Unclear title:

Solidifying vacuum: phase structure of the electroweak model in a strong magnetic field

Clarifying title:

Solidifying and evaporating vortex solid liquid — made, by the way, from nothing* — possessing superconductivity and superfluidity at the same time** and all that requires just one simple ingredient: magnetic field*** …

*) yes, vacuum is the most "nothing" of all available nothings

**) yes, the transport should be dissipationless

***) disclaimer: to make all that we need strong magnetic field

Solidifying vacuum: phase structure of the electroweak model in a strong magnetic field

(first-principle results from lattice simulations)

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Motivation:

Check emergence of a superconducting phase due to vacuum instability in strong magnetic field background

Based on:

PHYSICAL REVIEW LETTERS **130,** 111802 (2023)

Phase Structure of Electroweak Vacuum in a Strong Magnetic Field: The Lattice Results

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Scales of magnetic field in (particle) (astro)physics - I

1 T — Reference scale

(T = Tesla)   1 T = 10^4 G   (G = Gauss)

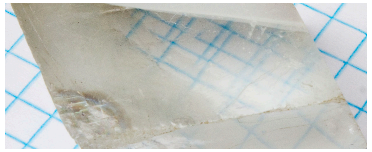
loudspeaker

NMR imaging

10^9 T — QED scale; the Schwinger limit

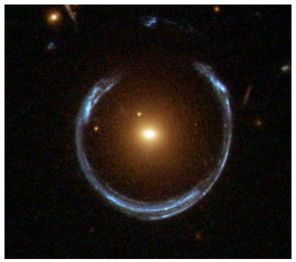
$$B^{\text{QED}} = \frac{m_{\text{e}}^2}{e} \simeq 4 \times 10^9\,\text{T}$$

— vacuum acquires optical birefringence properties



SL Adler, Annals Phys. 67, 599 (1971)

— vacuum can act as a "magnetic lens"
which is able to distort and magnify images

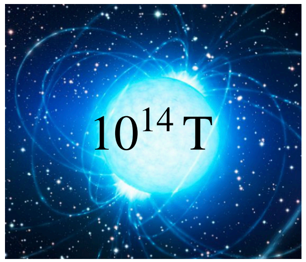


NJ Shaviv, JS Heyl, Y. Lithwick,
MNRAS 306, 333 (1999) [astro-ph/9901376]

(similar to gravitational lens)

magnetar surfaces

SA Olausen, VMKaspi,
"The McGill magnetar catalog"
AP SS 212, 6 (2015) [arXiv:1309.4167]



cores of magnetars

D Lai and SL Shapiro AJ 383, 745 (1991)
CY Cardall, M Prakash, JM Lattimer
AJ 554, 322 (2001) [astro-ph/0011148]

Images: Physics Today, Wikipedia, free resources

Scales of magnetic field in (particle) (astro)physics - II

10^{16} T — QCD scale

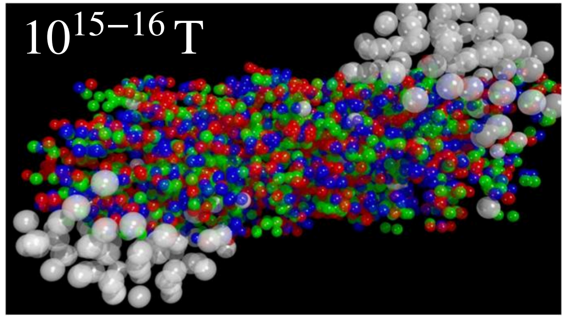
$$B^{\rm QCD} = \frac{m_p^2}{e} \sim 10^{16}\,{\rm T}$$

— magnetic catalysis (enhancement of chiral symmetry breaking)

SP Klevansky, RH Lemmer, Phys. Rev. D 39, 3478 (1989);
KG Klimenko, Z. Phys. C 54, 323 (1992);
great review: IA Shovkovy, Lect. Notes Phys. 871, 13 (2013).

— vacuum superconductivity?

MN Ch., Phys. Rev. D 82, 085011 (2010); PRL 106, 142003 (2011)



transient fields $(10^{-24}\,{\rm s})$
in heavy-ion collisions

V Skokov, A Yu Illarionov, V Toneev,
Int. J. Mod. Phys. A 24, 5925 (2009);
WT Deng, XG Huang,
Phys. Rev. C 85, 044907 (2012)

10^{20} T — EW scale

$$B^{\rm EW} = \frac{m_W^2}{e} \sim 10^{20}\,{\rm T}$$

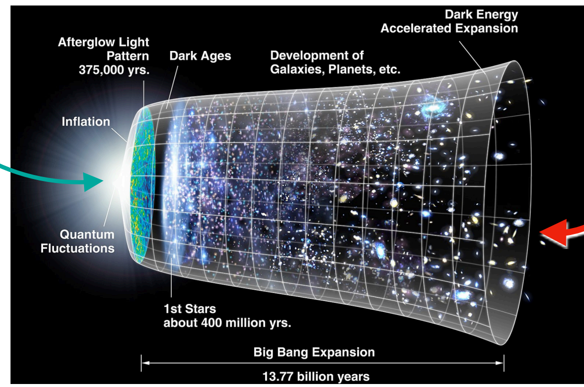
— change in vacuum structure

NK Nielsen, P Olesen, Nucl. Phys. B 144, 376 (1978);
VV Skalozub, Sov. J. Nucl. Phys. 28, 1 (1978);
VV Skalozub, Sov. J. Nucl. Phys. 28, 1 45, 6 (1987)
J Ambjorn, P Olesen, Phys. Lett. B 214, 565 (1988);
J Ambjorn, P Olesen, Nucl. Phys. B 315, 606 (1989)

Early Universe?

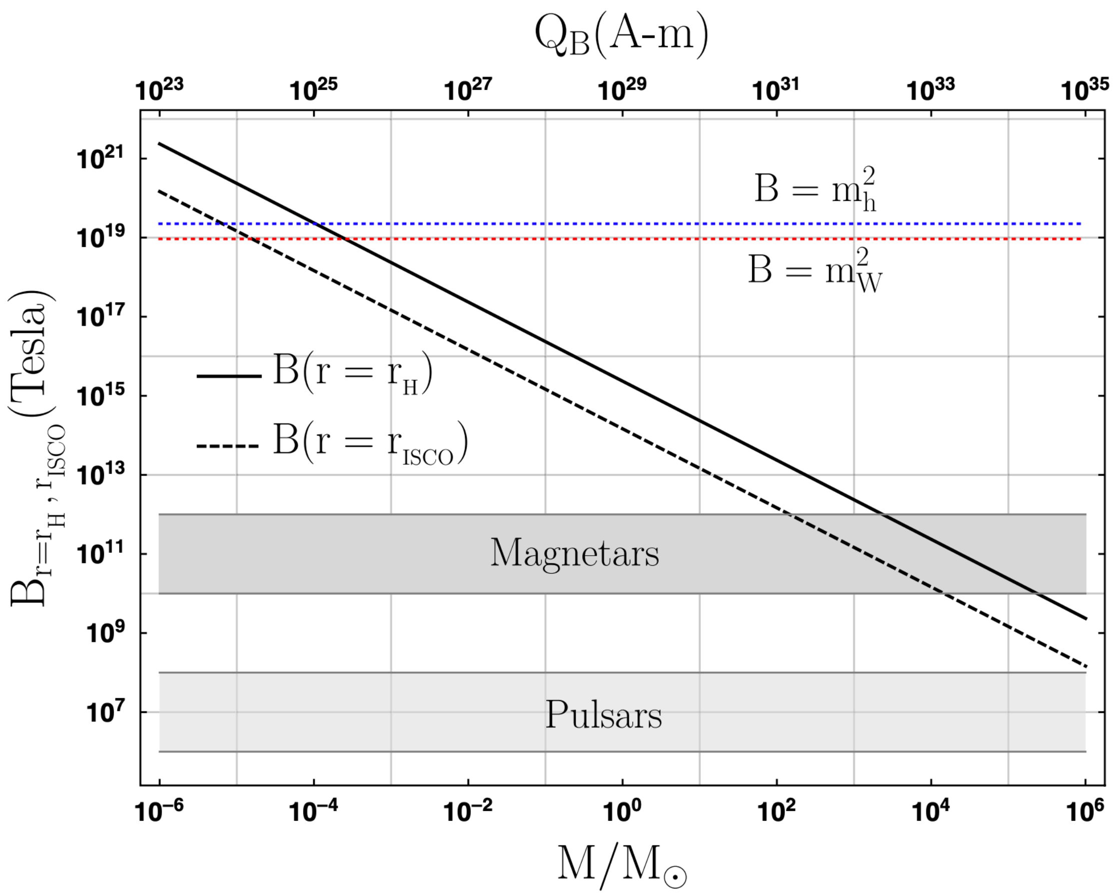
T Vachaspati, PLB 265, 258 (1991);
D Grasso, HR Rubinstein,
Phys. Rept. 348, 163 (2001)

you are here



Images: BNL, Physics Today

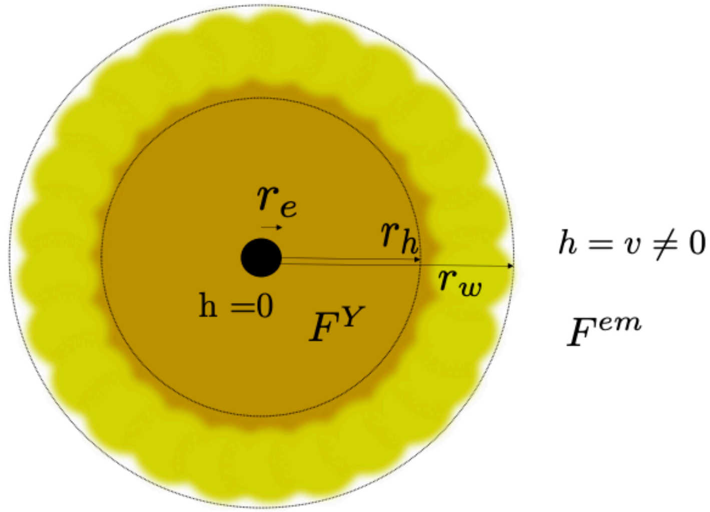
Scales of magnetic field in particle/(astro)physics - III



Astrophysical hints for magnetic black holes

Diptimoy Ghosh,* Arun Thalapillil,† and Farman Ullah‡

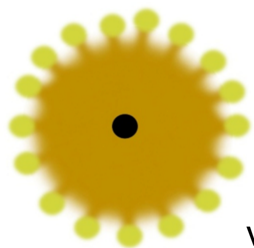
PHYSICAL REVIEW D **103**, 023006 (2021)



quantum atmospheres of magnetized black holes

black-hole mass

$$M_{\rm BH} \simeq (1/3) M_\oplus$$



black-hole radius

$$R \simeq 1\,\mathrm{cm}$$

vortex (superconducting) atmosphere

$$r \simeq 1\,\mathrm{mm}$$

magnetic field in the atmosphere

$$B \simeq 10^{21}\,\mathrm{T}$$

J Maldacena, JHEP 04, 079 (2021)

Change of vacuum structure in strong magnetic field

1) **QCD scale, B ~ 10^{16} T, associated with the ρ–meson condensation**

[M.Ch., PRD 80, 054503 (2009); PRL 106, 142003 (2011)]

possible weak crossover transition via inhomogeneous
condensation of composite ρ–meson states, difficult to see — not this talk

But the message is that one can get non-trivial vacuum state in the background magnetic field in the absence of ANY thermodynamic phase transition (no masses are vanishing at any point of the parameter space)

2) **EW scale, B ~ 10^{20} T, proceeds via the W boson condensation**

[J. Ambjorn, P. Olesen, PLB 214, 565 (1988); NPB 315, 606 (1989)]

Expectations:
inhomogeneous condensation, looks classical, easy, indisputable — this talk

Reality:
not entirely classical, not et all easy, and challenged in analytical calculations

Let us make it simple!

Free charged spin-1 relativistic particle in magnetic field

- Energy of a relativistic particle in the external magnetic field $B_{\rm ext}$:

$$\varepsilon^2_{n,s_z}(p_z) = p_z^2 + (2n - 2s_z + 1)eB_{\rm ext} + m^2$$

momentum along the magnetic field axis → p_z

nonnegative integer number → n

projection of spin on the magnetic field axis → s_z

(the external magnetic field is directed along the *z*-axis)

Instability for quantum numbers:

$$p_z = 0; \;\; n = 0; \;\; s_z = +1$$

Critical magnetic field:

$$eB_c = m^2$$

For *W* bosons (if we disregard interactions): $M_W^2(B) = M_W^2 - |eB|$

The critical field is: $$B_c^{\rm EW} = \frac{M_W^2}{e} \simeq 1.1 \times 10^{20}\,{\rm T}$$

Electroweak vacuum should become unstable toward *W* condensation!

Vacuum instability, what is the nature of the new phase?

… the one which is just about the **(first)** critical field.

1) Condensation of W bosons

[VV Skalozub (1987); J Ambjorn, P Olesen (1988), (1989)]

2) Vacuum superconductivity

[M.Ch., PRD 80, 054503 (2009)]

Vacuum should enter the new exotic phase which

a) is anisotropically superconducting

b) but does not possess Meissner effect

(= no screening of magnetic field by a charged condensate)

Superconductivity of the vacuum is interesting and nontrivial phenomenon. The first step to establish the vacuum superconductivity is to make sure that

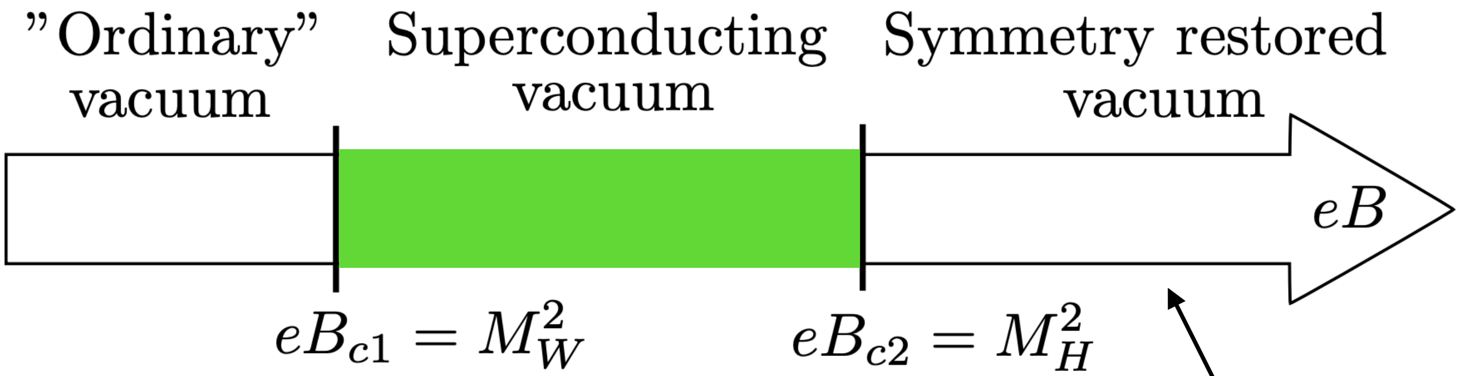
1) the vacuum instability towards the new phase exists;

2) the new phase has appropriate condensates (consistent with the theory);

→ aim of this work

What theory says about the EW phase structure?

(Weinberg-Salam model in strong magnetic field at T=0)



Inhomogeneous phase
made of a vortex crystal
(the aim of this talk)

symmetry restored phase
A Salam and JA Strathdee, Nucl. Phys. B 90, 203 (1975);
AD Linde, Phys. Lett. B 62, 435 (1976)
with remnants of the vortex lattice
P Olesen, Phys. Lett. B 268, 389 (1991);
J Van Doorsselaere, PRD, 88, 025013 (2013)

Our Aim No. 1: Check this phase structure

EW Lagrangian: $\mathcal{L} = -\frac{1}{4} W^a_{\mu\nu} W^{a,\mu\nu} - \frac{1}{4} X_{\mu\nu} X^{\mu\nu} + (D_\mu \Phi)^\dagger (D^\mu \Phi) - \lambda \left(|\Phi|^2 - v^2/2 \right)^2$

$D_\mu = \partial_\mu - i g \tau^a W^a_\mu / 2 - i g' X_\mu / 2$

$W^a_{\mu\nu} = \partial_\mu W^a_\nu - \partial_\nu W^a_\mu + g \epsilon^{abc} W^b_\mu W^c_\nu$

$X_{\mu\nu} = \partial_\mu X_\nu - \partial_\nu X_\mu$

Ordinary vacuum, symmetry breaking:

$SU(2)_L \times U(1)_X \to U(1)_{\text{em}}$

Particles:

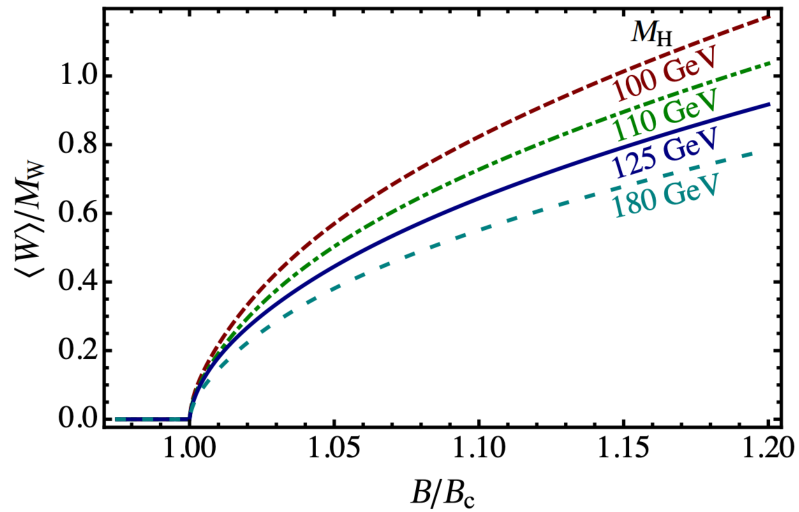
- W_μ — W-bosons (**massive** vector),
- Z_μ — Z-boson (**massive** vector),
- A_μ — photon (massless vector),
- Φ —Higgs particle **(massive** scalar)

Superconducting phase, what to expect (theory)

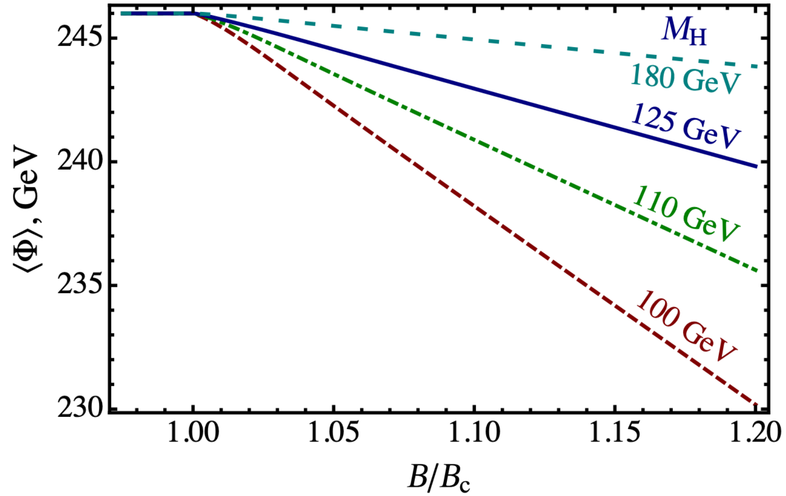
Solution of classical equations of motion (at a set of Higgs masses)

Transition at the vicitiny of the first critical field: $B_c = M_W^2/e$

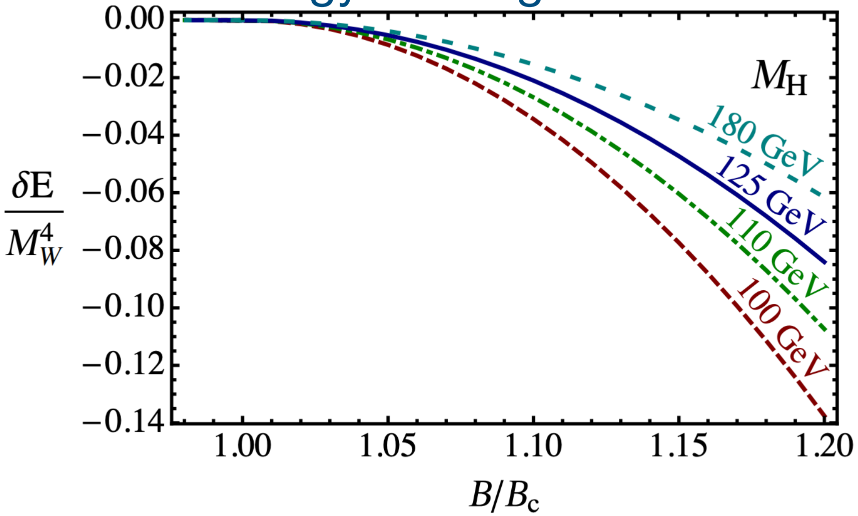
W-boson condensate



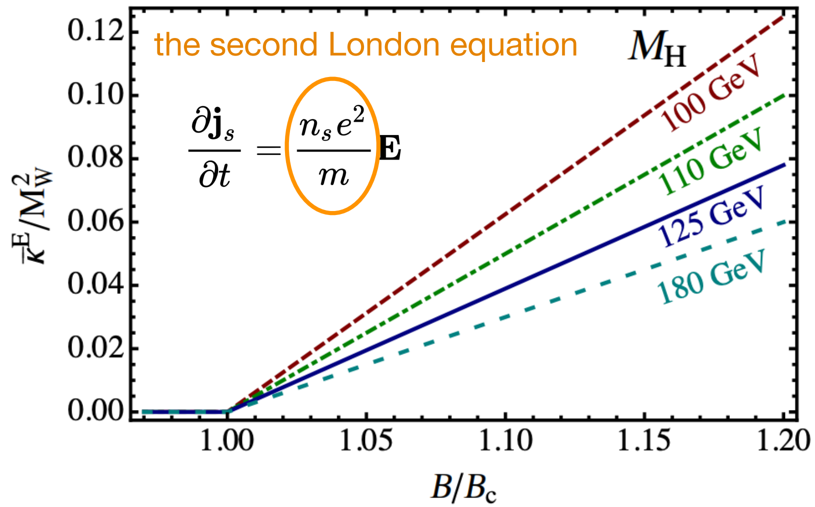
Higgs condensate



Energy of the ground state



Density of superconducting “pairs”



Second order phase transition

[J Van Doorsselaere, H Verschelde, M.Ch., PRD 88, 065006 (2013)]

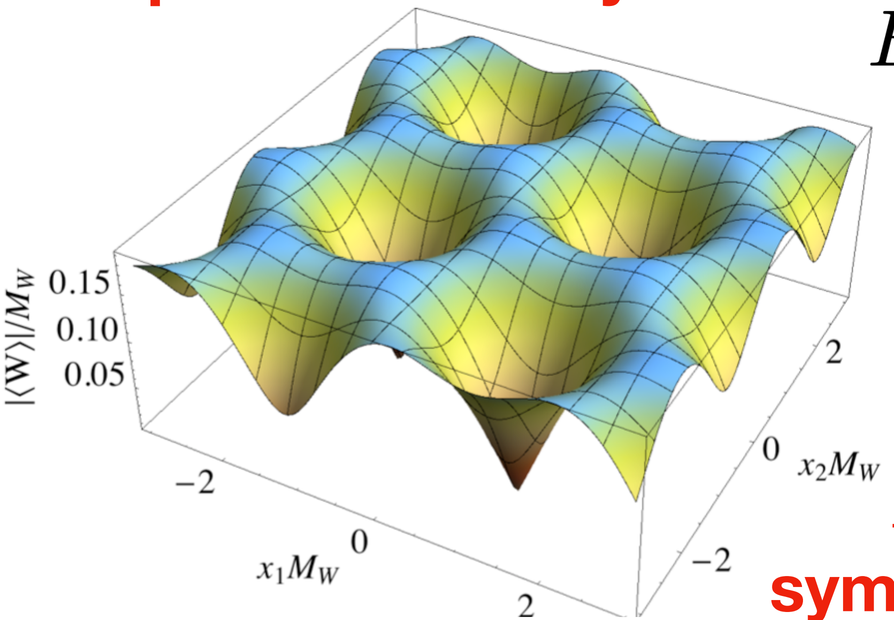
Superconducting phase, inhomogeneity (theory)

Superconductivity

Hexagonal vortex lattice

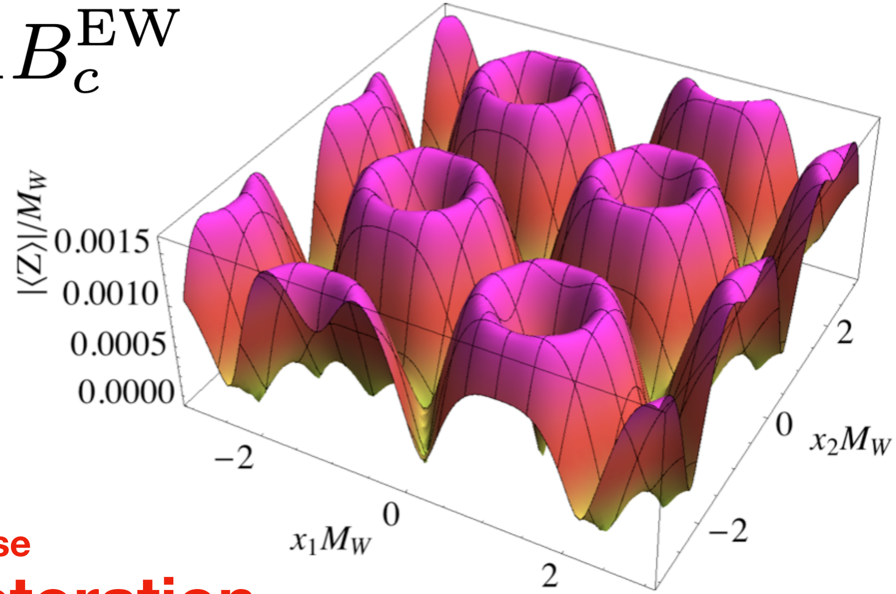
$$B = 1.01 B_c^{\mathrm{EW}}$$

Superfluidity



W-boson condensate

— **vanishes in the vortex core**



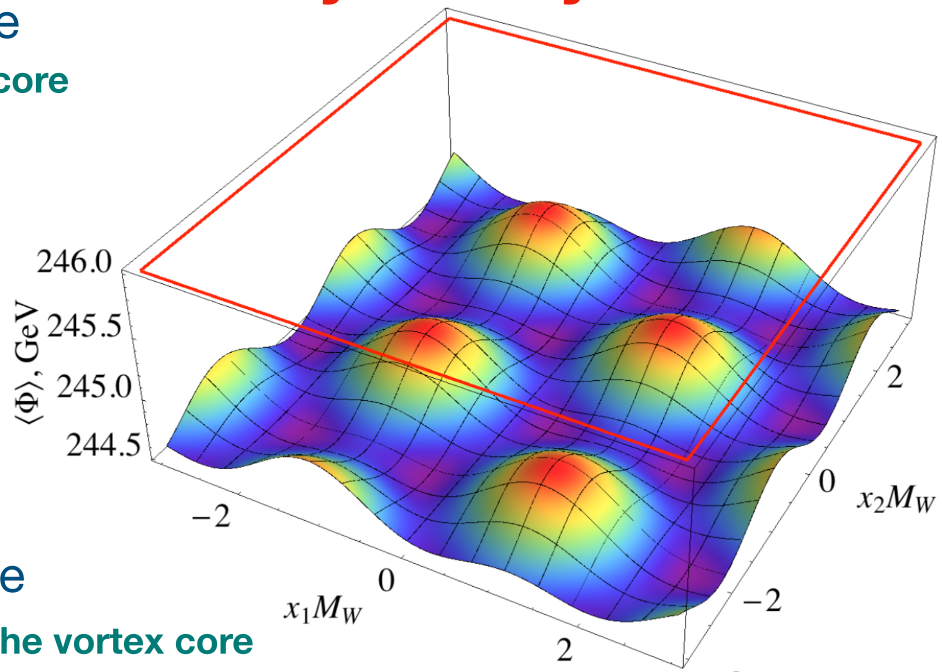
Z-boson condensate

— **vanishes in the vortex core and at an “equidistant manifold” in between the vortices;**

— **gets enhanced at intermediate distances**

tendency to cause

symmetry restoration



Higgs condensate

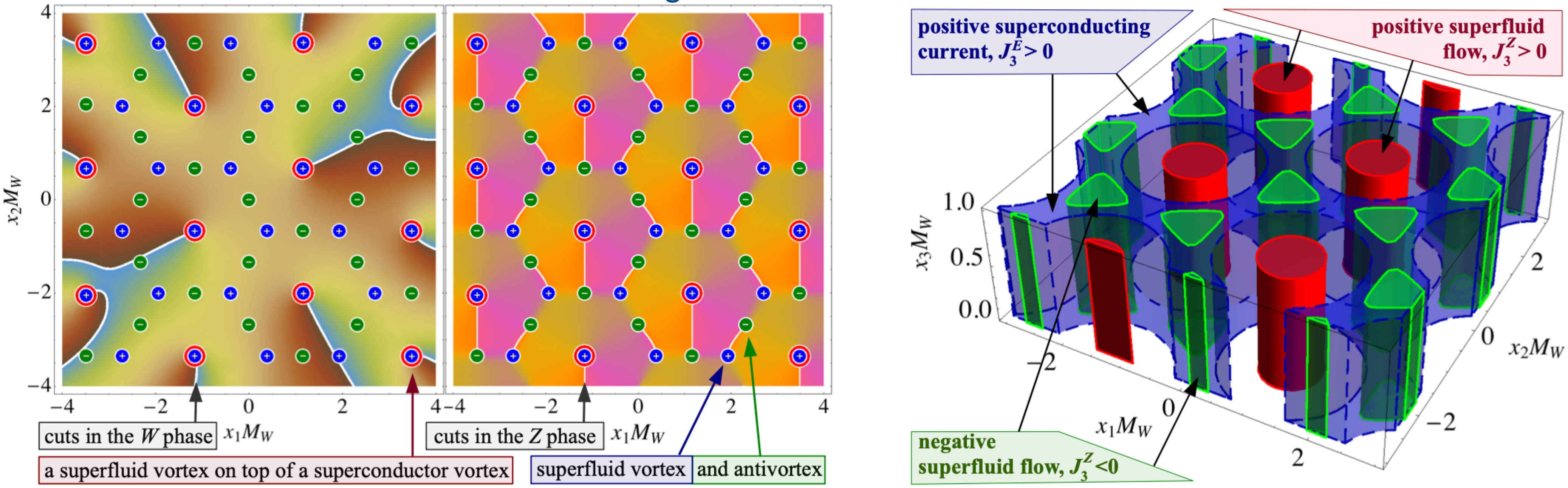
— **gets enhanced in the vortex core**

[J Van Doorsselaere, H Verschelde, M.Ch., PRD 88, 065006 (2013)]

Superconducting phase, inhomogeneity (theory)

Vortex structure in superconducting (W) and superfluid (Z) condensates

Plane transverse to the direction of magnetic field



[Jos Van Doorsselaere, Henri Verschelde, M.Ch., Phys. Rev. D 88, 065006 (2013)]

Visually (and distantly) similar but physically very different from the Abrikosov lattice in type-2 superconductors

Theoretical expectations based on classical equations of motion:

— Magnetic field leads to condensation of charged W bosons

— Condensation of the W's leads to a condensation of neutral Z bosons

→ **Coexisting superconducting and superfluid condensates**

Put Electroweak theory on the lattice!

— fermions play no essential role in the mechanism, we exclude them
— background hypermagnetic field gives magnetic field in the broken phase

Dynamical fields:

- $U_{x,\mu} = \exp\left(\imath \frac{\sigma_i}{2} W^i_{x,\mu}\right) \in SU(2)$
- $\theta_{x,\mu} \in \mathcal{R}$
- $\phi_x = \begin{pmatrix} \phi_{1,x} \\ \phi_{2,x} \end{pmatrix}$

$$S = \beta \sum_{x,\mu<\nu} \left(1 - \frac{1}{2} \mathrm{Tr}\, U_{x,\mu\nu}\right) + \frac{\beta_Y}{2} \sum_{x,\mu<\nu} \theta^2_{x,\mu\nu} \quad \textit{(gauge)}$$

$$+ \sum_x \left(-\kappa \phi^\dagger_x \phi_x + \lambda \left(\phi^\dagger_x \phi_x\right)^2\right) \quad \textit{(Higgs)}$$

$$+ \sum_{x,\mu} \left|\phi_x - e^{\imath\left(\theta_{x,\mu} + \theta^B_{x,\mu}\right)} U_{x,\mu} \phi_{x+\hat{\mu}}\right|^2 \quad \textit{(interaction)}$$

Boundary condition: periodic

Magnetic field : along Z direction

Lattice size: 64×48^3

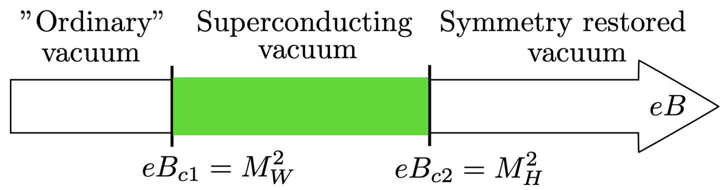
Parameters: β, β_Y, κ, λ, $\theta^B_{x,\mu}$.

Where is physical point?

Pioneering study: high temperature, 3d dimensionally reduced model around the EW crossover:
K Kajantie, M Laine, J Peisa, K Rummukainen, and ME Shaposhnikov, Nucl. Phys. B 544, 357 (1999) [arXiv:hep-lat/9809004]

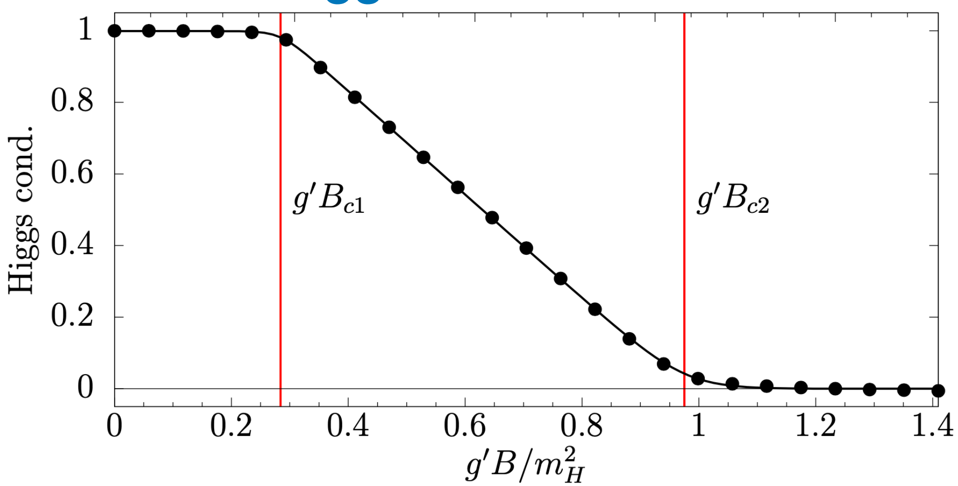
Mean Higgs condensate in (hyper)magnetic field

theory:

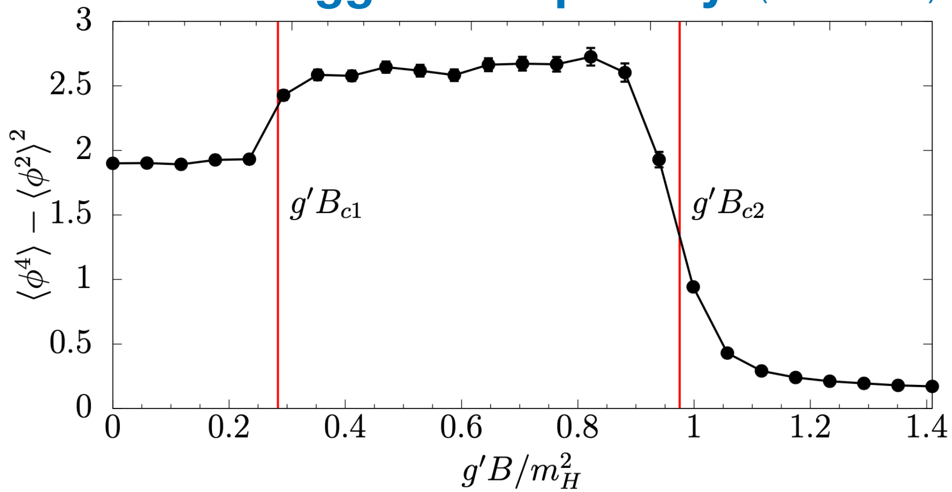


lattice simulations:

Higgs condensate (normalized)



Higgs susceptibility (normalized)



Result 1. Two phase transitions (as predicted by theory) **located at:**

First transition: $eB_{c1} \simeq 0.68(5)m_W^2$ (theory: $eB_{c1} = m_W^2$)

Second transition: $eB_{c2} \simeq 0.99(2)m_H^2$ (theory: $eB_{c2} = m_H^2$)

V. Skalozub, M. Bordag, IJMPA 15 (2000) 349

Result 2. The strength: both transitions are smooth crossovers, no singularity.

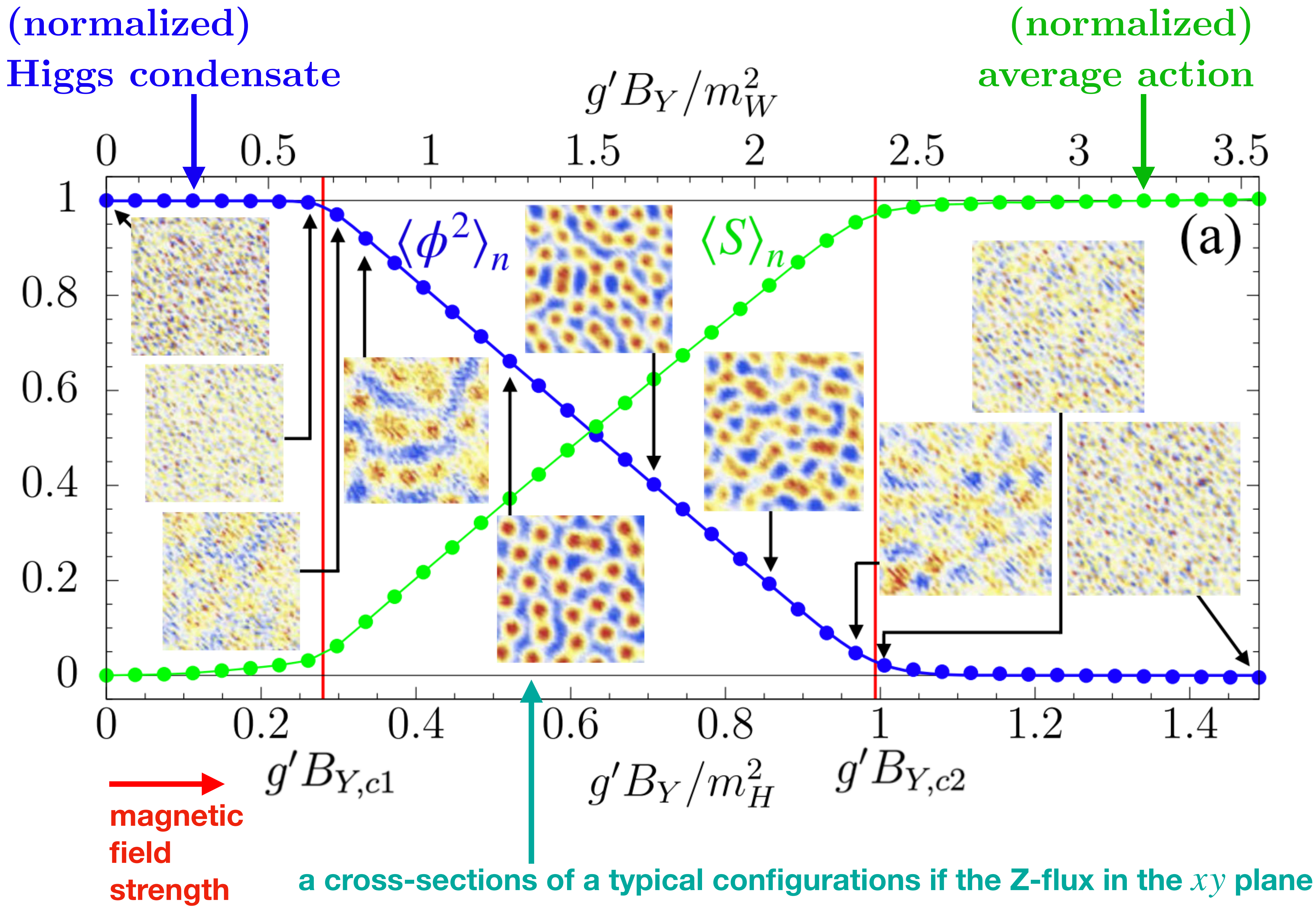
Expectations, classical approach: the transition is of the **second** order

perturbation theory: the transition is of the **first** order

Reality, first-principle simulations: the transition is of the **infinite** order (crossover)

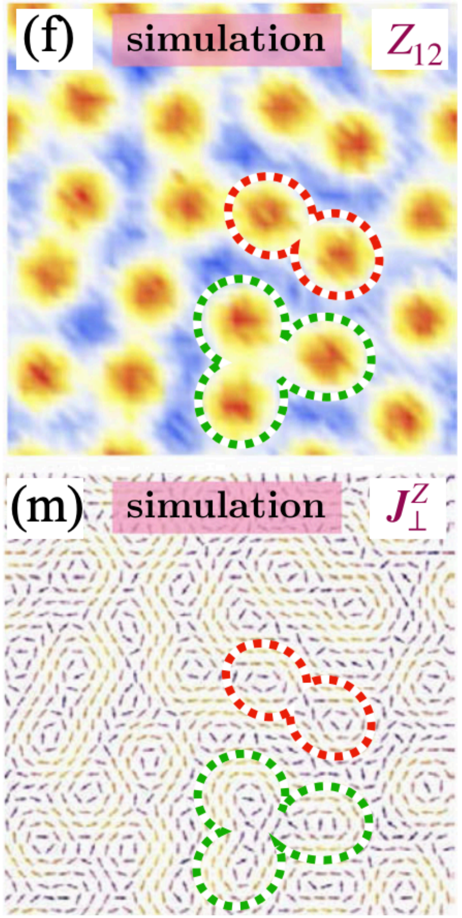
Result 3. The high-field phase $(B > B_{c2})$: symmetry-restored phase, OK with theory.

General view - I

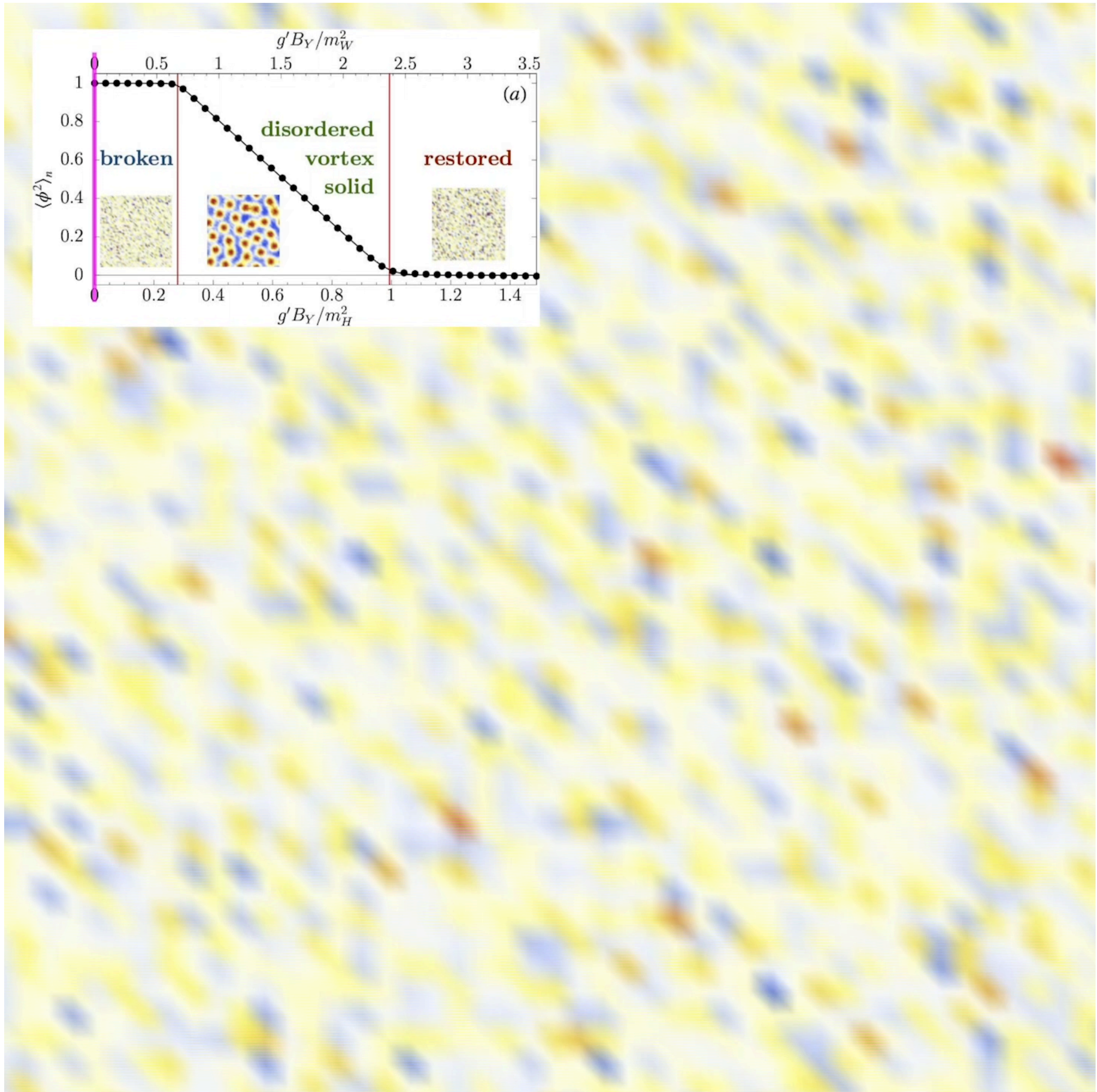


General view - II

Vortex condensate

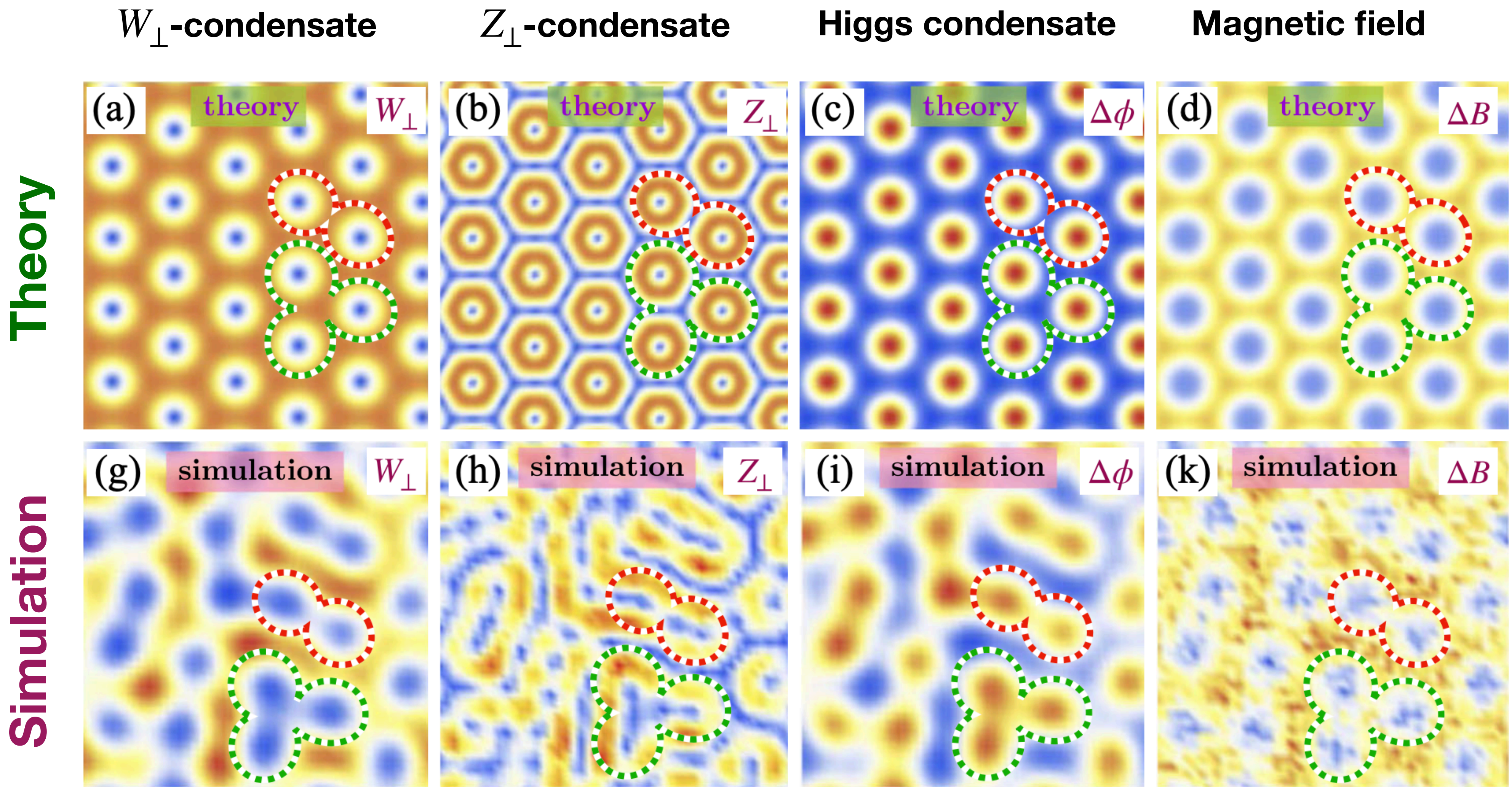


Currents around vortices!



a cross-section of a typical configuration in the xy plane

General view - III



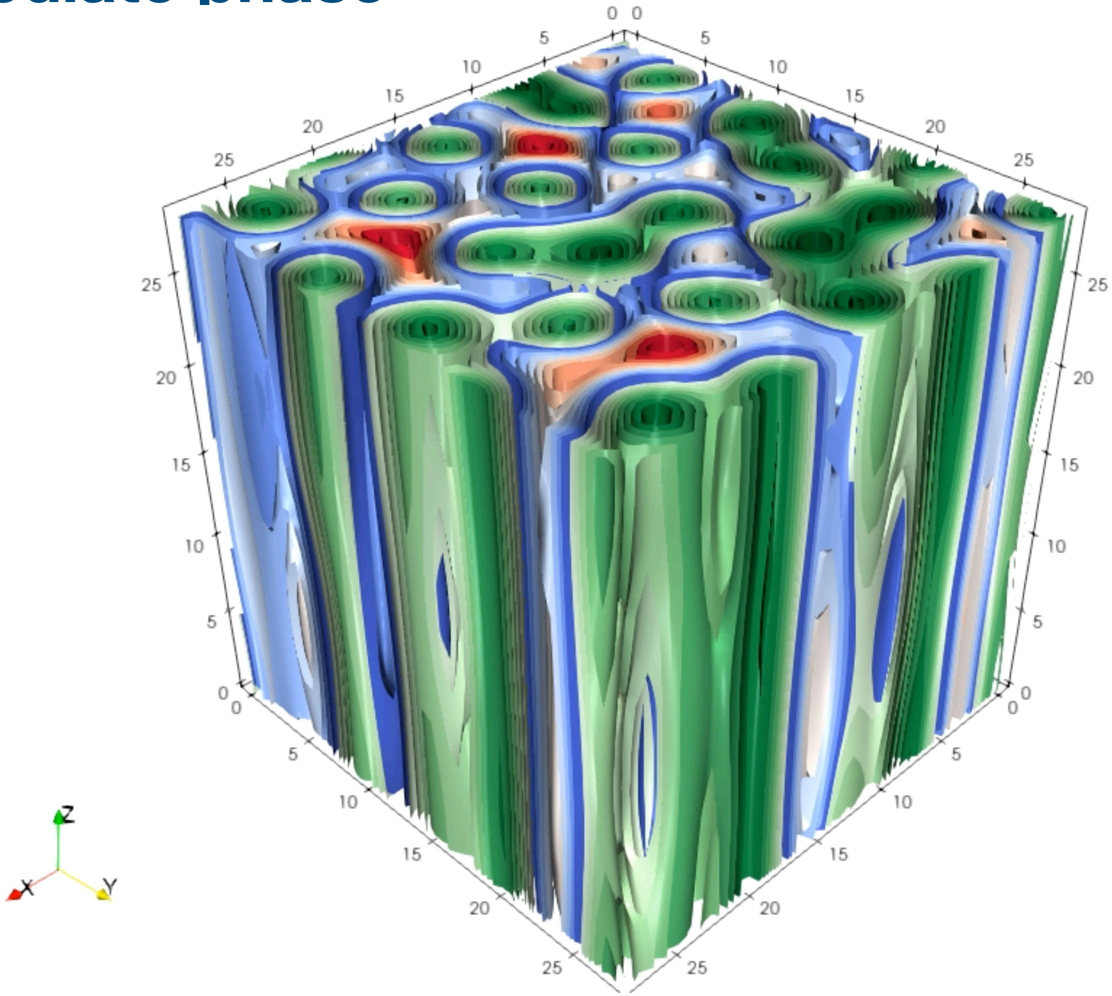
Not a "usual" type-II superconductor: magnetic field is strong <u>outside</u> the vortex cores and it is suppressed inside the vortices!

a cross-section of a typical configuration in the xy plane

Nature of the intermediate phase

$$eB = 1.1 M_W^2$$

$$B_{c1} < B < B_{c2}$$



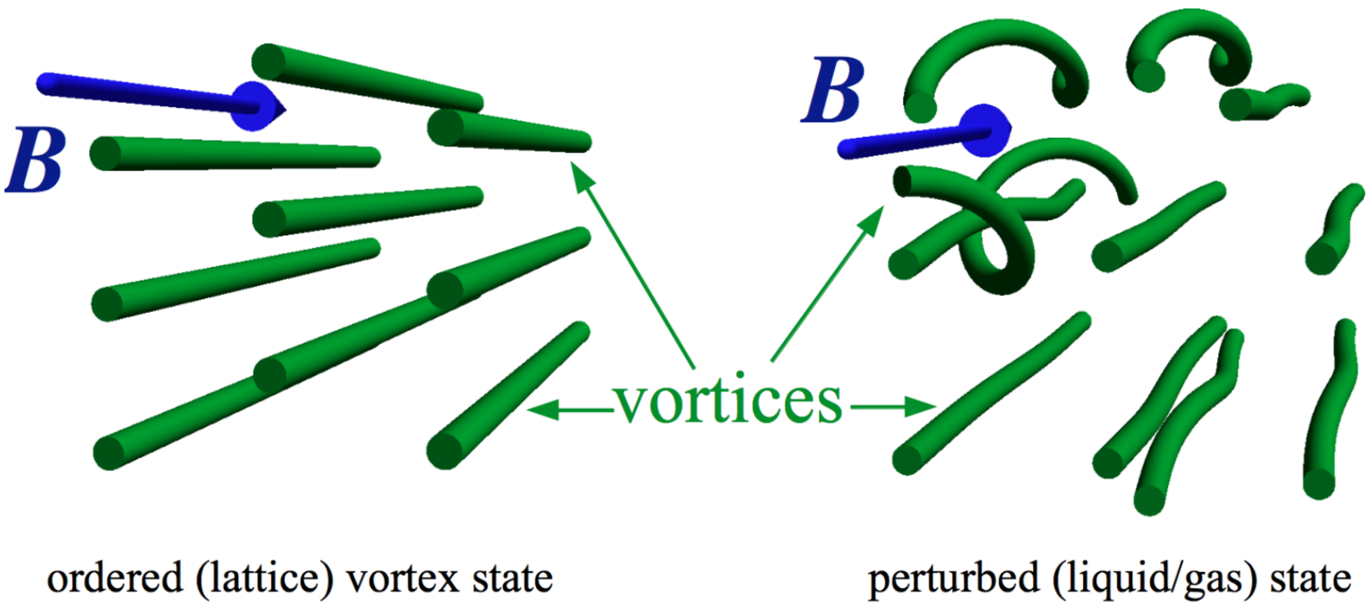
The blue (green) surfaces denote the equipotential surfaces of the **W condensate (the Higgs condensate)**.

The lines denote the lines of the hypermagnetic field.

Result 4. No crystalline order for vortices (presumably, due to quantum fluctuations).
(Classical) theory predicts the hexagonal vortex solid. Not OK with theory.
The vacuum presumably becomes a liquid made of vortices.

No vortex lattice

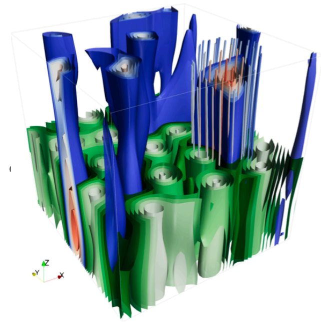
No clear vortex lattice at the physical point (at physical parameters)

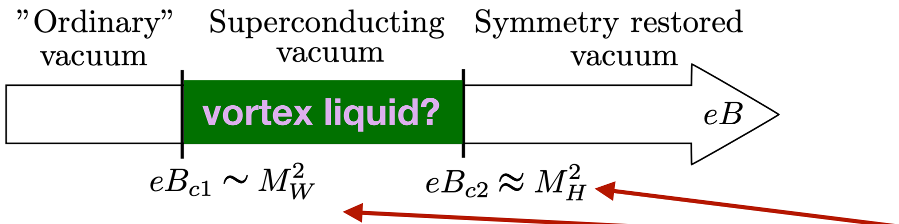


Conclusions

1. We found the phase structure of zero-temperature electroweak theory in the magnetic-field background from first-principle lattice simulations

2. The phase structure is qualitatively consistent with the theory based on solutions of classical EW equations of motions



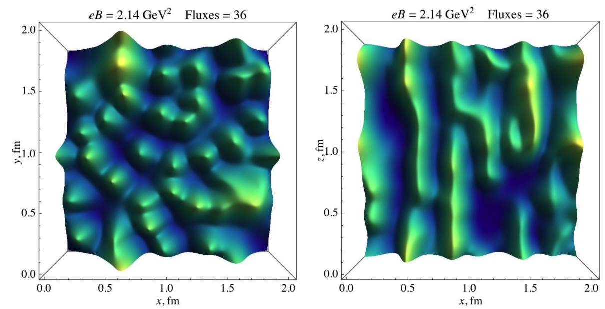


smooth crossovers

3. Some differences with the theory, the role of quantum fluctuations is crucial:

   — vortices share some similarities with the Ambjorn-Olesen solution
   — no crystal lattice formation (of the Abrikosov type)
   — the vortices form either gas or liquid (fluctuating vortex medium)
   — the transitions are not phase transitions but the smooth crossovers
   (difficult/impossible to see from thermodynamics)

quenched QCD



4. A similar phase in QCD at strong magnetic field? (no phase transition, a smooth appearance of the inhomogeneous phase).

[Braguta et al. *PoS* LATTICE2013 (2014) 362]