(r))|^2 \|v(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \|u(r) - v(r)\|^2 \, dr
\]

(11)

for all \( \tau \leq s \leq t \), where \( \bar{C} = \frac{2C^2}{\nu}/(\lambda_1 \nu) + \frac{2}{1 - \rho^*} \).

**Proof.** Using the second energy equality (5) for \( w := u - v \),

\[
\frac{1}{2} \frac{d}{dt} \|w(t)\|^2 + \nu |Aw(t)|^2 = b(v(t - \rho(t)), v(t), Aw(t)) - b(u(t - \rho(t)), u(t), Aw(t)) \\
+ (g(t, u_t) - g(t, v_t), Aw(t)) \text{ a.e. } t \geq \tau.
\]

Standard manipulations in the trilinear term \( b \) yields

\[
b(v(t - \rho(t)), v(t), Aw(t)) - b(u(t - \rho(t)), u(t), Aw(t)) = -b(w(t - \rho(t)), u(t), Aw(t)) - b(v(t - \rho(t)), w(t), Aw(t)) \text{ a.e. } t \geq \tau.
\]

Now from (3) and the Young inequality,

\[
|b(w(t - \rho(t)), u(t), Aw(t))| + |b(v(t - \rho(t)), w(t), Aw(t))| \\
\leq C \|w(t - \rho(t))\|^{1/2} \|w(t - \rho(t))\|^{1/2} \|u(t)\|^{1/2} |Au(t)|^{1/2} |Aw(t)| \\
+ C \|v(t - \rho(t))\|^{1/2} \|v(t - \rho(t))\|^{1/2} \|w(t)\|^{1/2} |Aw(t)|^{3/2} \\
\leq \frac{C^2}{\nu} \|w(t - \rho(t))\| \|w(t - \rho(t))\| \|u(t)\| |Au(t)| + \frac{\nu}{4} |Aw(t)|^2 \\
+ \frac{27C^4}{4\nu^2} \|v(t - \rho(t))\|^2 \|v(t - \rho(t))\|^2 \|w(t)\|^2 + \frac{\nu}{4} |Aw(t)|^2 \text{ a.e. } t \geq \tau.
\]
Combining the above with the Hölder inequality and integrating, we obtain
\[
\|w(s)\|^2 - \|w(\tau)\|^2 + \frac{\nu}{2} \int_{\tau}^{s} |Aw(r)|^2 dr \leq \frac{2C_g^2}{\nu} \int_{\tau-h}^{s} |w(r)|^2 dr
\]
\[
+ 2 \int_{\tau}^{s} \|w(r - \rho(r))\|^2 dr + \frac{C^4}{2\nu^2} \int_{\tau}^{s} |w(r - \rho(r))|^2 u(r)^2 |Au(r)|^2 dr
\]
\[
+ \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} \int_{\tau}^{s} |v(r - \rho(r))|^2 \|v(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \|w(r)\|^2 dr \quad \forall \tau \leq s.
\]
(12)

Splitting the first integral in the RHS, that on \([\tau - h, s]\) in the initial datum part and the evolutive solution on \([\tau, s]\), and using the Poincaré inequality and an eventual change of variables for \(t - \rho(t)\), in particular we conclude
\[
\|w(s)\|^2 \leq \|w(\tau)\|^2 + \tilde{C} \int_{\tau-h}^{s} \|\phi(r) - \psi(r)\|^2 dr + \frac{C^4}{2\nu^2} \int_{\tau}^{s} |w(r - \rho(r))|^2 u(r)^2 |Au(r)|^2 dr
\]
\[
+ \int_{\tau}^{s} \left( \tilde{C} + \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} |v(r - \rho(r))|^2 \|v(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \right) \|w(r)\|^2 dr \quad \forall s \geq \tau.
\]

The Gronwall lemma gives (10). Finally, (11) follows immediately from (12).

From the continuity of \((H \times (L^2_{\text{loc}} \cap L^2_{H}), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau})\) and \((L^2_{V} \cap C_H, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau})\) (cf. [4, Corollary 2]) combined with Corollary 1 and Proposition 1, we deduce

**Corollary 2.** Assume that \(f \in L^2_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}; H)\) and \(g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \rightarrow (L^2(\Omega))^2\) satisfies (H1)–(H4). Then \((V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^2_{V}), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau})\) and \((L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau})\) are continuous processes.

The first of the two key ingredients to ensure the existence of attractors is the absorbing property. We recall from [4] several concepts, definitions and extra condition on \(f\) such that the absorbing property holds in a natural universe associated to problem (1). These results will be improved in the sequel, in order to gain attractors in higher norms. Namely, we start recalling an additional assumption for extra energy estimates.

(H5) Assume that \(\nu \lambda_1 > C_g\), and that there exists a value \(\eta \in (0, 2(\nu \lambda_1 - C_g))\) such that for every \(u \in L^2(\tau - h, \tau; H)\),
\[
\int_{\tau}^{t} e^{\eta \tau} |g(s, u_s)|^2 ds \leq C_g^2 \int_{\tau-h}^{t} e^{\eta \tau} |u(s)|^2 ds \quad \forall t \geq \tau.
\]

Now we recall the estimates leading to the introduction of one universe for the study of pullback attractors (cf. [4, Lemma 1]).

**Lemma 1.** Consider given \(f \in L^2_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}; V')\) and \(g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \rightarrow (L^2(\Omega))^2\) satisfying conditions (H1)–(H5). Then, for any \((u^*, \phi) \in H \times (L^2_{V} \cap L^2_{H})\), the following inequalities hold for the solution \(u\) to (1) for all \(t \geq s \geq \tau\):
\[
|u(t)|^2 \leq e^{-\eta(t-\tau)}(|u^*|^2 + C_g ||\phi||^2_{L^2_H}) + \frac{e^{-\eta t}}{\beta} \int_{\tau}^{t} e^{\eta \tau} |f(r)|^2 dr,
\]
(13)
\[
\nu \int_{s}^{t} |u(r)|^2 dr \leq |u(s)|^2 + C_g ||u_s||^2_{L^2_H} + \frac{1}{\nu} \int_{s}^{t} ||f(r)||^2 dr + 2C_g \int_{s}^{t} |u(r)|^2 dr,
\]
(14)
where
\[
\beta = 2\nu - (\eta + 2C_g)\lambda_1^{-1} > 0.
\]
(15)
In the context of pullback attractors, a universe is a family of time-dependent sections, i.e., family of subsets in the phase-space, that allows to establish good dynamical properties, acting as basis of attraction. In [4] it was introduced $H^0_L^0(H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H))$, the class of all families of nonempty subsets $\tilde{D} = \{D(t) : t \in \mathbb{R}\} \subset \mathcal{P}(H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H))$ such that

$$\lim_{\tau \to -\infty} \left( e^{\eta r} \sup_{(\zeta, \varphi) \in D(\tau)} (|\zeta|^2 + \|\varphi\|_{L^2_H}^2) \right) = 0. \quad (16)$$

This notion of universe is naturally related to estimate (13), where the rate of growth in $-\infty$ is such that the initial data is killed by the dissipativity of the problem. Let us also observe that $H^0_L^0(H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H))$ is inclusion-closed, which allows certain advantages in the application of the theory.

We will denote by $D_F(H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H))$ the universe of fixed bounded sets in $H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H)$.

Then, after the above comments and having in mind (13), we gain the first absorbing family (cf. [4, Corollary 3]).

**Corollary 3.** Assume that $g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2$ fulfills conditions (H1)–(H5) and that $f \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}; V')$ satisfies

$$\int_{-\infty}^0 e^{\eta r} \|f(r)\|^2 dr < \infty. \quad (17)$$

Then, the family $\tilde{D}_0 = \{D_0(t) : t \in \mathbb{R}\} \subset \mathcal{P}(H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H))$ defined by

$$D_0(t) = \overline{B}_H(0, R_H(t)) \times (\overline{B}_{L^2_v}(0, R_V(t)) \cap \overline{B}_{L^\infty}(0, R_H(t))),$$

where

$$R_H(t) = 1 + \beta^{-1} e^{-\eta(t-2h)} \int_{-\infty}^t e^{\eta r} \|f(r)\|^2 dr,$$

$$R_V(t) = \nu^{-1} \left[ (1 + 3C_{g,h}) R_H^2(t) + \nu^{-1} \|f\|_{L^2_t(\Omega, V')}^2 \right],$$

is pullback $H^0_L^0(H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H))$–absorbing for the process $S$ on $H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H)$ (and therefore pullback $D_F(H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H))$–absorbing too), and $\tilde{D}_0$ belongs to $D^0_L^0(H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H))$.

As additional universe for the study of the problem in [4, Definition 5] it was introduced $C^H_\eta(L^2_v \cap C_H)$, the class of all families of nonempty subsets $\tilde{D} = \{D(t) : t \in \mathbb{R}\} \subset \mathcal{P}(L^2_v \cap C_H)$ such that

$$\lim_{\tau \to -\infty} \left( e^{\eta r} \sup_{\varphi \in D(\tau)} |\varphi|^2_{C_H} \right) = 0. \quad (18)$$

**Remark 3.** After Corollary 3 it is immediate to realize that $\tilde{D}_1 = \{D_1(t) : t \in \mathbb{R}\} \subset \mathcal{P}(L^2_v \cap C_H)$ given by $D_1(t) = \overline{B}_{L^2_v}(0, R_V(t)) \cap \overline{B}_{C_H}(0, R_H(t))$ is pullback $C^H_\eta(L^2_v \cap C_H)$–absorbing for $U$ on $L^2_v \cap C_H$.

Since the pullback estimates necessary for the dissipativity only require the tempered character in norms $H \times L^2_H$ or $C_H$, we may consider more restricted universes, with higher norms but the same tempered condition. So, analogously to the previous definitions of $H^0_L^0(H \times (L^2_v \cap L^\infty_H))$ and $C^H_\eta(L^2_v \cap C_H)$ we introduce the following classes.
Definition 3. Denote by $D_n^{H,L,t}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L_\infty^\infty))$ the class of all families of nonempty subsets $\hat{D} = \{D(t) : t \in \mathbb{R}\} \subset \mathcal{P}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L_\infty))$ such that (16) holds.

Denote by $D_n^{C,u}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)$ the class of all families of nonempty subsets $\hat{D} = \{D(t) : t \in \mathbb{R}\} \subset \mathcal{P}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)$ such that (18) holds.

We also denote by $D_F(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L_\infty^\infty))$ and $D_F(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)$ the universes of fixed bounded sets in $V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L_\infty^\infty)$ and $L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V$ respectively.

Remark 4. After Corollary 3 and Remark 3, as an immediate consequence of Theorem 2, $\hat{D}_0 \cap \mathcal{P}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L_\infty^\infty))$ and $\hat{D}_1 \cap \mathcal{P}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)$ are pullback $D_n^{H,L,t}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L_\infty^\infty))$–absorbing and pullback $D_n^{C,u}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)$–absorbing for $S$ and $U$ on $V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L_\infty^\infty)$ and $L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V$ respectively.

4. Asymptotic compactness. The first goal of this section is to provide the sufficient uniform estimates at any current time $t$ such that the data is starting pullback enough in time. The cumbersome choice of some intervals is due to the necessity of controlling several delay terms appearing in the computations. This will end up with the asymptotic compactness of the associated dynamical systems introduced previously.

Lemma 2. Assume that $g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2$ and $f \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}; H)$ satisfy (H1)–(H5) and (17) respectively. Then, for any $t \in \mathbb{R}$ and $\hat{D} \in D_n^{H,L,t}(H \times (L^2 \cap L_\infty^\infty))$, there exists $\tau(\hat{D}, t, h) < t - 5h - 2$ and functions $\{\rho_i\}_{i=1}^4$ depending on $t$ and $h$, such that for any $\tau \leq \tau(\hat{D}, t, h)$ and any $(u, \phi) \in D(\tau)$,

$$\begin{aligned}
&\{ u(r; \tau, u^r, \phi^r) \}^2 \leq \rho_1(t) \quad \forall r \in [t - 5h - 2, t], \\
&\| u(r; \tau, u^r, \phi^r) \|^2 \leq \rho_2(t) \quad \forall r \in [t - 3h - 1, t], \\
&\frac{\nu}{2} \int_{t-1}^{t} |Au(s)|^2 ds \leq \rho_3(t) \quad \forall r \in [t - 2h, t], \\
&\int_{t-1}^{t} |u'(s)|^2 ds \leq \rho_4(t) \quad \forall r \in [t - 2h, t],
\end{aligned}$$

where

$$\rho_1(t) = 1 + e^{-\eta(t-5h-2)} \beta^{-1} \int_{-\infty}^{t} e^{\eta s} \|f(s)\|_2^2 ds,$$

$$\rho_2(t) = \left[ \frac{\rho_1(t)}{\nu} (1 + C_g(h + 2 + 2C_g(h + 1))) + \int_{t-3h-2}^{t} \left( \frac{\|f(s)\|_2^2 + \frac{1}{\nu} |f(s)|^2}{\nu} \right) ds \right] \times \exp \left[ \frac{2\nu^3}{2\nu^3(1 - \rho^*)} \frac{\rho_1(t)(1 + 3C_g(3h + 2))}{\rho_1(t)(1 + 3C_g(3h + 2)) + \nu \int_{t-4h-2}^{t} \|f(s)\|_2^2 ds + \frac{2C_g^2}{\lambda_1 \nu} \right],$$

$$\rho_3(t) = \nu \rho_2(t) + \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} \rho_1(t) \rho_2(t) + \frac{2}{\nu} \int_{t-2h-1}^{t} |f(s)|^2 ds + \frac{2C_g^2}{\nu} (h + 1) \rho_1(t),$$

$$\rho_4(t) = \nu \rho_2(t) + 4 \int_{t-2h-1}^{t} |f(s)|^2 ds + 4C_g^2 (h + 1) \rho_1(t) + 2^{3/2} C_g^2 \rho_1^{1/2}(t) \rho_2(t) \left( \frac{\rho_3(t)}{\nu} \right)^{1/2}.$$

Proof. First estimate in (19) and the formula for $\rho_1$ is a direct consequence of (13) in the interval $[t - 5h - 2, t]$ since the universe is tempered w.r.t. the exponential with parameter $\eta$. 
Using the Galerkin approximations introduced in Theorem 2, multiplying each equation by \( \lambda \gamma_{jk}(t) \), summing from \( j = 1 \) to \( k \), and using the Cauchy-Schwartz and Young inequalities,

\[
\frac{d}{dt}\|u^k(t)\|^2 + 2\nu |Au^k(t)|^2 + 2b(u^k(t - \rho(t)), u^k(t), Au^k(t)) \\
\leq \nu |Au^k(t)|^2 + \frac{2}{\nu} |f(t)|^2 + \frac{2}{\nu} |g(t, u^k_t)|^2 \text{ a.e. } t > \tau.
\]

From (3) and the Young inequality,

\[
|b(u^k(t - \rho(t)), u^k(t), Au^k(t))| \\
\leq C |u^k(t - \rho(t))|^{1/2} \|u^k(t - \rho(t))\|^{1/2} |u^k(t)|^{1/2} |Au^k(t)|^{3/2} \\
\leq \frac{27C^4}{4\nu^3} |u^k(t - \rho(t))|^2 |u^k(t - \rho(t))|^2 |u^k(t)|^2 + \frac{\nu}{4} |Au^k(t)|^2.
\]

Plugging this into the above inequality,

\[
\frac{d}{dt}\|u^k(t)\|^2 + \frac{\nu}{2} |Au^k(t)|^2 \\
\leq \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} |u^k(t - \rho(t))|^2 |u^k(t - \rho(t))|^2 |u^k(t)|^2 + \frac{2}{\nu} |f(t)|^2 + \frac{2}{\nu} |g(t, u^k_t)|^2 \text{ a.e. } t > \tau.
\]

Integrating in \([s, t]\) with \( s \geq \tau \), and using (H4),

\[
\|u^k(t)\|^2 + \frac{\nu}{2} \int_s^t |Au^k(r)|^2 dr \\
\leq \|u^k(s)\|^2 + \int_s^t \left( \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} |u^k(r - \rho(r))|^2 |u^k(r - \rho(r))|^2 + \frac{2C^2}{\lambda_1 \nu} \right) |u^k(r)|^2 dr \\
+ \frac{2}{\nu} \int_s^t |f(r)|^2 dr + \frac{2C^2}{\nu} \int_{s-h}^s |u^k(r)|^2 dr.
\]

In particular, the Gronwall lemma yields

\[
\|u^k(r)\|^2 \leq \left( \|u^k(s)\|^2 + \frac{2}{\nu} \int_s^r |f(\theta)|^2 d\theta + \frac{2C^2}{\nu} \|u^k\|^2_{L^2_h} \right) \\
\times \exp \left[ \int_s^r \left( \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} |u^k(\theta - \rho(\theta))|^2 |u^k(\theta - \rho(\theta))|^2 + \frac{2C^2}{\lambda_1 \nu} \right) d\theta \right]
\]

for any \( \tau \leq s \leq r \).

Integrating w.r.t. \( s \in (r - 1, r) \)

\[
\|u^k(r)\|^2 \leq \left( \int_{r-1}^r \|u^k(s)\|^2 ds + \frac{2}{\nu} \int_{r-1}^r |f(\theta)|^2 d\theta + \frac{2C^2}{\nu} \int_{r-h-1}^{r-1} |u^k(\theta)|^2 d\theta \right) \\
\times \exp \left[ \int_{r-1}^r \left( \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} |u^k(\theta - \rho(\theta))|^2 |u^k(\theta - \rho(\theta))|^2 + \frac{2C^2}{\lambda_1 \nu} \right) d\theta \right]
\]

for any \( r \geq \tau + 1 \).

Using the first estimate in (19) by \( \rho_1 \) proved above (which is valid also for the Galerkin approximations), and twice the estimate (14) for \( \|u^k\|^2_{L^2(r-1, r; V)} \) and \( \|u^k(\cdot - \rho(\cdot))\|^2_{L^2(r-1, r; V)} \) (this last one of order \( \|u^k\|^2_{L^2(r-1, r; V)} \) by a change of
variables), after some tedious computations (we omit the details for the sake of brevity) we conclude that

\[
\|u^k(r)\|^2 \leq \left[ \frac{\rho_1(t)}{\nu} (1 + C_g(h + 2 + 2C_g(h + 1))) + \frac{\int_{t-3h-2}^t \left( \frac{|f(s)|^2}{\nu^2} + \frac{2}{\nu} |f(s)|^2 \right) ds}{\nu} \right] 
\times \exp \left[ \frac{27C_4^4 \rho_1(t)}{2\nu^4(1-\rho^s)} \left( \rho_1(t)(1+C_g(3h+2))+\frac{1}{\nu} \int_{t-4h-2}^t |f(s)|^2 ds \right) + \frac{2C_2^2}{\lambda_1 \nu} \right]
\]

for all \( r \in [t-3h-1, t] \) and any \( k \in \mathbb{N} \).

Since the convergence of the Galerkin approximations towards the solution \( u \) holds weakly-star in \( L^\infty(t-3h-1, t; V) \) and \( u \in C([t-3h-1, t]; V) \) by Theorem 2, taking the inferior limit when \( k \) goes to infinity above, we obtain the second estimate in (19).

Going back to (20), integrating in \([r-1, r]\) we obtain

\[
\frac{\nu}{2} \int_{r-1}^r |Au^k(s)|^2 ds \leq \|u^k(r-1)\|^2 + \frac{\nu}{2} \int_{r-1}^r |f(s)|^2 ds + \frac{\nu}{2} \int_{r-1}^r |g(s, u^k)|^2 ds
\]

\[
+ \frac{27C_4^4}{2\nu^3} \int_{r-1}^r |u^k(s-\rho(s))|^2 \|u^k(s-\rho(s))\|^2 \|u^k(s)\|^2 ds
\]

\[
\leq \rho_2(t) + \frac{27C_4^4}{2\nu^3} \rho_1(t) \rho_2^2(t) + \frac{2}{\nu} \int_{t-2h-1}^r |f(s)|^2 ds + \frac{2C_2^2}{\nu} (h+1) \rho_1(t),
\]

for any \( r \in [t-2h, t] \), where we have used (H4) and the two first estimates from (19) involving \( \rho_1 \) and \( \rho_2 \).

Since the convergence of the Galerkin approximations towards the solution \( u \) holds weakly in \( L^2(t-2h, t; D(A)) \) by Theorem 2, taking the inferior limit when \( k \) goes to infinity above, we obtain the third estimate in (19).

Finally, multiplying each equation in (6) by \( \gamma_{jk}^s(t) \) and summing from \( j = 1 \) till \( k \), after the Young inequality

\[
|(u^k)'(s)|^2 + \frac{\nu}{2} \frac{d}{ds} \|u^k(s)\|^2 + b(u^k(s-\rho(s)), u^k(s), (u^k)'(s))
\]

\[
=(f(s) + g(s, u^k), (u^k)'(s)) \leq 2|f(s)|^2 + 2|g(s, u^k)|^2 + \frac{1}{4} |(u^k)'(s)|^2 \ a.e. s > \tau.
\]

From (3) and the Young inequality once more,

\[
|b(u^k(s-\rho(s)), u^k(s), (u^k)'(s))| \leq \frac{1}{4} |(u^k)'(s)|^2 + C^2 \|u^k(s-\rho(s))\|^2 \|u^k(s)\||Au^k(s)|.
\]

Plugging this into the above estimate gives

\[
|(u^k)'(s)|^2 + \nu \frac{d}{ds} \|u^k(s)\|^2 \leq 4|f(s)|^2 + 4|g(s, u^k)|^2 + 2C^2 \|u^k(s-\rho(s))\|^2 \|u^k(s)\||Au^k(s)| \ a.e. s > \tau.
\]
In particular, integrating and combining (H4) with the previous estimates involving \( \{ \rho_i \}_{i=1}^3 \),
\[
\int_{r-1}^r |(u^k)'(s)|^2 ds \leq \nu \| u^k(r-1) \|^2 + 4 \int_{r-1}^r |f(s)|^2 ds + 4C_g^2 \int_{r-h-1}^r |u^k(s)|^2 ds \\
+ 2C^2 \int_{r-1}^r |u^k(s - \rho(s))||u^k(s - \rho(s))|\|u^k(s)\|\|Au^k(s)\| ds \\
\leq \nu \rho_2(t) + 4 \int_{t-2h-1}^t |f(s)|^2 ds + 4C_g^2(h+1)\rho_1(t) \\
+ 2C^2 \rho_1^{-1/2}(t)\rho_2(t) \left( \frac{2}{\nu} \rho_3(t) \right)^{1/2}
\]
for any \( r \in [t - 2h, t] \).

Analogously to the previous arguments, following these computations one can check that the time derivates \( (u^k)' \) of the Galerkin approximations given in Theorem 2 converge towards \( u' \) weakly in \( L^2(t - 2h, t; H) \). Taking the inferior limit when \( k \) goes to infinity above, we obtain the last estimate in (19).

Now we may use the uniform estimates proved above to apply an energy method yielding the asymptotic compactness. The ideas are analogous to [6, Lemma 5.3] and [8, Lemma 4], but nevertheless the result here is not a verbatim copy of those. Actually, the presence of two delays make the arguments more involved. So we will make the proof clear.

**Lemma 3.** Assume that \( g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2 \) and \( f \in L^{2,\infty}(\mathbb{R}; H) \) satisfy (H1)–(H5) and (17) respectively. Then, for any \( t \in \mathbb{R} \), any \( \tilde{D} \in D^{H,L^2}_0(H \times (L^2 \cap L^\infty_H)) \) and any sequences \( \{ \tau_n \} \subset (-\infty, t] \) and \( \{ (u^\tau_n, \phi^\tau_n) \} \subset H \times (L^2 \cap L^\infty_H) \) with \( \tau_n \to -\infty \) and \( (u^\tau_n, \phi^\tau_n) \in D(\tau_n) \), the sequence \( \{ u(\cdot; \tau_n, u^\tau_n, \phi^\tau_n) \} \) is relatively compact in \( C([t-h,t];V) \cap L^2(t-h,t;D(A)) \).

**Proof:** Fix \( t \in \mathbb{R} \), a family \( \tilde{D} \in D^{H,L^2}_0(H \times (L^2 \cap L^\infty_H)) \), and sequences \( \{ \tau_n \} \subset (-\infty, t] \) and \( \{ (u^\tau_n, \phi^\tau_n) \} \subset H \times (L^2 \cap L^\infty_H) \) as in the statement.

Denote for short \( u^n(\cdot) \) to \( u(\cdot; \tau_n, u^\tau_n, \phi^\tau_n) \). Firstly we will check the relative compactness of \( \{ u^n \} \) in \( C([t-h,t];V) \) and secondly in \( L^2(t-h,t;D(A)) \).

Indeed, thanks to Lemma 2, consider \( \tau(\tilde{D}, t, h) < t-5h-2 \) such that the sequence \( \{ u^n : \tau_n \leq \tau(\tilde{D}, t, h) \} \) is bounded in \( L^\infty(t-3h-1,t;V) \cap L^2(t-2h-1,t;D(A)) \) with \( \{ (u^n)' \} \) bounded in \( L^2(t-2h-1,t;H) \). By using the Aubin-Lions compactness lemma there exists \( u \in L^\infty(t-3h-1,t;V) \cap L^2(t-2h-1,t;D(A)) \) with \( u' \in L^2(t-2h-1,t;H) \) such that a sequence (labeled the same) satisfies

\[
\begin{aligned}
&u^n \rightharpoonup u \quad \text{weakly-star in } L^\infty(t-3h-1,t;V), \\
u^n \to u \quad \text{weakly in } L^2(t-2h-1,t;D(A)), \\
(u^n)' \to u' \quad \text{weakly in } L^2(t-2h-1,t;H), \\
u^n(s) \to u(s) \quad \text{strongly in } V, \ a.e. \ s \in (t-2h-1,t). 
\end{aligned}
\]

(22)

From these convergences we deduce that \( u \in C([t-2h-1,t];V) \) is a strong solution to (1) in \( (t-h-1,t) \) with suitable initial data. Boundedness of \( \{ u^n \} \) in \( L^\infty(t-2h-1,t;V) \) jointly with equi-continuity on \( [t-2h-1,t] \) with values in \( H \), leads by the Ascoli-Arzelà theorem (up to a subsequence, labeled the same) to

\[
u^n \to u \quad \text{strongly in } C([t-2h-1,t];H),
\]

(23)
which also helps to identify the weak-limit in next property

\[ u^n(s_n) \rightharpoonup u(s_*) \text{ weakly in } V \text{ for any } \{s_n\} \subset [t-2h-1,t] \text{ with } s_n \to s_* . \]  

(24)

Now we can prove that

\[ u^n \to u \text{ strongly in } C([t-h,t]; V) . \]  

(25)

Indeed, if (25) is false, there exists \( \varepsilon > 0, t_* \in [t-h,t] \) and sequences (labeled the same) \( \{u^n\} \) and \( \{t_n\} \subset [t-h,t] \) with \( \lim_n t_n = t_* \) such that

\[ \|u^n(t_n) - u(t_*)\| \geq \varepsilon \ \forall n \geq 1 . \]  

(26)

However, from (24)

\[ \|u(t_*)\| \leq \liminf_{n \to \infty} \|u^n(t_n)\| . \]  

(27)

The second energy equality (5) for \( w = u^n \) or \( w = u \) reads

\[
\frac{1}{2} \frac{d}{d\theta} \|w(\theta)\|^2 + \nu |Aw(\theta)|^2 + b(w(\theta - \rho(\theta)), w(\theta), Aw(\theta)) \\
= (f(\theta) + g(\theta, w_0), Aw(\theta)) \text{ a.e. } \theta > t - h - 1 .
\]

Combining the Young inequality for the RHS and for the trilinear term \( b \) (after (3))

\[ |b(w(\theta - \rho(\theta)), w(\theta), Aw(\theta))| \\
\leq \frac{27C^4}{4\nu^3} |w(\theta - \rho(\theta))|^2 \|w(\theta - \rho(\theta))\|^2 \|w(\theta)\|^2 + \frac{\nu}{4} |Aw(\theta)|^2 , \]

we conclude

\[
\frac{d}{d\theta} \|w(\theta)\|^2 + \nu |Aw(\theta)|^2 \\
\leq \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} |w(\theta - \rho(\theta))|^2 \|w(\theta - \rho(\theta))\|^2 \|w(\theta)\|^2 + \frac{4}{\nu} (|f(\theta)|^2 + |g(\theta, w_0)|^2)
\]

a.e. \( \theta > t - h - 1 \). Integrating, we have for any \( w = u^n \) or \( w = u \)

\[
\|w(s_2)\|^2 + \nu \int_{s_1}^{s_2} |Aw(r)|^2 dr \\
\leq \|w(s_1)\|^2 + \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} \int_{s_1}^{s_2} |w(r - \rho(r))|^2 \|w(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \|w(r)\|^2 dr \\
+ \frac{4}{\nu} \int_{s_1}^{s_2} (|f(r)|^2 + |g(r, w_0(r))|^2) dr \ \forall t - h - 1 \leq s_1 \leq s_2 \leq t .
\]  

(28)

Neglecting the integral term in the LHS, we may consider the functions

\[
J_n(s) = \|u^n(s)\|^2 - \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} \int_{t-h-1}^{s} |u^n(r - \rho(r))|^2 \|u^n(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \|u^n(r)\|^2 dr \\
- \frac{4}{\nu} \int_{t-h-1}^{s} (|f(r)|^2 + |g(r, u^n(r))|^2) dr
\]

and

\[
J(s) = \|u(s)\|^2 - \frac{27C^4}{2\nu^3} \int_{t-h-1}^{s} |u(r - \rho(r))|^2 \|u(r - \rho(r))\|^2 \|u(r)\|^2 dr \\
- \frac{4}{\nu} \int_{t-h-1}^{s} (|f(r)|^2 + |g(r, u(r))|^2) dr .
\]
These functions are continuous, and from the corresponding inequalities above, they are non-increasing. Moreover, from (22) and (H4),

\[ J_n(s) \rightarrow J(s) \text{ a.e. } s \in (t-h-1, t). \]

It is now a standard matter to deduce (e.g., cf. \cite[Lemma 2]{4}) that

\[ \limsup_{n \to \infty} J_n(t_n) \leq J(t_*), \]

whence, after (22) and (H4) again,

\[ \limsup_{n \to \infty} \|u^n(t_n)\| \leq \|u(t_*)\|, \]

which combined with (27) and (24) gives that \( u^n(t_n) \to u(t_*) \) strongly in \( V \), contradicting (26). Therefore, (25) is proved.

Going back to the inequality (28), after the convergences proved of \( u^n \) towards \( u \) above, observing the integral term in the LHS, we deduce that \( u^n \to u \) in norm in \( L^2(t-h, t; D(A)) \), which jointly with (22) means that

\[ u^n \to u \text{ strongly in } L^2(t-h, t; D(A)). \]

\[ \square \]

Observe that in particular the above gives immediately the following result.

**Corollary 4.** Assume that \( g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2 \) and \( f \in L^2_{loc}(\mathbb{R}; H) \) satisfy (H1)–(H5) and (17) respectively. Then, \((V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V)), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau} \) and \((L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \) are pullback asymptotically compact in \( \mathcal{D}^H (V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V)) \) and \( \mathcal{D}^C (L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V) \) respectively.

5. **Existence of attractors and their relationships.** Before establishing the main result of the paper about the existence of attractors, it is useful to give another one concerning the relation of tempered families in the two universes we are considering. Namely, just allowing the solutions to (1) evolve for an elapsed time bigger than the delay time \( h \), the regularization effect makes, roughly speaking, that a family tempered in one universe is mapped into a tempered family in a more regular universe. This type of result is the analogous to [4, Lemma 3], and it is helpful in order to establish comparison between attractors.

**Lemma 4.** Under the assumptions of Corollary 3, for any \( \hat{D} = \{D(\tau) : \tau \in \mathbb{R}\} \subseteq \mathcal{D}^H (H \times (L^2_H \cap L^\infty_H)) \) and any \( r > h \), the family \( \hat{D}^{(r)} = \{D^{(r)}(\tau) : \tau \in \mathbb{R}\} \) where \( D^{(r)}(\tau) = \{u_{\tau+r}(\cdot, \tau, u^*, \phi) : (u^*, \phi) \in D(\tau)\} \), for any \( \tau \in \mathbb{R} \), belongs to \( \mathcal{D}^C (L^2_{D(\tau)} \cap C_V) \).

**Proof.** The inclusion \( D^{(r)}(\tau) \subseteq L^2_{D(\tau)} \cap C_V \) follows from Theorem 2. The tempered character of any solution \( u_{\tau+r} \) in \( C_H \) for any \( \tau \in \mathbb{R} \) and \((u^*, \phi) \in D(\tau)\) can be deduced from estimate (13) and assumption (17) for \( f \). Indeed,

\[ |u(\tau + s)|^2 \leq e^{-\eta_s}(|u^*|^2 + C_g \|\phi\|_{L^2_H}^2) + \beta^{-1}e^{-\eta_s(1 + s)} \int_0^{1 + s} e^{s\theta} \|f(\theta)\|_2^2 d\theta \forall s \geq 0. \]

Therefore,

\[ |u_{\tau+r}|^2_{C_H} = \sup_{s \in [\tau-h, \tau]} |u(\tau + s)|^2 \]
\[ \leq e^{-\eta(r-h)}(|u_\tau|^2 + C_\eta \|\phi\|^2_{L^2_H}) + \beta^{-1} e^{-\eta(\tau+r-h)} \int_\tau^{\tau+r} e^{\eta \phi} \|f(\theta)\|^2 \,d\theta, \]

whence \( \lim_{r \to -\infty} e^{\eta r} \sup_{u_\tau, \omega \in D^{(r)}(\tau)} |u_{\tau+r}|_{L^2_{\omega}} = 0. \square 

Now we may establish our main result.

**Theorem 3.** Assume that \( g : \mathbb{R} \times C_H \to (L^2(\Omega))^2 \) and \( f \in L^2_{\text{loc}}(\mathbb{R}; H) \) satisfy (H1)–(H5) and (17) respectively. Then there exist the minimal pullback attractors \( \{A_{\mathcal{D}_D}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V))^{(s)}\}_{s \in \mathbb{R}} \) and \( \{A_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V))^{(s)}\}_{s \in \mathbb{R}} \) for \( (V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \) and \( (A_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V), (s)\}_{s \in \mathbb{R}} \) and \( \{A_{\mathcal{D}^H_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V), \{s\}_{s \in \mathbb{R}} \) for \( (L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \).

The following relations hold for any \( s \in \mathbb{R} \)
\[ \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}_D}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V))^{(s)} \subset \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^H_H}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V))^{(s)} \subset D_0(s), \quad (29) \]
\[ \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)^{(s)} \subset \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)^{(s)} \subset D_1(s), \quad (30) \]
\[ \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)^{(s)} \subset \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)^{(s)} \subset D_1(s), \quad (31) \]
\[ \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^H_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)^{(s)} \subset \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^H_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)^{(s)} \subset D_1(s), \quad (32) \]

where \( \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^H_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V) \to V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V) \) is defined by \( \tilde{\mathcal{A}}(\phi) = (\phi(0), \phi) \).

Finally, if \( f \) satisfies
\[ \sup_{s \leq 0} \int_{s-1}^s \|f(\theta)\|^2 \,d\theta < \infty, \quad (33) \]
then (31) becomes an equality, \( \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}_D}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V))^{(s)} = \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^H_H}(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V))^{(s)} = \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)^{(s)} = \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V)^{(s)} . \)

**Proof.** The abstract result ensuring existence of pullback attractors for the tempered universes (e.g., cf. [5, Theorem 3.11] or [4, Theorem 3]) can be applied for both \( (V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \) and \( (L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V, \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \) since they are continuous processes (cf. Corollary 2), with absorbing families (cf. Remark 4) and fulfilling the pullback asymptotic compact property (cf. Corollary 4) w.r.t. the universes \( \mathcal{D}^H_H(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty_V)) \) and \( \mathcal{D}^C_H(L^2_{D(A)} \cap C_V) \) respectively.

The existence of pullback attractors for the case of universes of fixed bounded sets is simpler (e.g., cf. [14] or [4, Corollary 1]) since they are contained in the tempered universes. This also implies relations (29) and (30).

Relations (31) and (32) via \( \tilde{\mathcal{A}} \) follows by the characterization of minimal pullback attractors and Lemma 4.

Last statement follows again from [4, Corollary 1] since absorbing families in these phase-spaces are uniformly bounded in time (see expressions of \( \rho_2 \) and \( \rho_3 \) in Lemma 2).

Using comparison results for attractors (e.g., cf. [5, Theorem 3.15]) and relations among tempered families of different universes after a time-shift (thanks to Lemma 4), it is possible to relate the attractors \( \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}_D}(H \times (L^2_{H}) \cap L^\infty_H) \) and \( \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(H \times (L^2_{H}) \cap L^\infty_H) \) for \( (H \times (L^2_{H}) \cap L^\infty_H), \{S(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \) and \( \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(L^2_{H} \cap C_H) \) and \( \mathcal{A}_{\mathcal{D}^C_H}(L^2_{H} \cap C_H) \) for \( (L^2_{H} \cap C_H), \{U(t, \tau)\}_{t \geq \tau}) \) obtained in [4, Theorems 4 and 5] with the ones obtained here in Theorem 3. Arguments are analogous to the above proof so it is omitted.
Theorem 4. Under the assumptions of Theorem 3, the attractors cited previously satisfy the following relations

\[ \mathcal{A}_D^H(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty)) (s) \subset \mathcal{A}_D^H(H \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty))(s), \]  
\[ \mathcal{A}_D(L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty)(s) \subset \mathcal{A}_D(L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty)(s), \]  
\[ \mathcal{A}_D^H(H \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty))(s) = \mathcal{A}_D^H(V \times (L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty))(s), \]  
\[ \mathcal{A}_D^{H^2}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty)(s) = \mathcal{A}_D^{H^2}(L^2_{D(A)} \cap L^\infty)(s) \]

for any \( s \in \mathbb{R}. \)

Moreover, if \( f \) satisfies (33), then (34) and (35) are in fact equalities.

Acknowledgments. The authors wish to congratulate Prof. Kloeden for his 70th birthday. Particularly, P.M.-R. thanks Prof. Kloeden for their relationship during all these years, both academic and friendship, and for his continuous encouragement from the beginning of his scientific career.

The authors also wish to thank the referees for their careful reading and comments on a previous version of the manuscript.

Partially supported by the projects MTM2015-63723-P (MINECO/FEDER, EU) and P12-FQM-1492 (Junta de Andalucía). G. Planas was partially supported by CNPq-Brazil, grants 306646/2015-3 and 402388/2016-0 and CAPES-Brazil, Finance Code 001.

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Received May 2018; revised September 2018.

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