



Magnetic order in hyperhoneycomb magnet β-Li₂IrO₃ and its evolution in magnetic field

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Collaborators





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Everything started with the model ...

A. Kitaev, Annals of Physics 321, 2 (2006)





Exactly solvable

Spin liquid ground state

The Kítaev model appeared to be realizable ...

G. Jackeli and G. Khaliullin, PRL 102, 017205 (2009)



Effective low-energy Hamiltonian for $J_{eff} = 1/2$ "spins":

 $H = H_{K}$ + (other terms)

Experimental realizations in 2D



 $H_3Lilr_2O_6$

Experimental realizations in 3D

 β -Li₂IrO₃

A. Biffin et al, PRB (2014)

T. Takayama et al, PRL (2015)

 γ -Li₂IrO₃

Modic et al, Nature Comm. (2014)

A. Biffin et al, PRL (2014)

Physics is different from pure Kitaev spin liquid but very interesting $H = H_{\kappa}$ + (other terms)



I. Rousochatzakis, S. Kourtis, J. Knolle, R. Moessner, NBP, PRB 2019

Complex magnetism in β-Li₂IrO₃ in applied magnetic field



Experiment:

A. Biffin et al, PRB (2014)

- T. Takayama et al, PRL (2015)
- A. Ruiz et al, Nat.Com. (2017)
- L.S.I. Veiga et al, PRB (2017)

M. Majumder et al, PRL (2018), PRM (2019), arXiv:1910.03251

A. Ruiz et al, arXiv:1909.06355

Theory:

- E. K.-H. Lee and Y. B. Kim, PRB (2015)
- E. K.-H. Lee, J. G Rau and Y. B. Kim, PRB (2015)
- I. Kimchi, R. Coldea, and A. Vishwanath, PRB (2015)
- I. Kimchi and R. Coldea, PRB (2016)
- P. P. Stavropoulos, A. Catuneanu, H.-Y. Kee, PRB (2018)
- S. Ducatman, I.Rousochatzakis and N.P., PRB (2018)
- I.Rousochatzakis and N.P., PRB (2018)
- M. Lee, I. Rousochatzakis and N.P., arxiv:1910.****



Experimental facts: zero field

T_N=37 K: incommensurate (IC) counter-rotating spiral



Irreducible representation: $\mathbf{M}_{(0.57,0,0)} = (iM_aA, iM_bC, M_cF)$

$$F = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}, A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \\ -1 \\ 1 \end{bmatrix}, C = \begin{bmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ -1 \\ -1 \\ -1 \end{bmatrix}$$

A. Biffin et al, PRB (2014)

Experimental facts: magnetic field along b



The system develops a significant uniform 'zigzag' component along **a**









Experimental facts: magnetic field along a, b and c



A. Ruiz et al, Nat.Com. 2017

M. Majumder, et al PRM 2019







S. Ducatman, I.Rousochatzakis and N.P., PRB (2018)

 $\Gamma(S_0^y S_1^z + S_0^z S_1^y) + K S_0^x S_1^x$

 $E/N = \frac{1}{2}(K + 2\Gamma)S^2$

coincides with min of energy from LT

Classical degeneracy associated with the direction of the initial central spin S₀

S. Ducatman, I. Rousochatzakis and N.P., PRB 2018

$$K(S_1^y S_2^y - S_1^x S_2^z - S_1^z S_2^x) \to -KS_1' \cdot S_2'$$

Main idea: IC order can be understood as a long-wavelength twisting of a nearby commensurate order. In this case: Q = (2/3, 0, 0)

Static structure factor components Q=2/3: $M_a(A)$, $M_b(C)$ and $M_c(F)$ Γ_4 IRR Q=0: $M'_a(G)$ and $M'_b(F)$

$$A = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \\ -1 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}, \quad C = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ -1 \\ -1 \end{pmatrix}, \quad F = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \\ 1 \end{pmatrix}, \quad G = \begin{pmatrix} 1 \\ -1 \\ 1 \\ -1 \\ 1 \\ -1 \end{pmatrix}$$

Six sublattices (A,B,C) and (A',B',C') forming almost ideal 120°-order

Q=0 canting due M'_a(G) and M'_b(F)

The counter-rotating along xy- and x'y'chains: lower spins ABCABC... upper spins ACBACB

S. Ducatman, I. Rousochatzakis and N.P., PRB 2018

The behavior of β -Li₂IrO₃ under magnetic field along any crystallographic direction can be described in a unified manner.

$$\mathcal{H}_{ij}^{t} = J\mathbf{S}_{i} \cdot \mathbf{S}_{j} + KS_{i}^{\alpha_{t}}S_{j}^{\alpha_{t}} + \sigma_{t}\Gamma(S_{i}^{\beta_{t}}S_{j}^{\gamma_{t}} + S_{i}^{\gamma_{t}}S_{j}^{\beta_{t}})$$
$$\mathcal{H}^{Z} = -\mu_{B}\mathbf{H} \cdot \sum_{i} \mathbf{g}_{i} \cdot \mathbf{S}_{i}.$$

$$\mathbf{g}_{i} = \mathbf{g}_{\text{diag}} + p_{i}\mathbf{g}_{\text{off-diag}} \equiv \begin{pmatrix} g_{aa} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & g_{bb} & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & g_{cc} \end{pmatrix} + p_{i} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & g_{ab} & 0 \\ g_{ab} & 0 & 0 \\ 0 & 0 & 0 \end{pmatrix}$$

$$g_{aa} = g_{bb} = g_{cc} = 2$$
$$g_{ab} = 0.1$$

General structure of the field-induced phases

field direction		H∥a			H∥b					H∥c					
Hamiltonian ${\cal H}$	\mathcal{T}	I	C _{2a}	ΘC _{2b}	ΘC_{2c}	\mathcal{T}	I	ΘC_{2a}	С _{2b}	ΘC_{2c}	\mathcal{T}	I	⊖C _{2a}	$\Theta C_{2\mathbf{b}}$	C _{2e}
state at $0 \le H < H^*$	×	\checkmark	×	×	\checkmark	×	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	×	\checkmark	\checkmark	×	×
state at $H^* < H < H^{**}$	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	×	×
state at $H > H^{**}$	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark
) < H < H* од ^{, со} ов, ^и	10 oc	,	Ir,			ź Ĉ				€ ^{C2a}	F'Q	F″	* < ₣′ੵੵ	H < I	- ** F'0 ~

Symmetries

field direction			H∥a			H∥b						H∥c					
Hamiltonian $\mathcal H$	\mathcal{T}	I	C_{2a}	<u></u> ӨС _{2b}	ΘC_{2c}	\mathcal{T}	I	ΘC _{2a}	С _{2b}	ΘC_{2c}	τ	I	ΘC_{2a}	ΘC _{2b}	C _{2e}		
state at $0 \le H < H^*$	×	\checkmark	×	×	\checkmark	×	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	×	\checkmark	\checkmark	×	×		
state at $H^* < H < H^{**}$	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	×	×		
state at $H > H^{**}$	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark	\checkmark		

 $C_{2\mathbf{c}}$ maps *x*-bonds to *y*-bonds $[S_x, S_y, S_z] \rightarrow [S_y, S_x, -S_z]$

 $C_{2\mathbf{a}}$ maps *x*-bonds to *y*'-bonds and *y*-bonds to *x*' $[S_x, S_y, S_z] \rightarrow [-S_y, -S_x, -S_z]$

 $C_{2\mathbf{b}}$ maps *x*-bonds to *x'*-bonds and *y*-bonds to *y'* $[S_x, S_y, S_z] \rightarrow [-S_x, -S_y, S_z]$

Magnetization process in the **b**-field

For $H > H^*$, all modulated components vanish and only uniform structure factors left. Significant zigzag component perpendicular to the field up to very high field, thus the system can not reach fully polarized state even classically.

The spins lie on the ab-plane, so direction of the zigzag is fixed by the field.

Magnetization process in the a-field

For $H > H^*$, all modulated components vanish and only uniform structure factors left. Significant zigzag component perpendicular to the field up to very high field, thus the system can not reach fully polarized state even classically.

The spins lie on the ab-plane, so direction of the zigzag is fixed by the field.

Magnetization process in the c-field

Significant zigzag and additional FM component perpendicular to the field for $H > H^*$. The spin plane changes continuously with a field. However, not all the symmetries are broken and thus there is a second transition at H^{**} . For $H > H^{**}$ the classical system is in a fully polarized state.

Robustness of high-field zigzag orders

$$E_{\mathbf{a}}/N = \eta'_{aF}M'_{a}(F)^{2} + \eta'_{bG}M'_{b}(G)^{2} - \sqrt{2}\Gamma M'_{a}(F) M'_{b}(G) - \mu_{B}H\left(g_{aa}M'_{a}(F) - g_{ab}M'_{b}(G)\right).$$

$$E_{\mathbf{b}}/\mathcal{N} = \eta'_{bF}M'_{b}(F)^{2} + \eta'_{aG}M'_{a}(G)^{2} - \sqrt{2}\Gamma M'_{a}(G) M'_{b}(F) - \mu_{B}H[g_{bb}M'_{b}(F) - g_{ab}M'_{a}(G)].$$

$$E_{c}/N = \eta'_{bF}M'_{b}(F)^{2} + \eta'_{cF}M'_{c}(F)^{2} + \eta'_{aG}M'_{a}(G)^{2} - \sqrt{2}\Gamma M'_{a}(G) M'_{b}(F) - g_{cc}\mu_{B}H M'_{c}(F).$$

The presence of these cross-coupling terms reveal that the qualitative reason why it is energetically favorable for the system to sustain appreciable zigzag orders up to high fields is the strong Gamma- interaction.

Intensity sum rule

The **intensity sum rule** is fulfilled for **all field directions and strengths**. This is a direct fingerprint of the local spin length constraints.

Magnetization process $\mathbf{m} = \frac{1}{N_{\rm m}} \mu_B \left(\mathbf{g}_{\rm diag} \cdot \sum_{\mu} \langle \mathbf{S}_{\mu} \rangle + \mathbf{g}_{\rm off-diag} \cdot \sum_{\mu} p_{\mu} \langle \mathbf{S}_{\mu} \rangle \right)$ $(\mathcal{N}_{\rm m} = 48 \text{ for } H < H^* \text{ and } \mathcal{N}_{\rm m} = 2 \text{ for } H > H^*)$

Phase diagram

Magnetic excitations in the field

$$\mathcal{H}_{2} = E_{cl}/S + \sum \mathbf{x}_{\mathbf{q}}^{\dagger} \cdot \mathbf{H}_{\mathbf{q}} \cdot \mathbf{x}_{\mathbf{q}}$$
$$\mathbf{x}_{\mathbf{q}} = \left(a_{\mathbf{q},1}, \dots, a_{\mathbf{q},\mathcal{N}_{\mathrm{m}}}, a_{-\mathbf{q},1}^{\dagger}, \dots, a_{-\mathbf{q},\mathcal{N}_{\mathrm{m}}}^{\dagger}\right)^{\mathrm{T}}$$

Evolution of magnetic excitations in the b-field

Non-monotonic behavior of spin gap in the b-field

 $H < H^*$ the gap decreases as the IC order is being suppressed by the external field; $H > H^*$ the gap increases and shows a roughly linear behavior indicating that the system is gradually turning into a paramagnet

Spin gap in the b-field

Magnetic torque

The torque for H II **a** is about 40 times weaker than the torque for H II **c**: $\tau_c \ll \tau_a$

Both torques show a non-monotonic behavior as a function of the field. The kink in τ_a is due to the first-order transition. The sign of τ_a is chosen spontaneously.

Angular dependence of the torque

At low fields, the magnetic response is linear and the dependence of the torque is quadratic with field and proportional to $\sin 2\theta$. Sawtooth shape of the torques for larger fields and angles, comes from the interplay of interaction anisotropy and g-anisotropy.

Similar angular dependence of the torque was observed in RuCl₃ and γ -Li₂IrO₃

Also discussed for RuCl3 by K.Riedl, Y. Li, S. M. Winter, and R. Val Phys. Rev. Lett. 122, 197202 2019

Conclusions

zero field:

The period-3 order for dominant K and small J interactions shares the same physics at short distances and the same excitation spectrum with the experimentally observed IC order above some small energy cutoff.

finite field: Field evolution of the magnetic ground state differs significantly for field along three crystallographic axes due to different symmetry-breaking schemes.

Thank you

Ansatz

H//a: 10 parameters+ 4 constraints

$$\begin{split} \mathbf{A} &= S[x_1, y_1, z_1] \\ \mathbf{A}' &= S[y_2, x_2, z_2] \\ \mathbf{B} &= S[-y_1, -x_1, z_1] \\ \mathbf{B}' &= S[-x_2, -y_2, z_2] \\ \mathbf{C} &= S[-x_3, x_3, -z_3] \\ \mathbf{C}' &= S[x_4, -x_4, -z_4] \end{split} \\ \begin{split} E/N &= S^2 \Big\{ K[x_1^2 + x_2^2 + 2x_3y_1 + 2x_4y_2 + 2z_1z_2 + z_3z_4] \\ E/N &= S^2 \Big\{ K[x_1^2 + x_2^2 + 2x_3y_1 + 2x_4y_2 + 2z_1z_2 + z_3z_4] \\ +2\Gamma[x_1x_2 + x_3x_4 + y_1y_2 + x_1z_3 + x_3z_1 + x_2z_4 + x_4z_2 + y_1z_1 + y_2z_2] \\ +2\Gamma[x_1x_2 + x_3x_4 + y_1y_2 + x_1z_3 + x_3z_1 + x_2z_4 + x_4z_2 + y_1z_1 + y_2z_2] \\ +J[2 - 2x_1x_3 - 2x_2x_4 - 2x_3x_4 + 2x_1y_2 + 2x_2y_1 + 2x_3y_1 + 2x_4y_2 + 2z_1z_2 - 2z_1z_3 - 2z_2z_4 + z_3z_4] \Big\} / 0 \\ \\ +S[x_1 - x_2 - x_3x_4 - 2x_2x_4 - 2x_3x_4 + 2x_1y_2 + 2x_2y_1 + 2x_3y_1 + 2x_4y_2 + 2z_1z_2 - 2z_1z_3 - 2z_2z_4 + z_3z_4] \Big\} / 0 \\ \\ +S[x_4 - x_4, -z_4] \\ \end{split}$$

H//b: 5 parameters+ 2 constraints (same as H = 0)

$$\begin{array}{ll} \mathbf{A} = S[x_1, y_1, z_1] \\ \mathbf{A}' = S[y_1, x_1, z_1] \\ \mathbf{B} = S[-y_1, -x_1, z_1] \\ \mathbf{B}' = S[-x_1, -y_1, z_1] \\ \mathbf{C} = S[-x_2, x_2, -z_2] \\ \mathbf{C}' = S[x_2, -x_2, -z_2] \end{array} \begin{array}{ll} E/N = S^2 \Big\{ K[3 - 2(y_1 - x_2)^2] \\ +2\Gamma[1 - z_1^2 + x_2^2 + 2(y_1 + x_2)z_1 + 2x_1z_2] \\ +2\Gamma[1 - z_1^2 + x_2^2 + 2(y_1 + x_2)z_1 + 2x_1z_2] \\ +J[1 + 2(z_1 - z_2)^2 - 4x_1x_2 + 4(x_1 + x_2)y_1] \Big\}/6 \\ -\mu_B HS[\sqrt{2}g^{ab}(x_1 - x_2 - y_1) + g^{bb}(-2z_1 + z_2)]/3 \end{array}$$

H//c: 9 parameters+ 3 constraints

$$\begin{array}{l} \mathbf{A} = S[x_1, y_1, z_1] \\ \mathbf{A}' = S[y_1, x_1, z_1] \\ \mathbf{B} = S[-y_2, -x_2, z_2] \\ \mathbf{B}' = S[-x_2, -y_2, z_2] \\ \mathbf{C} = S[-y_3, x_3, -z_3] \\ \mathbf{C}' = S[x_3, -y_3, -z_3] \end{array} \begin{array}{l} E/N = S^2 \Big\{ K[x_1^2 + x_2^2 + z_1^2 + z_2^2 + z_3^2 + 2x_3y_1 + 2y_2y_3] \\ E/N = S^2 \Big\{ K[x_1^2 + x_2^2 + z_1^2 +$$