A night photograph of a Harvard University building with a red roof and white walls, illuminated by warm lights. The building is reflected in a body of water in the foreground. In the background, a church steeple with a green dome is visible against a dark blue sky. The text "The quantum phases of matter" is overlaid on the right side of the image in a white, stylized font with a purple glow.

The quantum phases of matter

sachdev.physics.harvard.edu



The phases of matter:

The phases of matter:

ice



water



steam

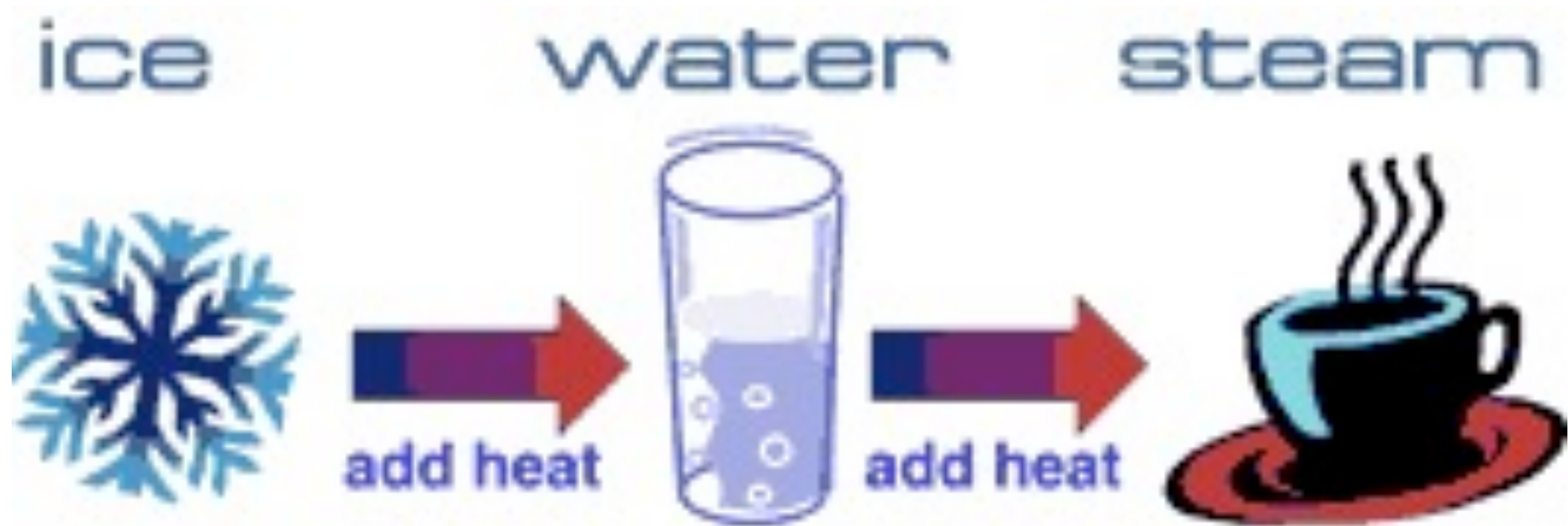


Solids

Liquids

Gases

The phases of matter:



Solids

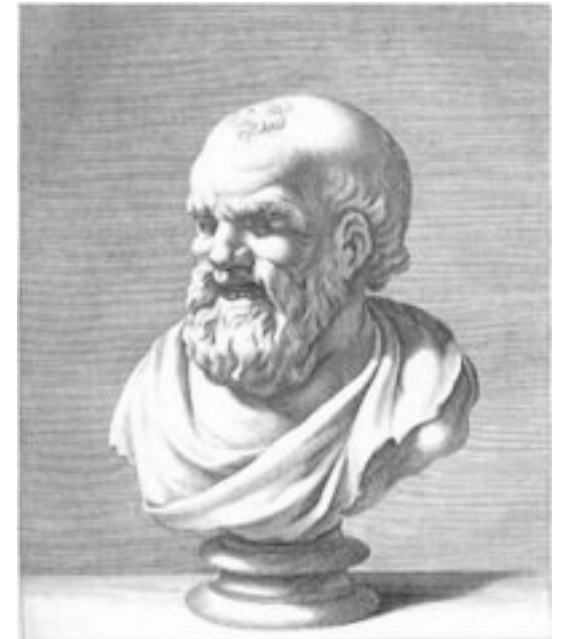
Liquids

Gases

Theory of the phases of matter:

Theory of the phases of matter:

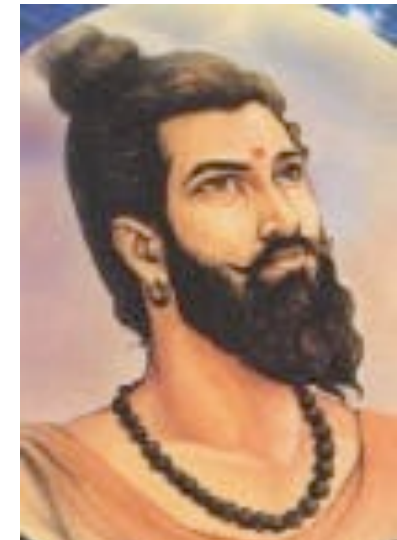
1. Matter is made of atoms



Democritus (4th century B.C.)

Theory of the phases of matter:

1. Matter is made of atoms

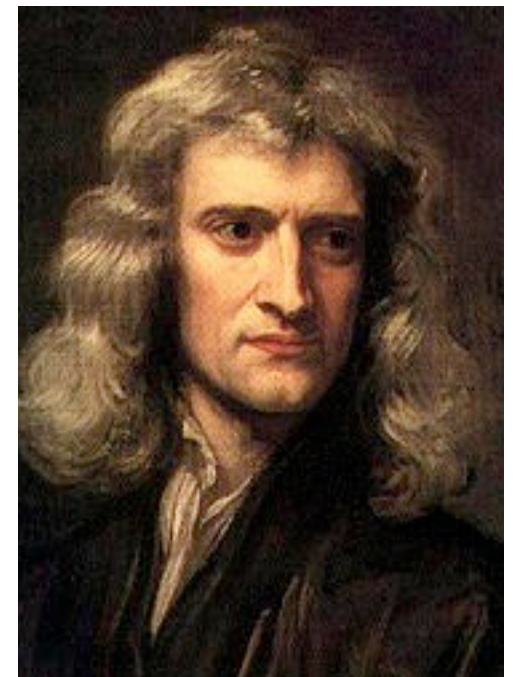


Acharya Kanad (6th century B.C.)

Theory of the phases of matter:

1. Matter is made of atoms

2. The atoms move because of
forces acting between them,
just like the moon or an apple



Newton (1687)

Theory of the phases of matter:

1. Matter is made of atoms

2. The atoms move because of forces acting between them, just like the moon or an apple

3. The phases of matter are determined by the spatial arrangements of atoms



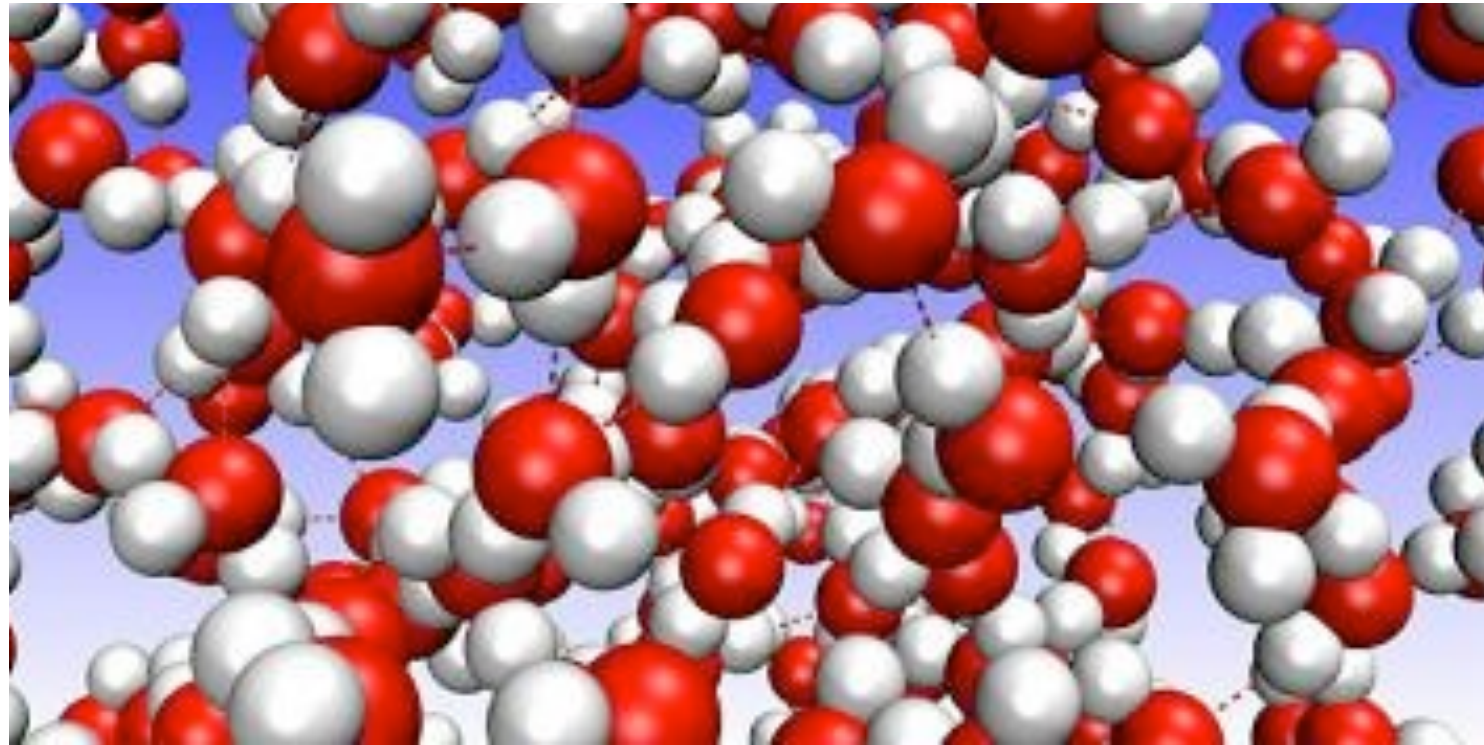
Boltzmann (1877)

Solids



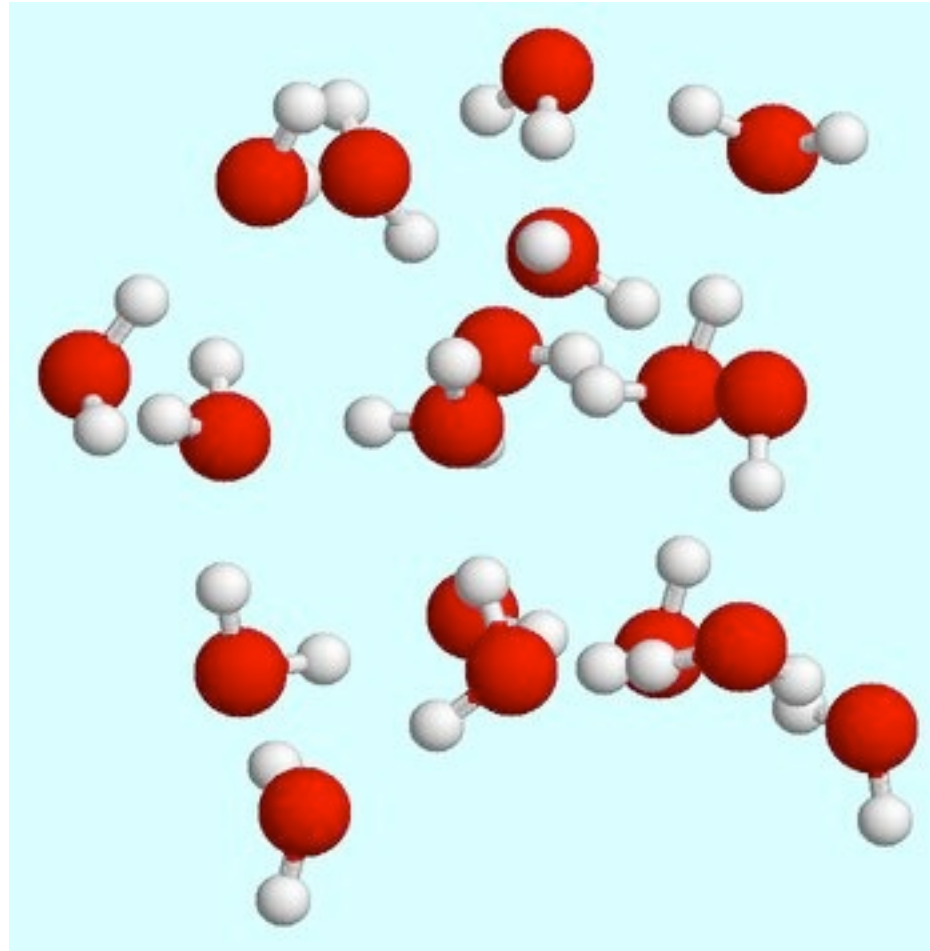
Ice

Liquids



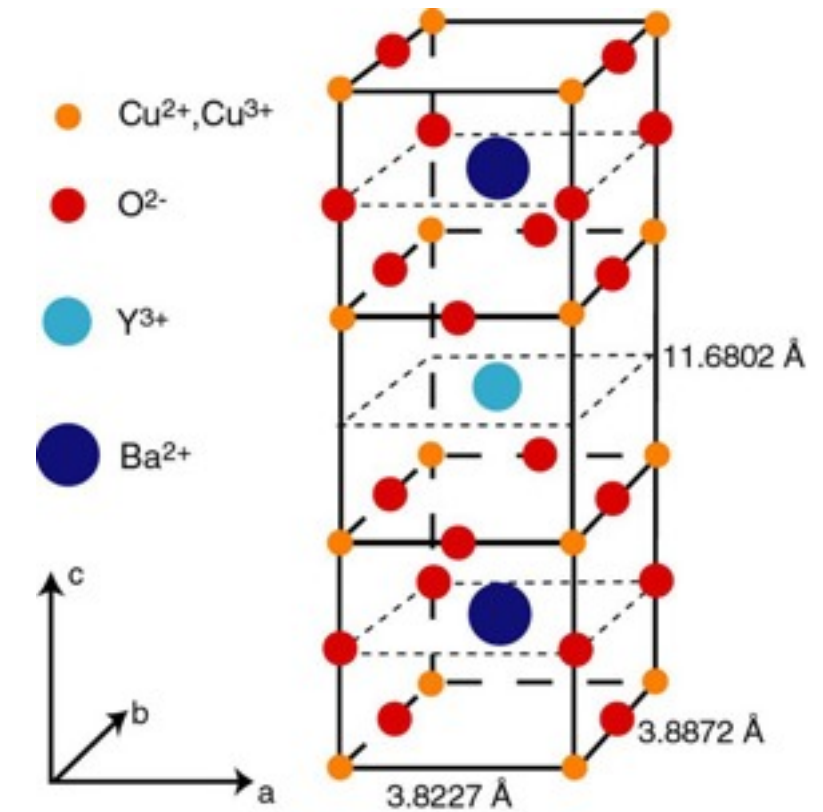
Water

Gases



Steam

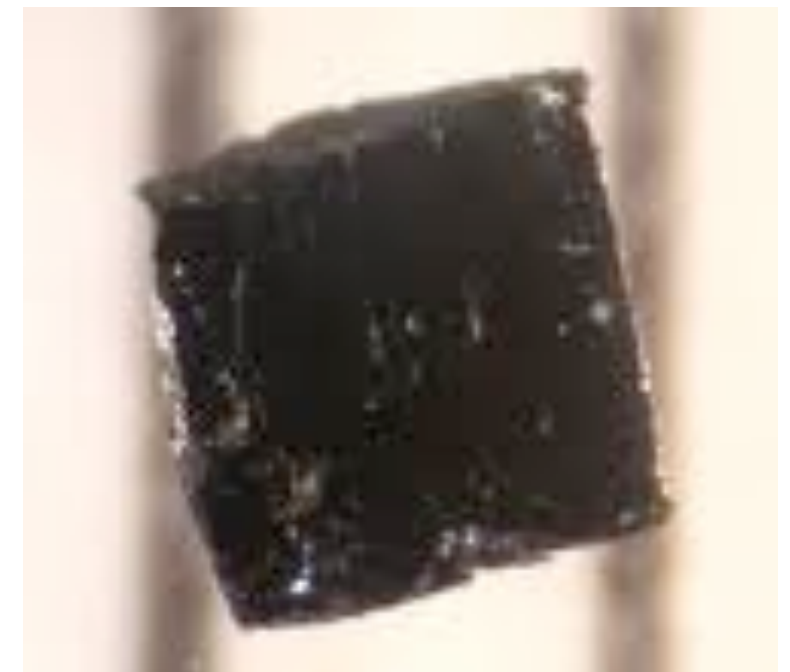
Solids



Copper

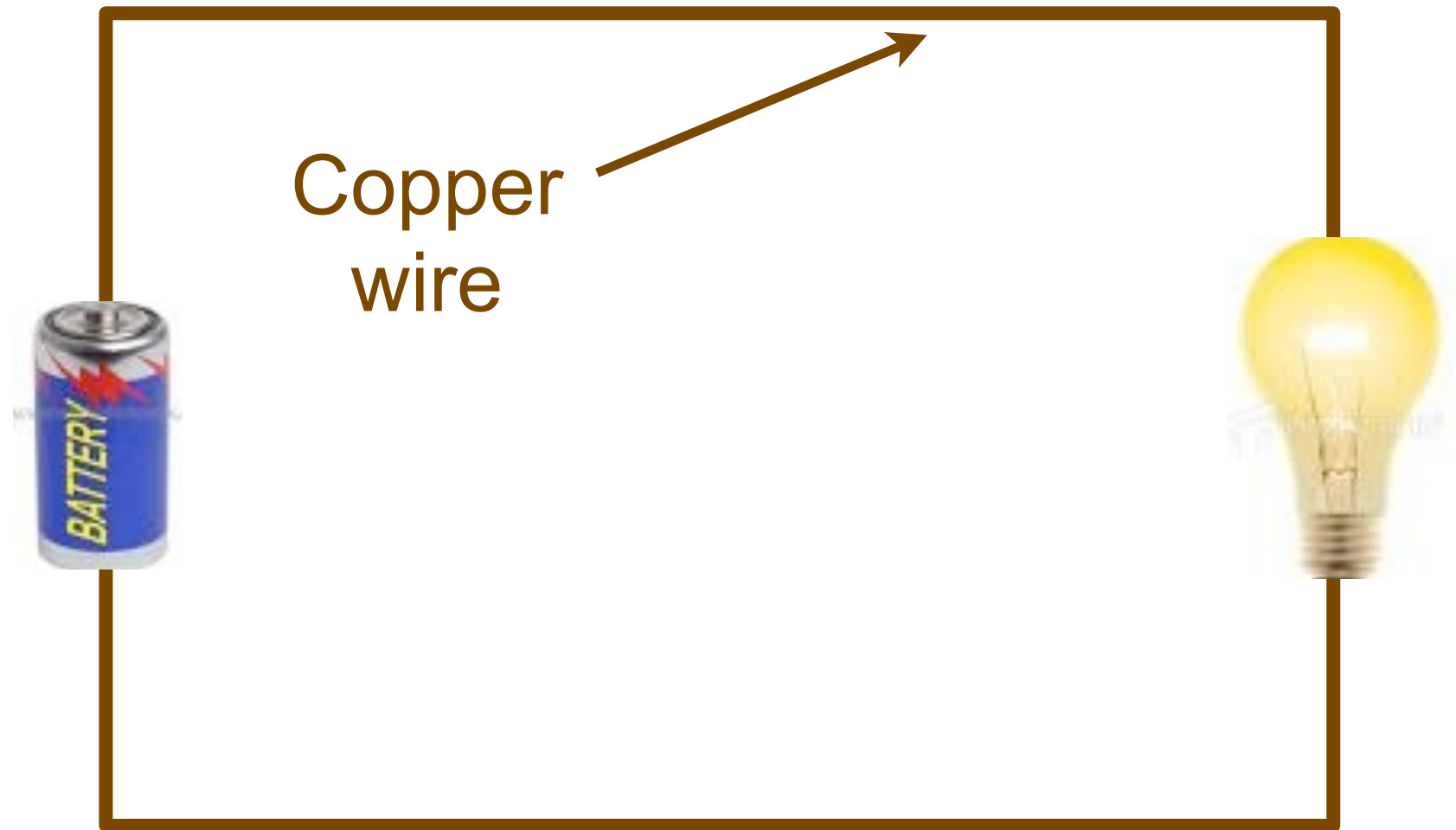


Silicon



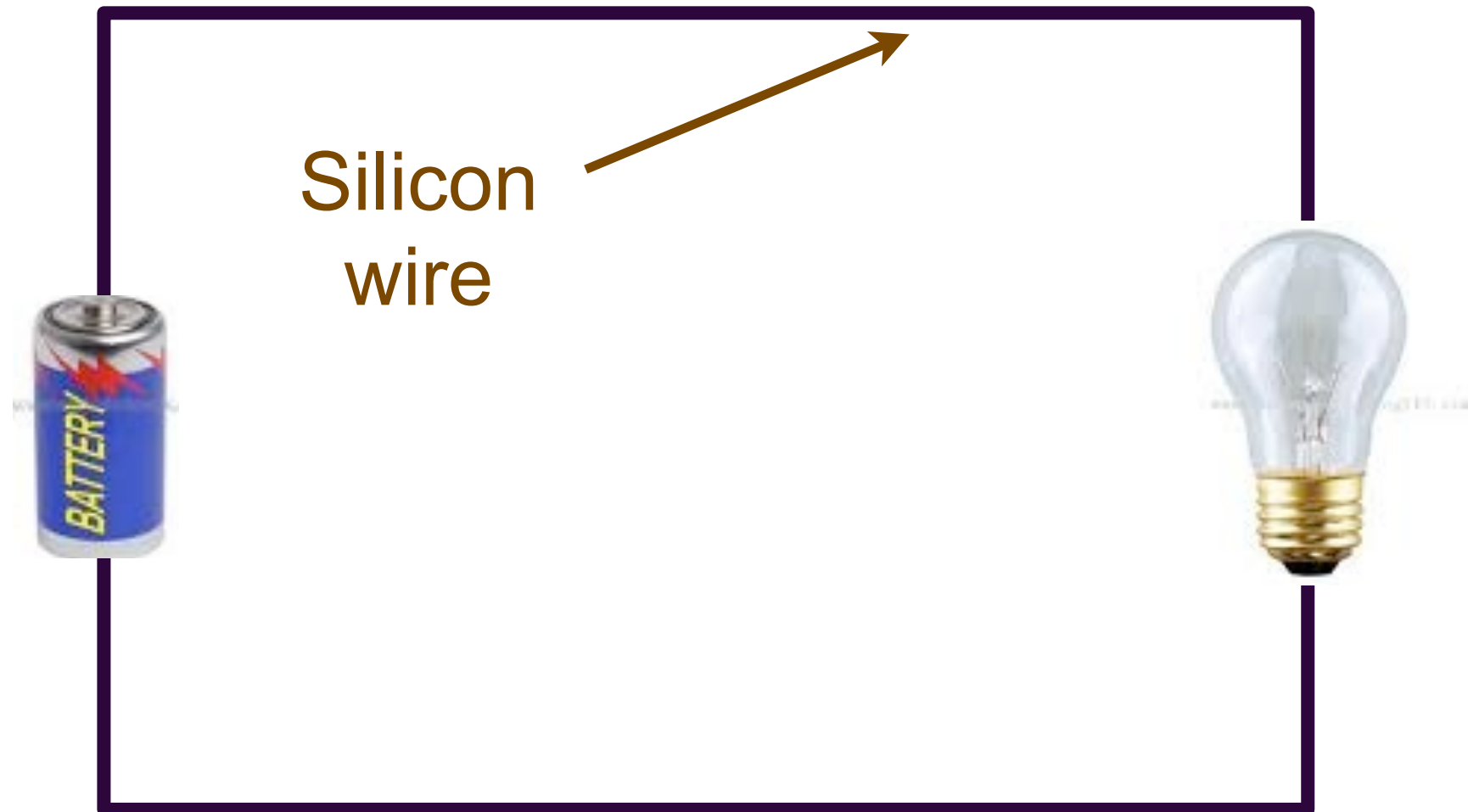
YBCO

These solids have very different electrical and magnetic properties



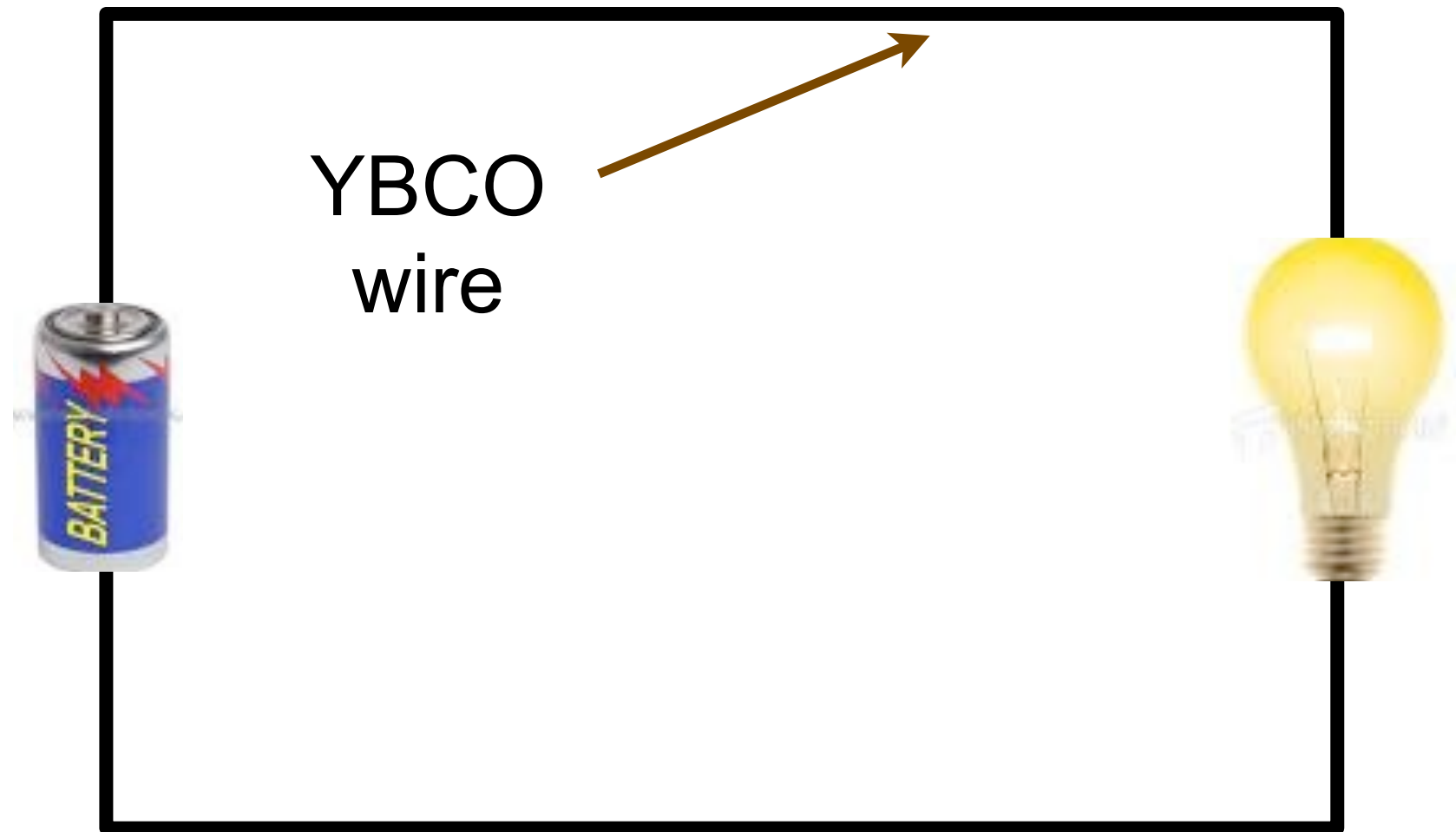
Copper is a conductor of electricity

These solids have very different electrical and magnetic properties



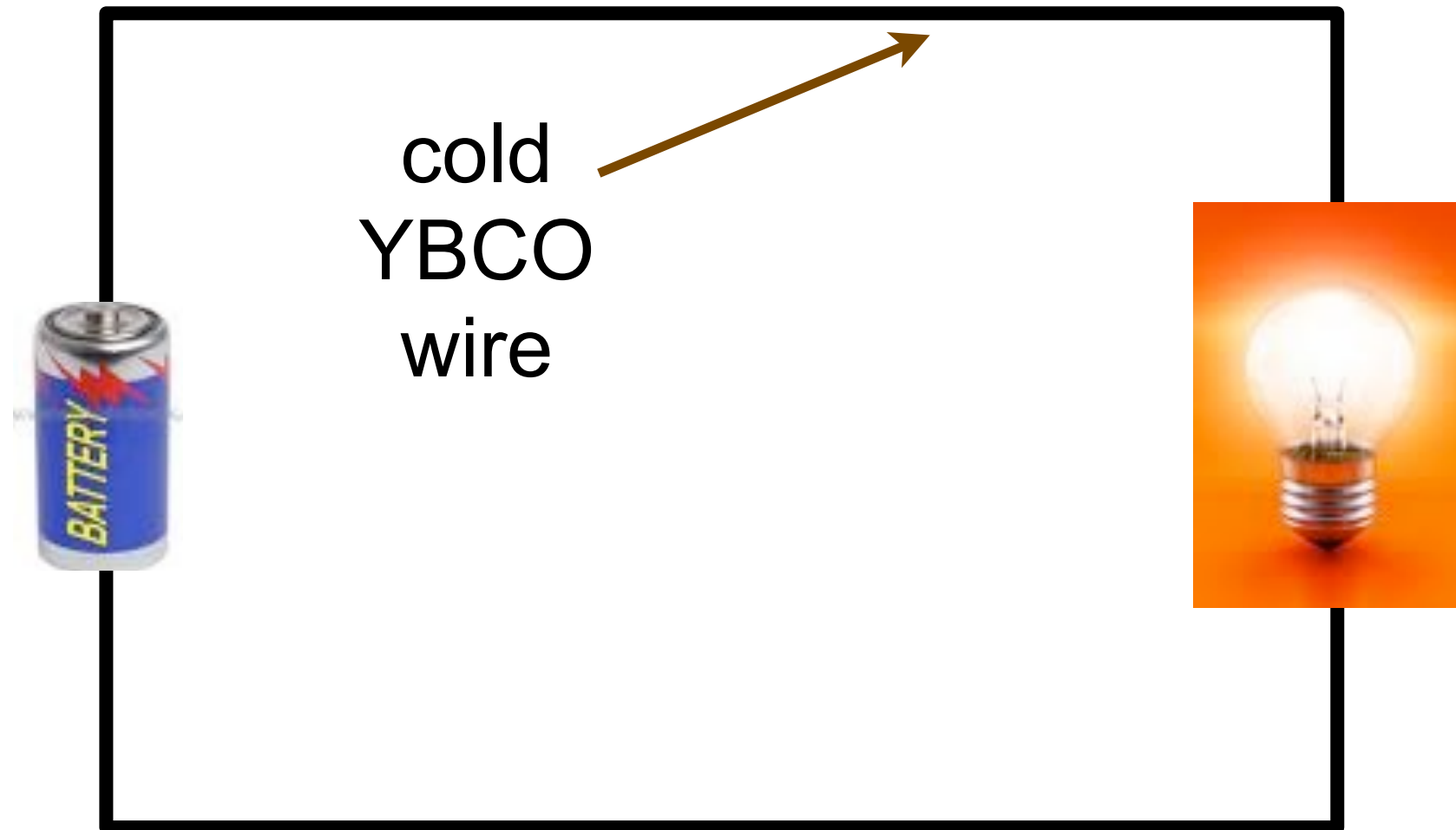
Silicon is an insulator

These solids have very different electrical and magnetic properties



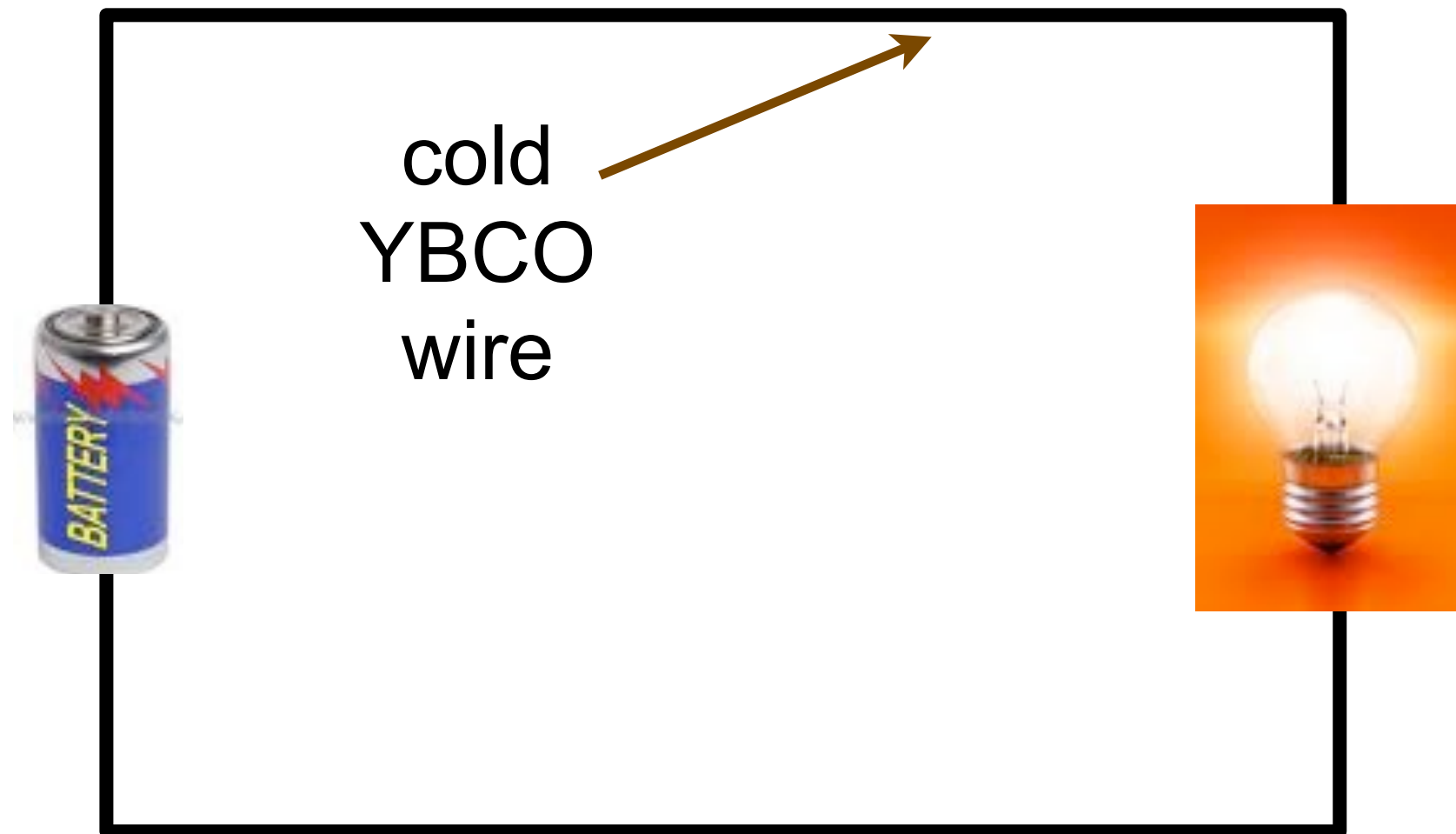
At room temperature, YBCO conducts electricity (but not very well)

These solids have very different electrical and magnetic properties



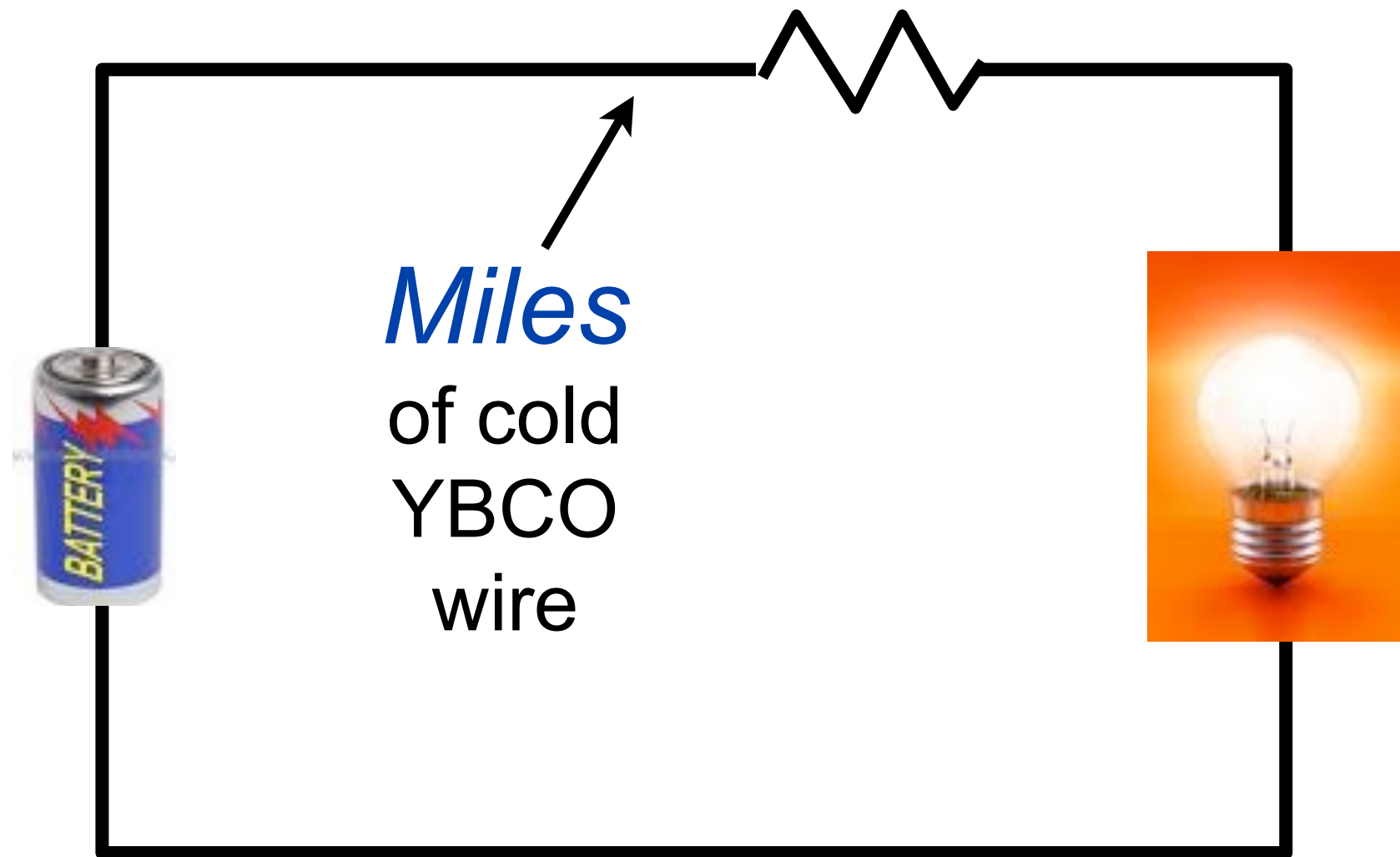
When cooled by liquid nitrogen, YBCO conducts electricity without resistance

These solids have very different electrical and magnetic properties



When cooled by liquid nitrogen,
YBCO is a SUPERCONDUCTOR !

These solids have very different electrical and magnetic properties

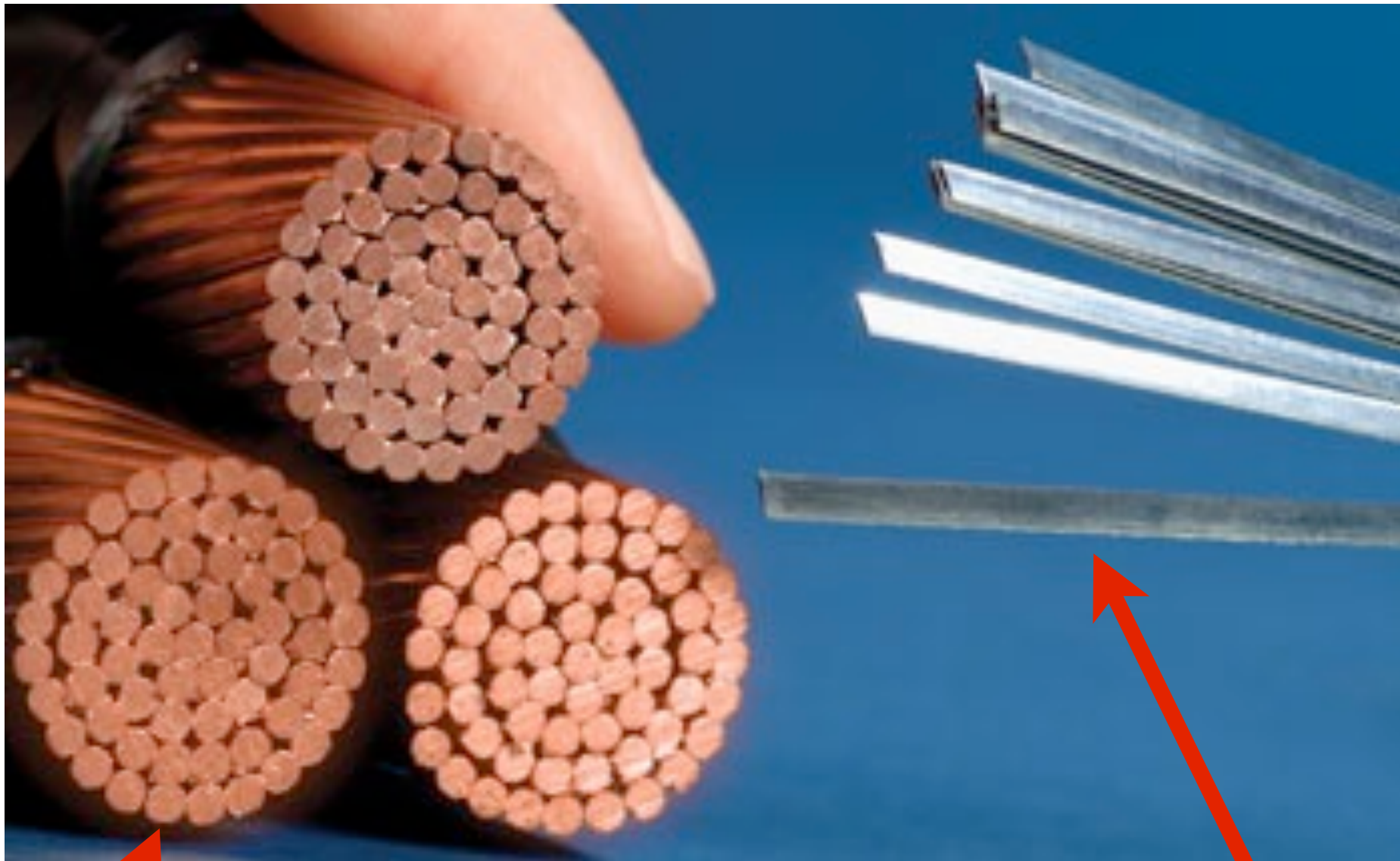


When cooled by liquid nitrogen,
YBCO is a SUPERCONDUCTOR !



Transmitting power
with YBCO

American Superconductor Corporation



Cu wires for
equivalent
power density

YBCO tape

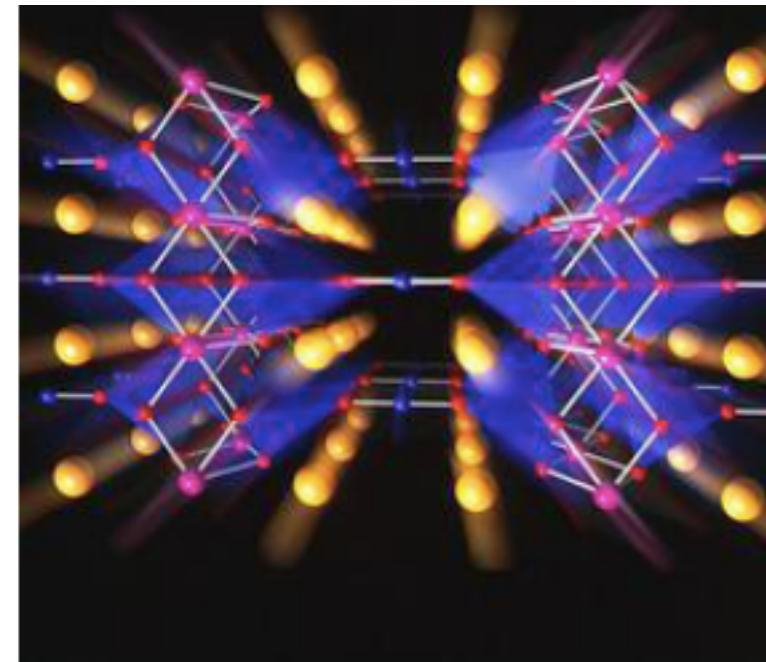
American Superconductor Corporation

Superconductors come of age

A South Korean company has placed by far the biggest commercial order for superconducting wires.



Superconducting wires could soon help to light up Seoul.



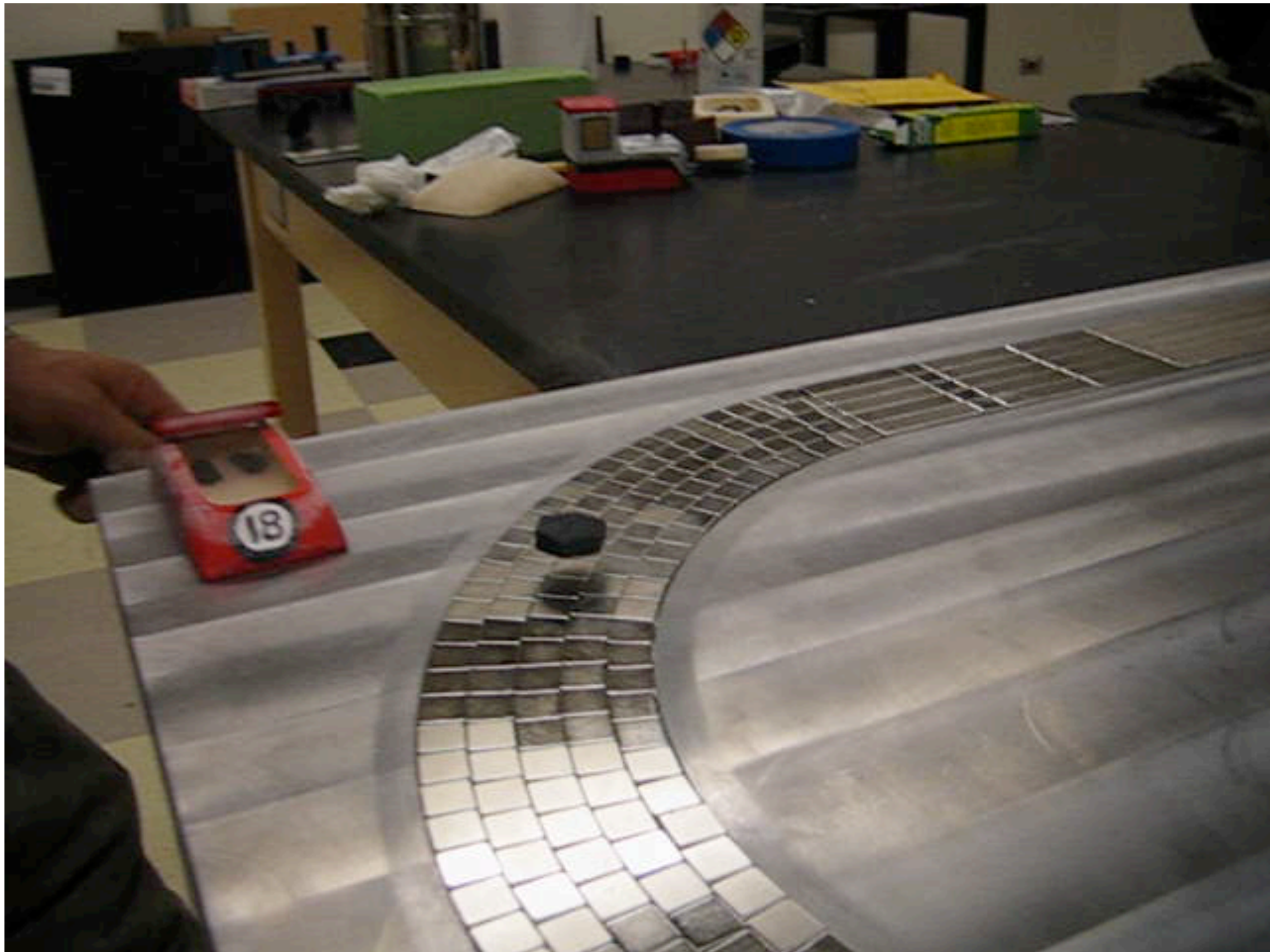
YBCO superconductors are likely to be used in more power grids in future.

LS Cable, a South Korean company based in Anyang-si near Seoul, has ordered three million metres of superconducting wire from US firm American Superconductor in Devens, Massachusetts. Jason Fredette, managing director of corporate communications at the company, says that LS Cable will use the wire to make about 20 circuit kilometres of cable as part of a programme to modernize the South Korean electricity network starting in the capital, Seoul.

The superconducting wire is made using the ceramic compound yttrium barium copper oxide (YBCO), part of a family of 'high-temperature' superconducting ceramics that were first discovered in 1986.

Nd-Fe-B magnets, YBaCuO superconductor

Julian Hetel and Nandini Trivedi, Ohio State University



Nd-Fe-B magnets, YBaCuO superconductor

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Theory of the electrical phases of matter:

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Theory of the electrical phases of matter:

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Theory of the electrical phases of matter:

1. In solids, electrons separate

Needed:

A theory for the
quantum phases of
matter

2.
3.

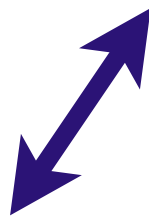
and Schroedinger determines the
electrical properties of solids at
macroscopic scales

Quantum superposition and entanglement

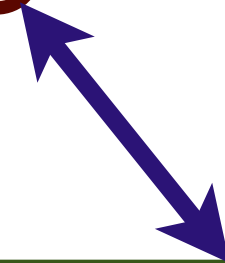
**Quantum
criticality**



**Quantum
superposition and
entanglement**



**Black Holes and
String Theory**

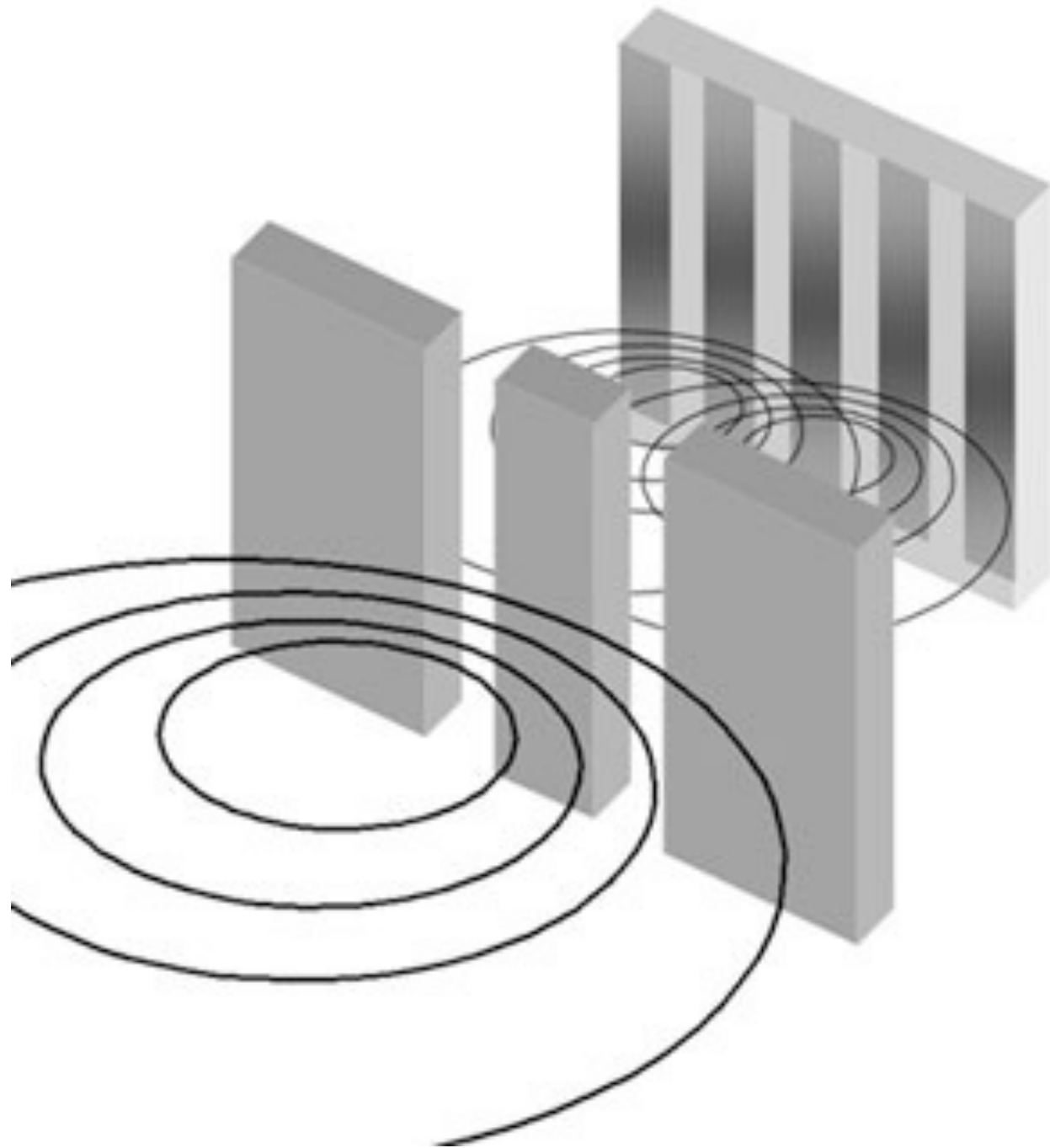


Superconductivity

Quantum superposition and entanglement

Quantum Superposition

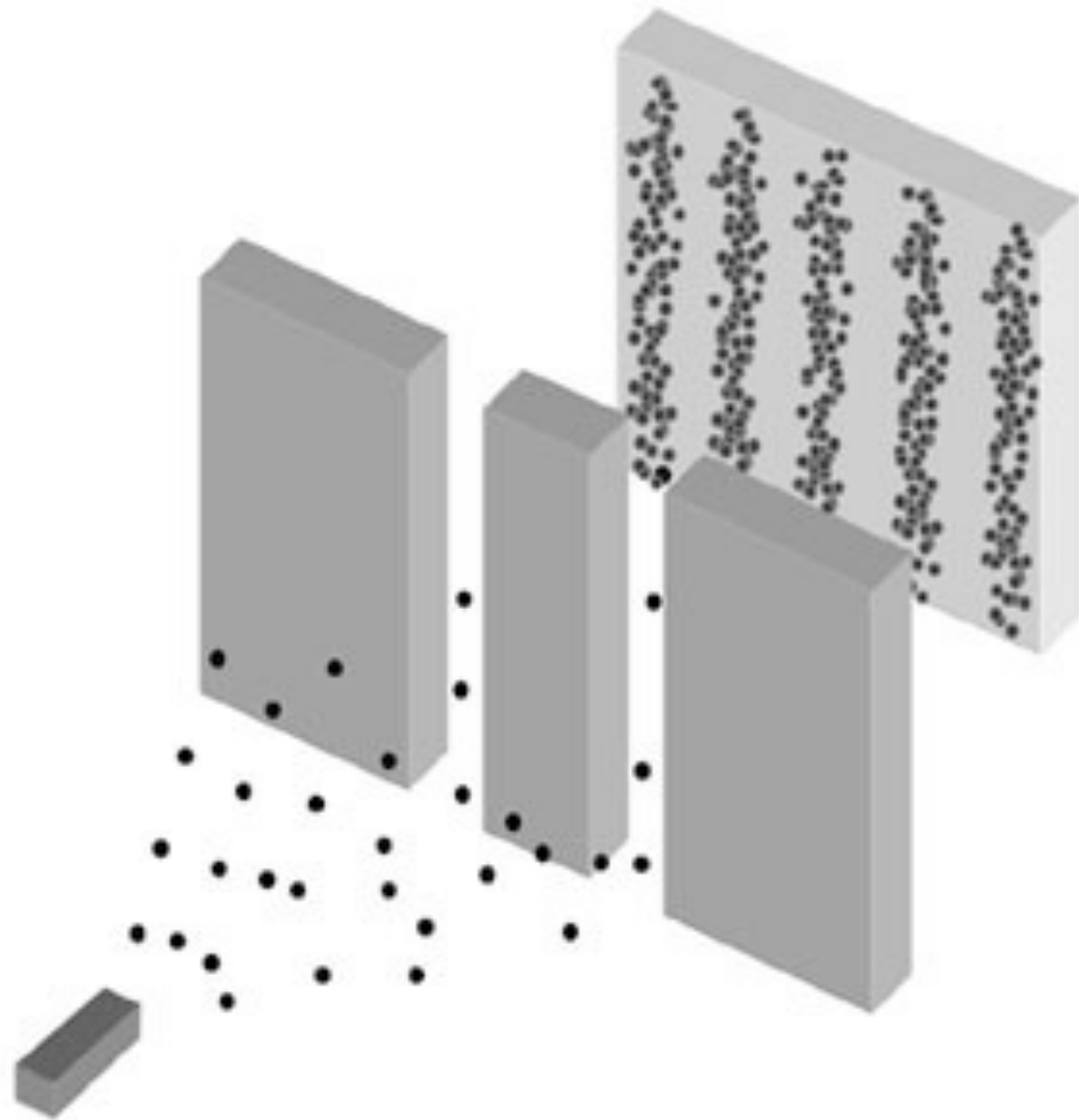
The double slit experiment



Interference of water waves

Quantum Superposition

The double slit experiment

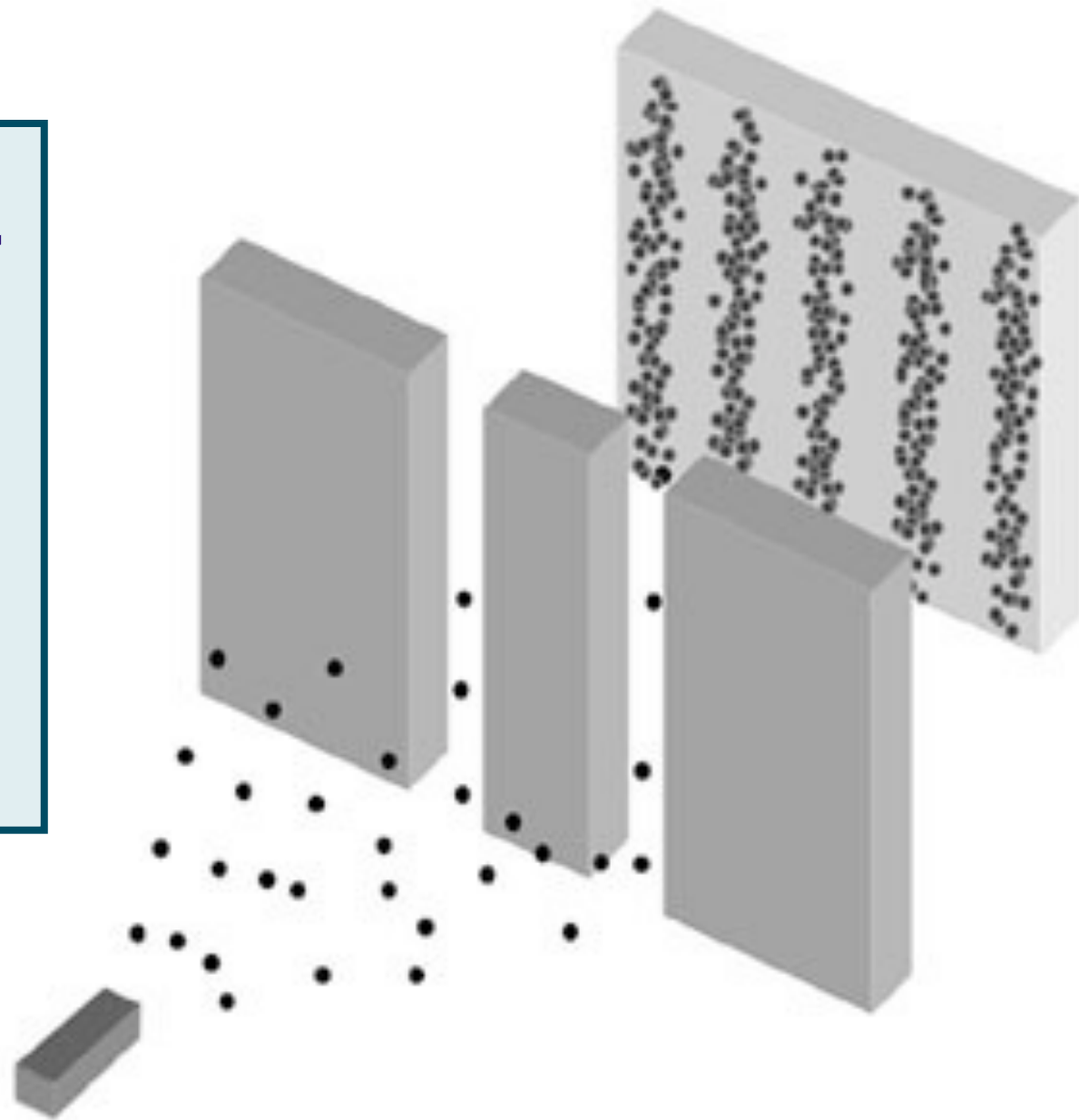


Interference of electrons

Quantum Superposition

The double slit experiment

Which slit
does an
electron
pass
through ?

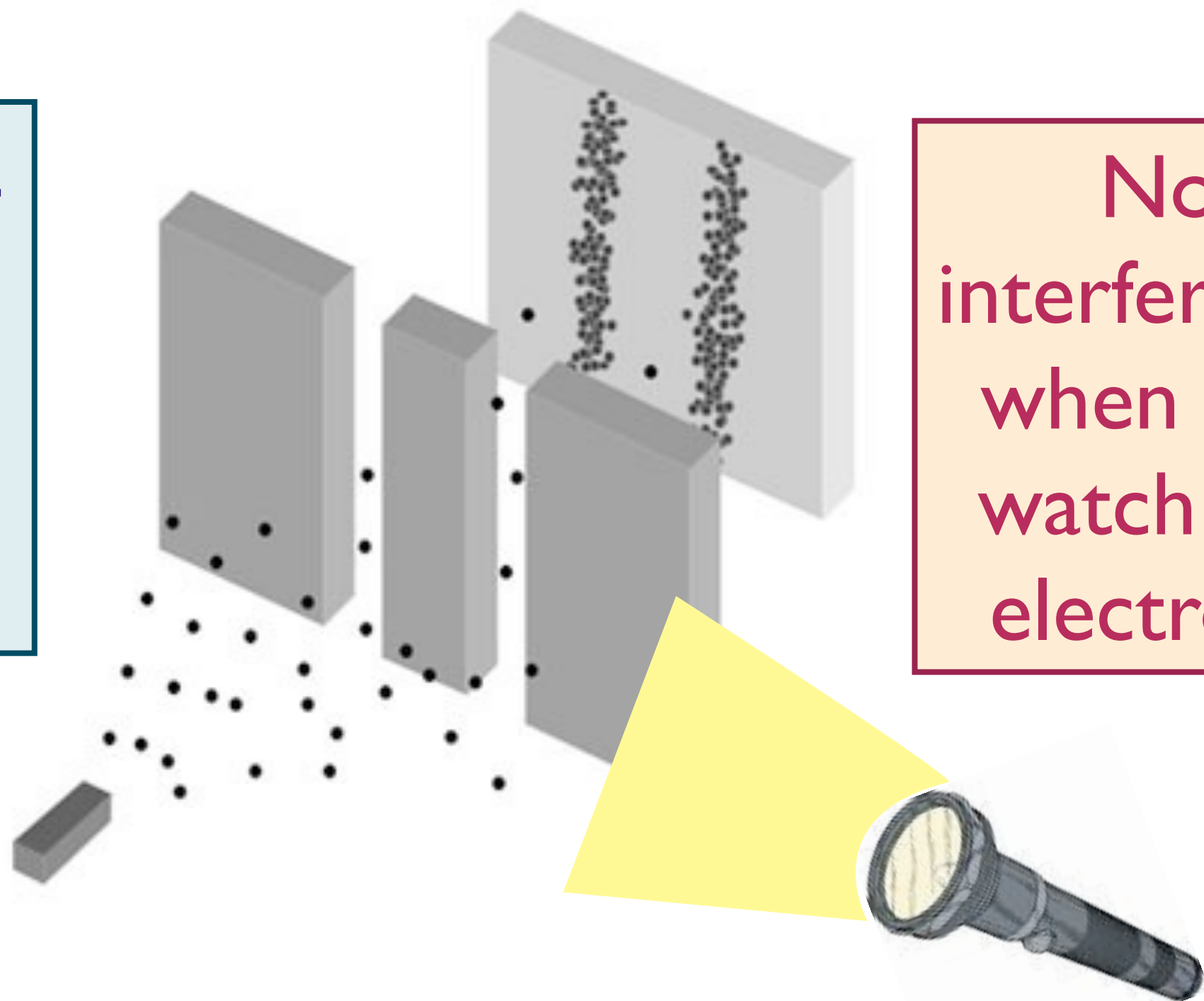


Interference of electrons

Quantum Superposition

The double slit experiment

Which slit
does an electron
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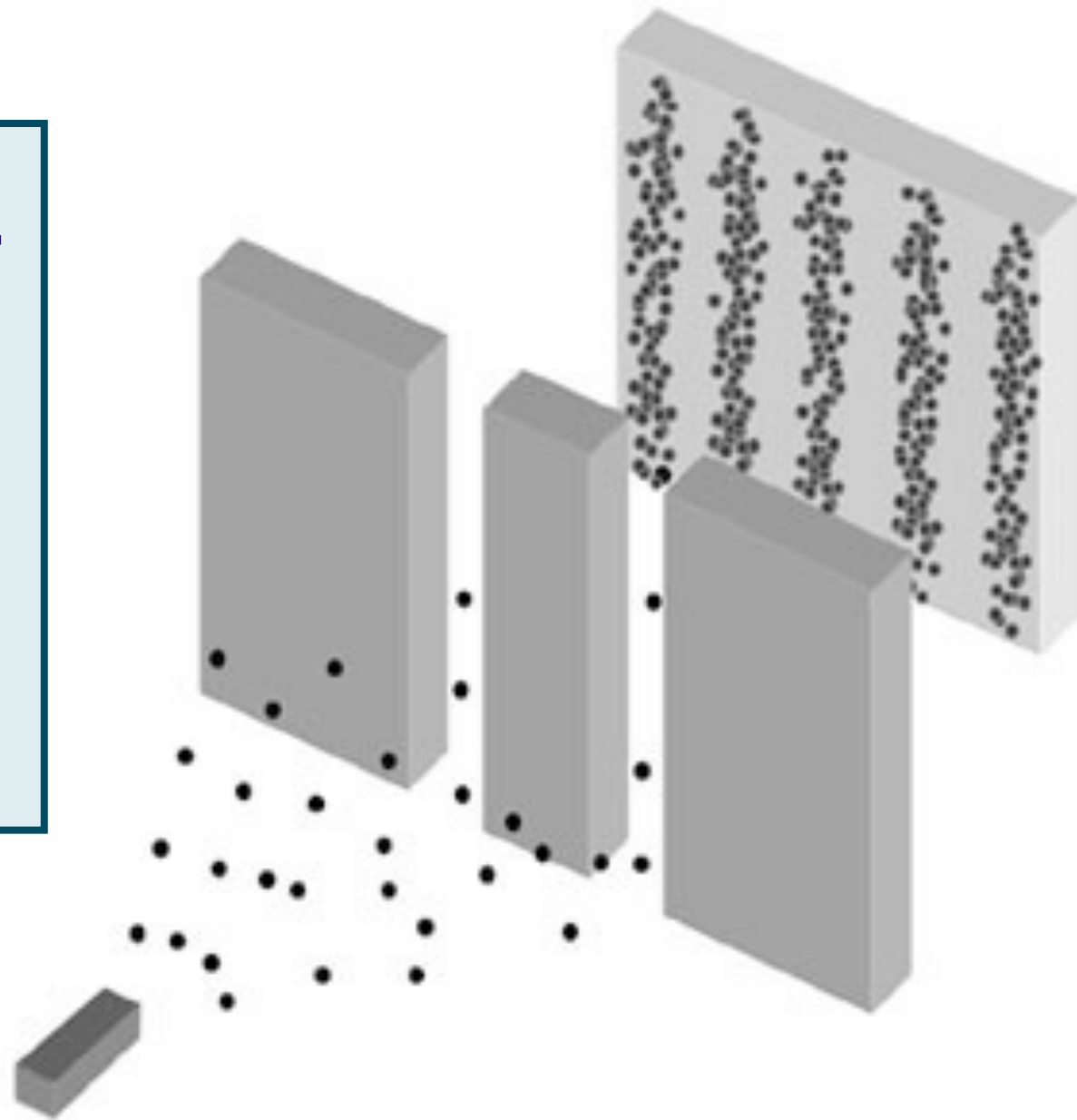
No
interference
when you
watch the
electrons

Interference of electrons

Quantum Superposition

The double slit experiment

Which slit
does an
electron
pass
through ?

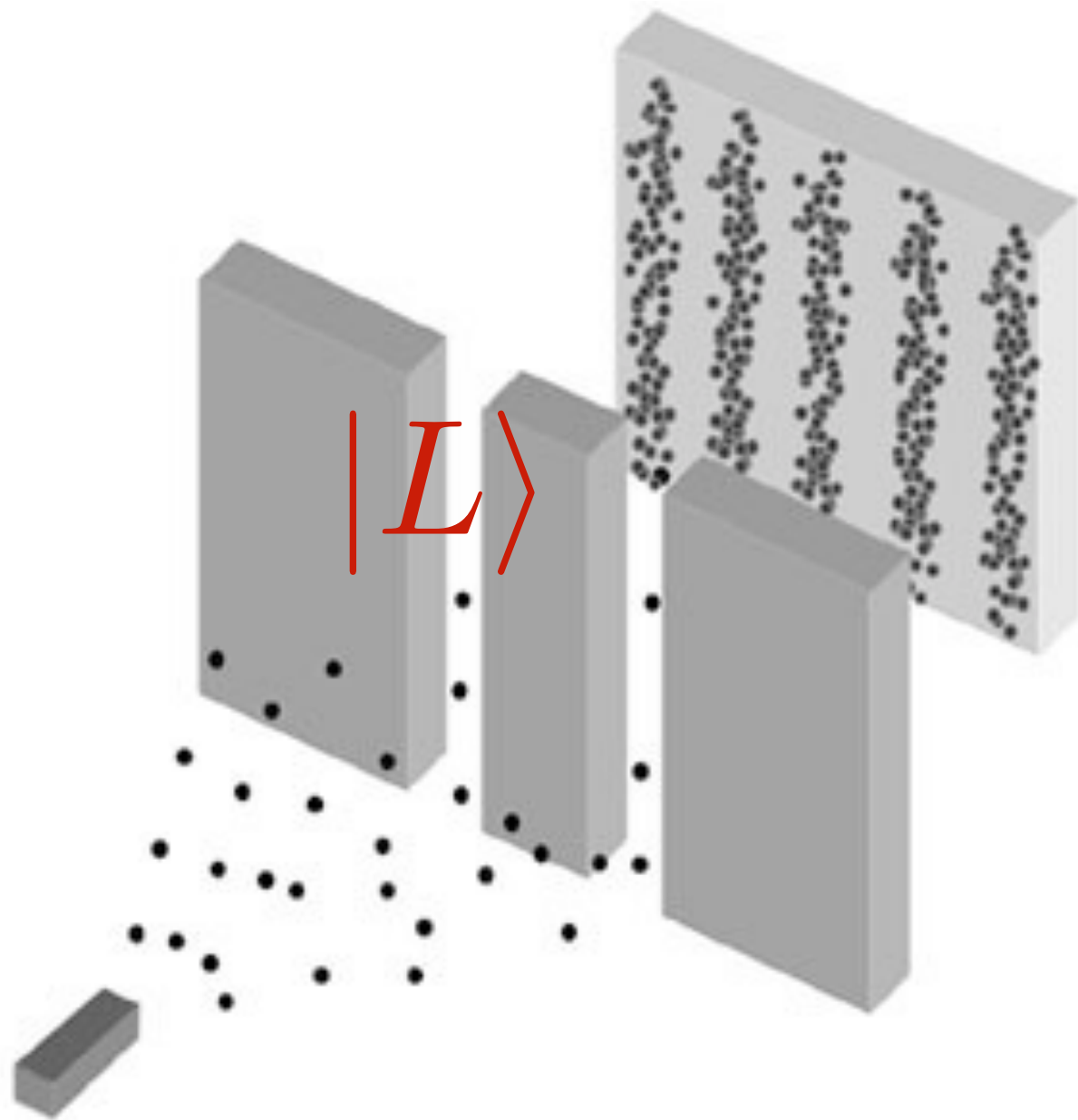


Each
electron
passes
through
both slits !

Interference of electrons

Quantum Superposition

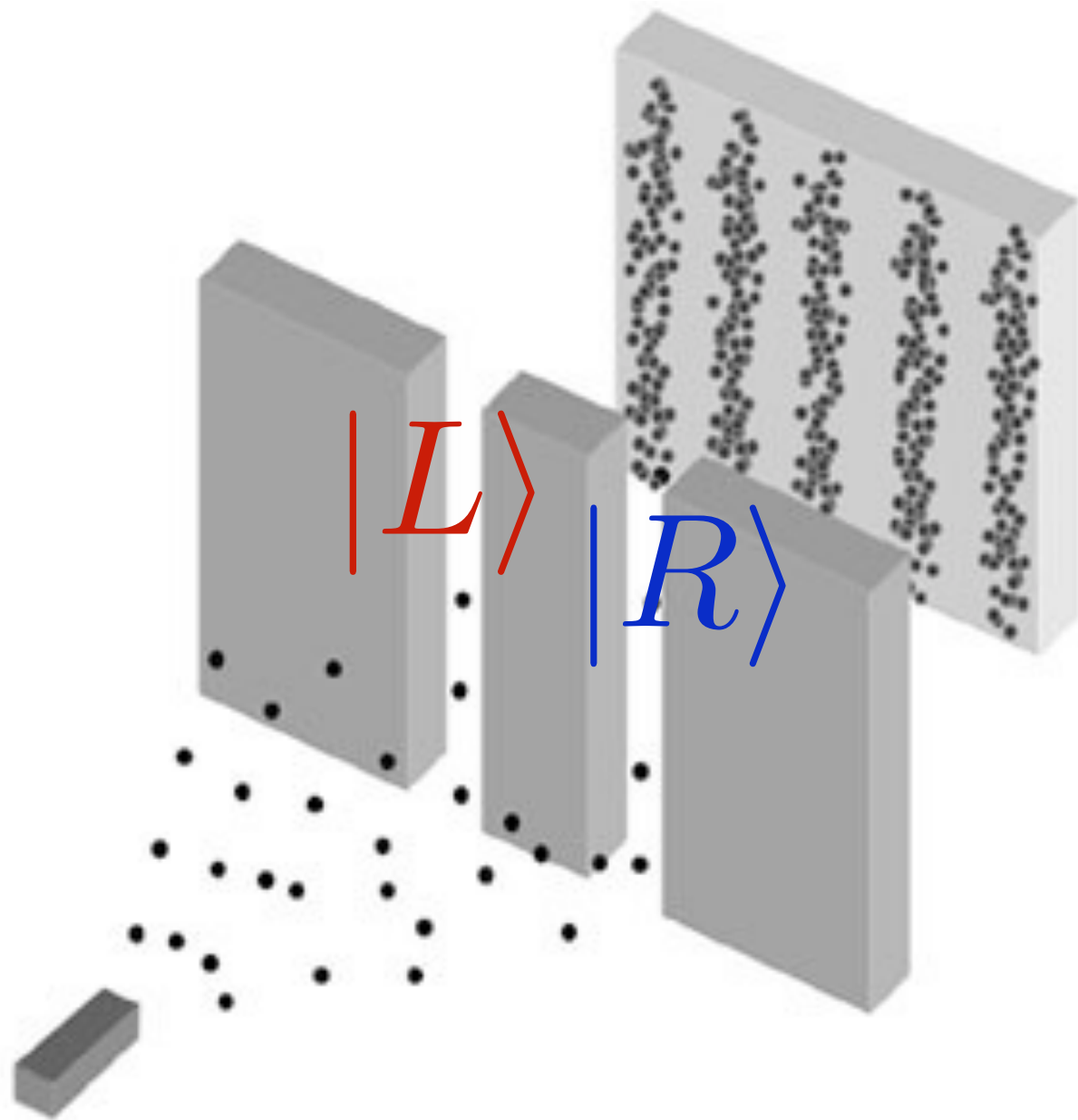
The double slit experiment



Let $|L\rangle$ represent the state with the electron in the left slit

Quantum Superposition

The double slit experiment

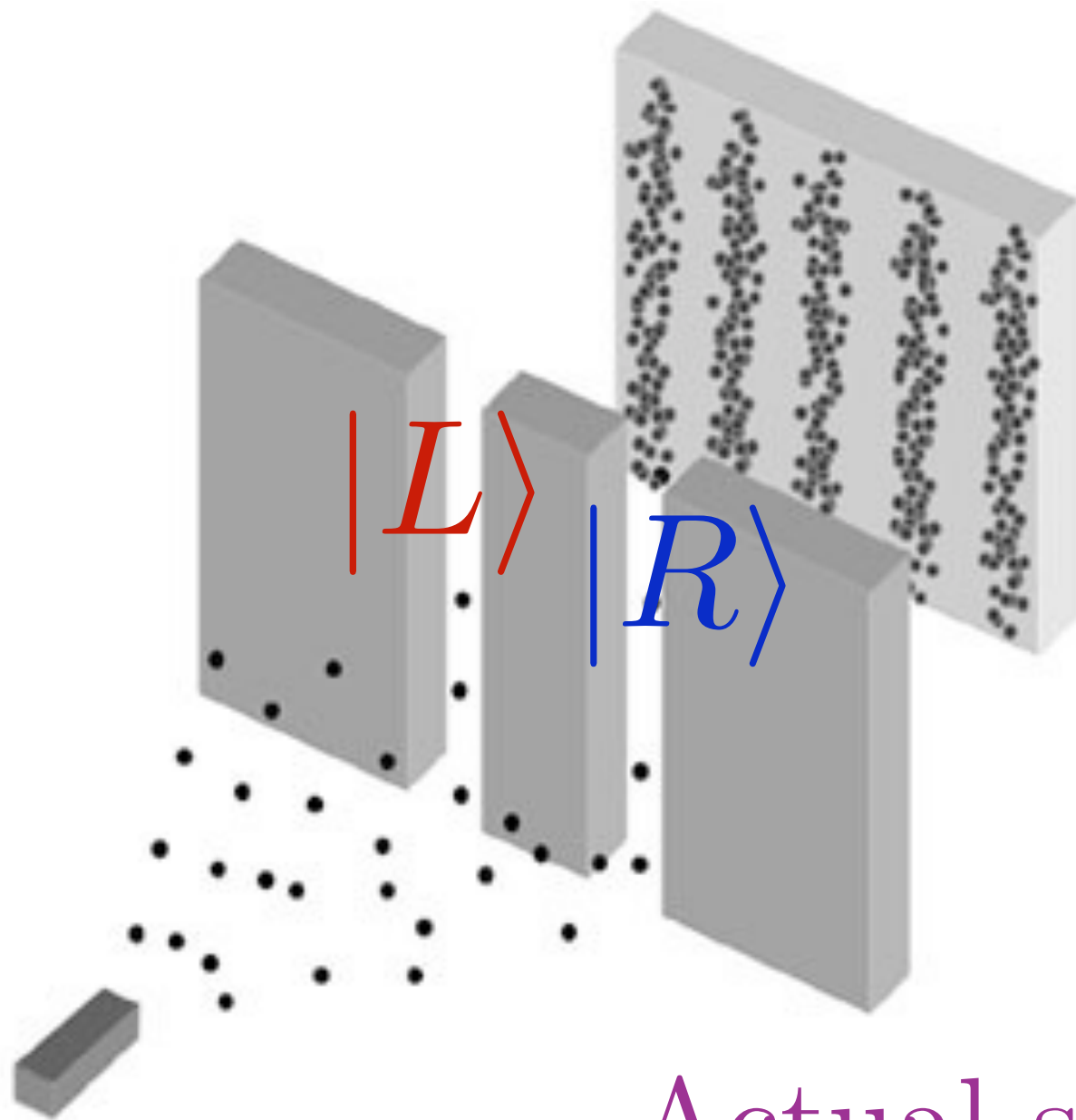


Let $|L\rangle$ represent the state with the electron in the left slit

And $|R\rangle$ represents the state with the electron in the right slit

Quantum Superposition

The double slit experiment



Let $|L\rangle$ represent the state with the electron in the left slit

And $|R\rangle$ represents the state with the electron in the right slit

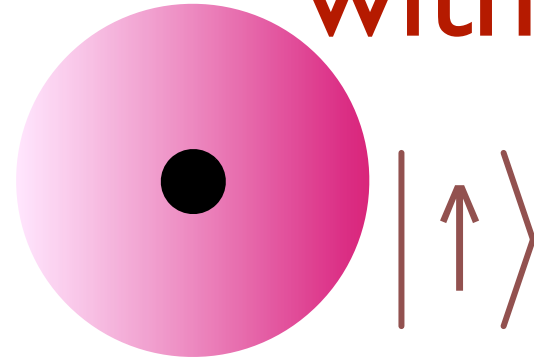
Actual state of the electron is

$$|L\rangle + |R\rangle$$

Quantum Entanglement: quantum superposition
with more than one particle

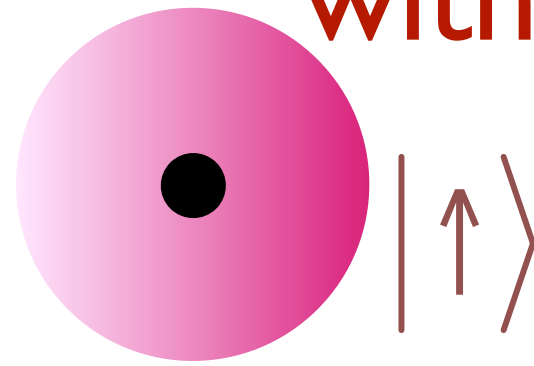
Quantum Entanglement: quantum superposition with more than one particle

Hydrogen atom:

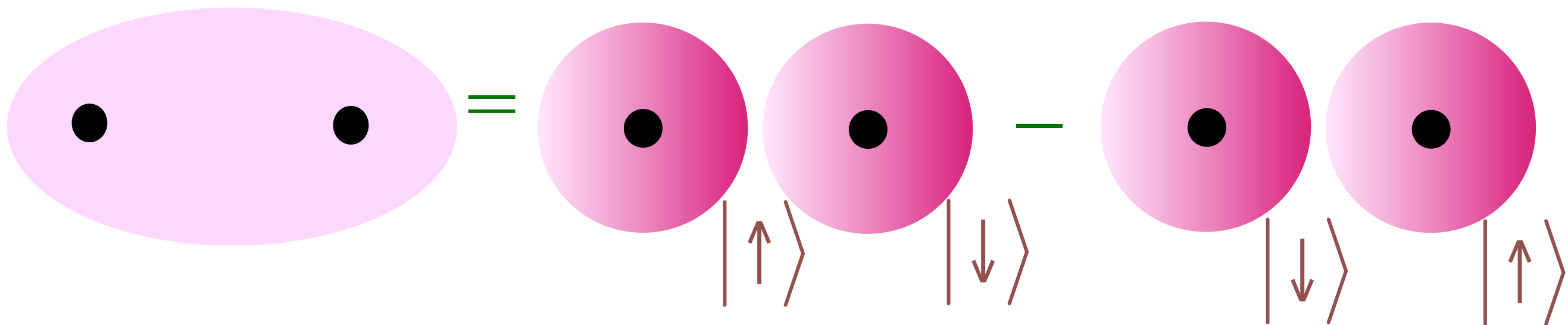


Quantum Entanglement: quantum superposition with more than one particle

Hydrogen atom:



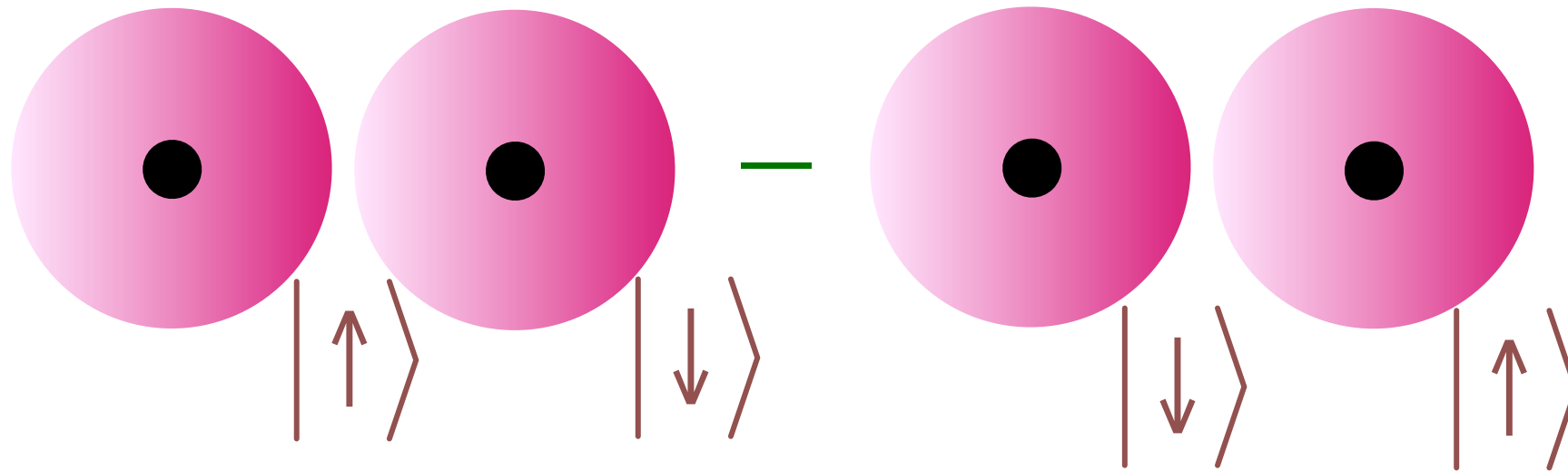
Hydrogen molecule:



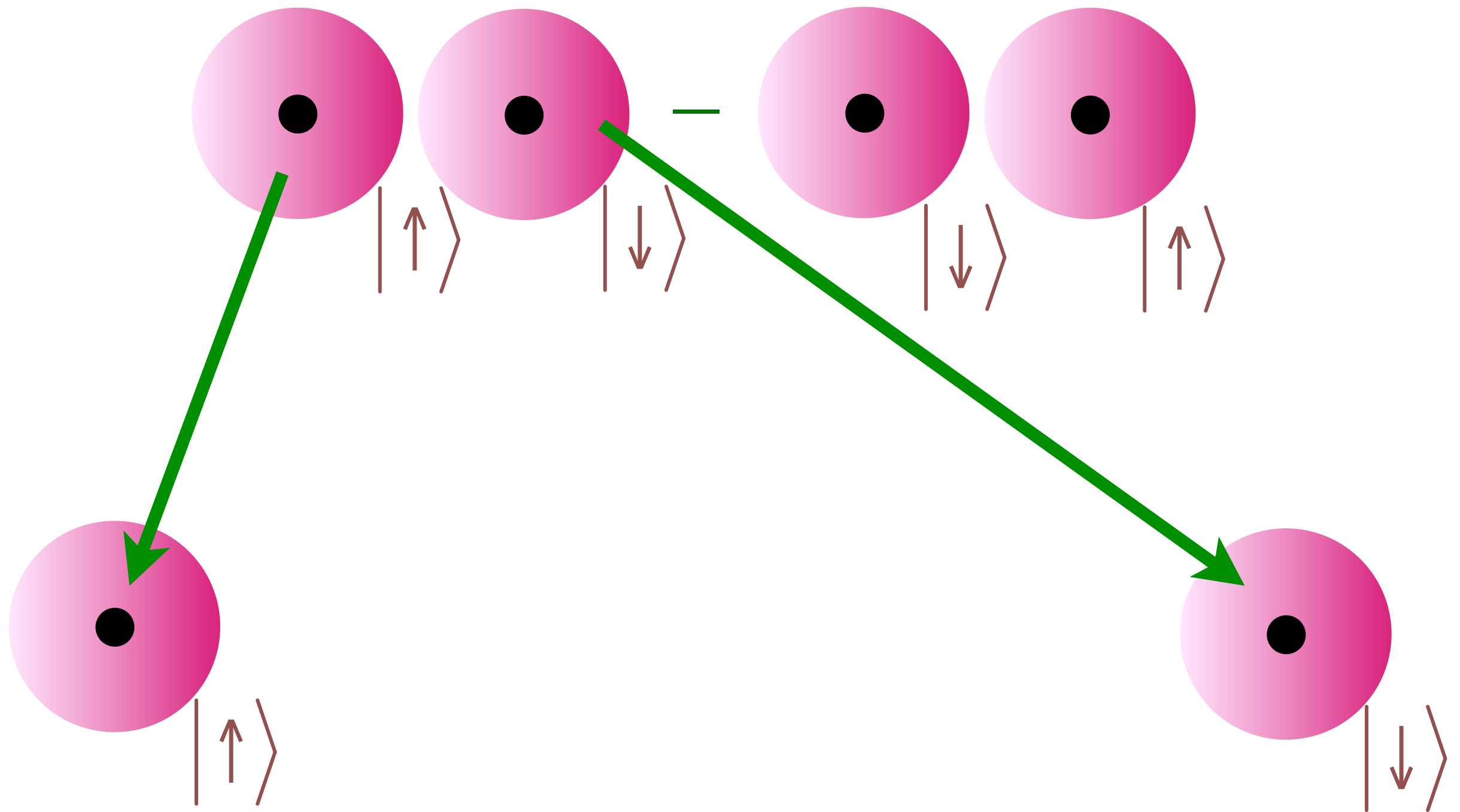
$$= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} (|\uparrow\downarrow\rangle - |\downarrow\uparrow\rangle)$$

Superposition of two electron states leads to non-local
correlations between spins

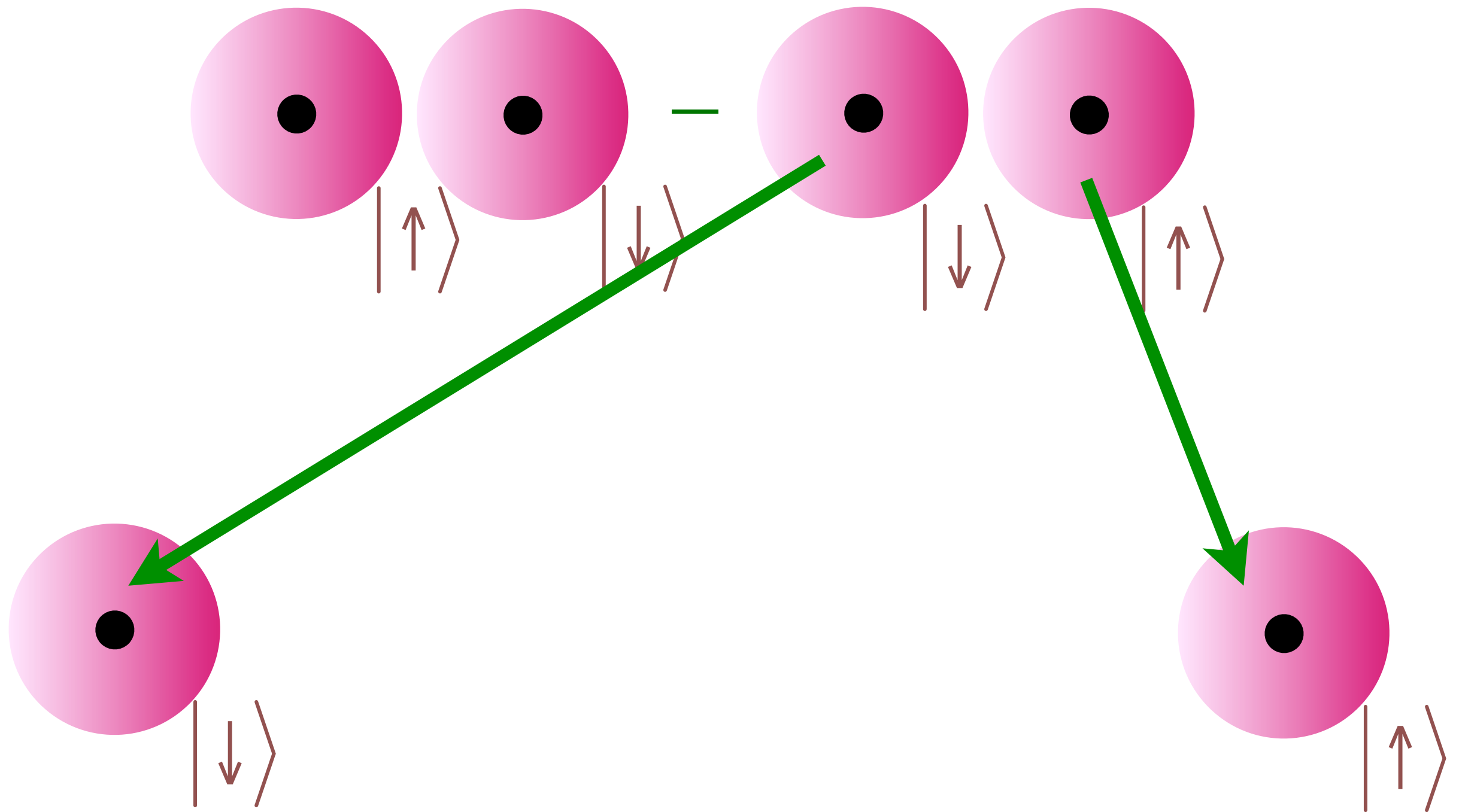
Quantum Entanglement: quantum superposition with more than one particle



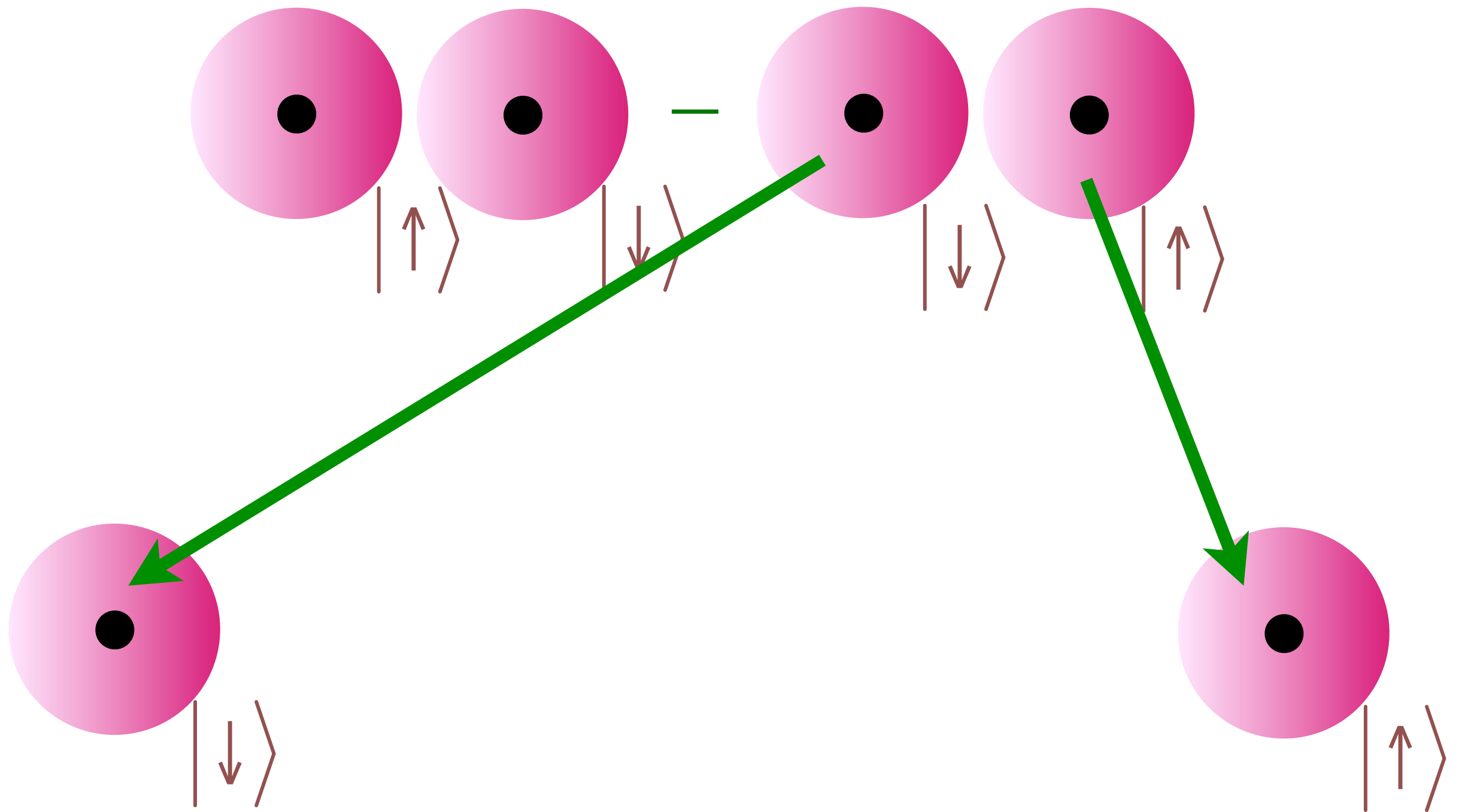
Quantum Entanglement: quantum superposition with more than one particle



Quantum Entanglement: quantum superposition with more than one particle



Quantum Entanglement: quantum superposition with more than one particle



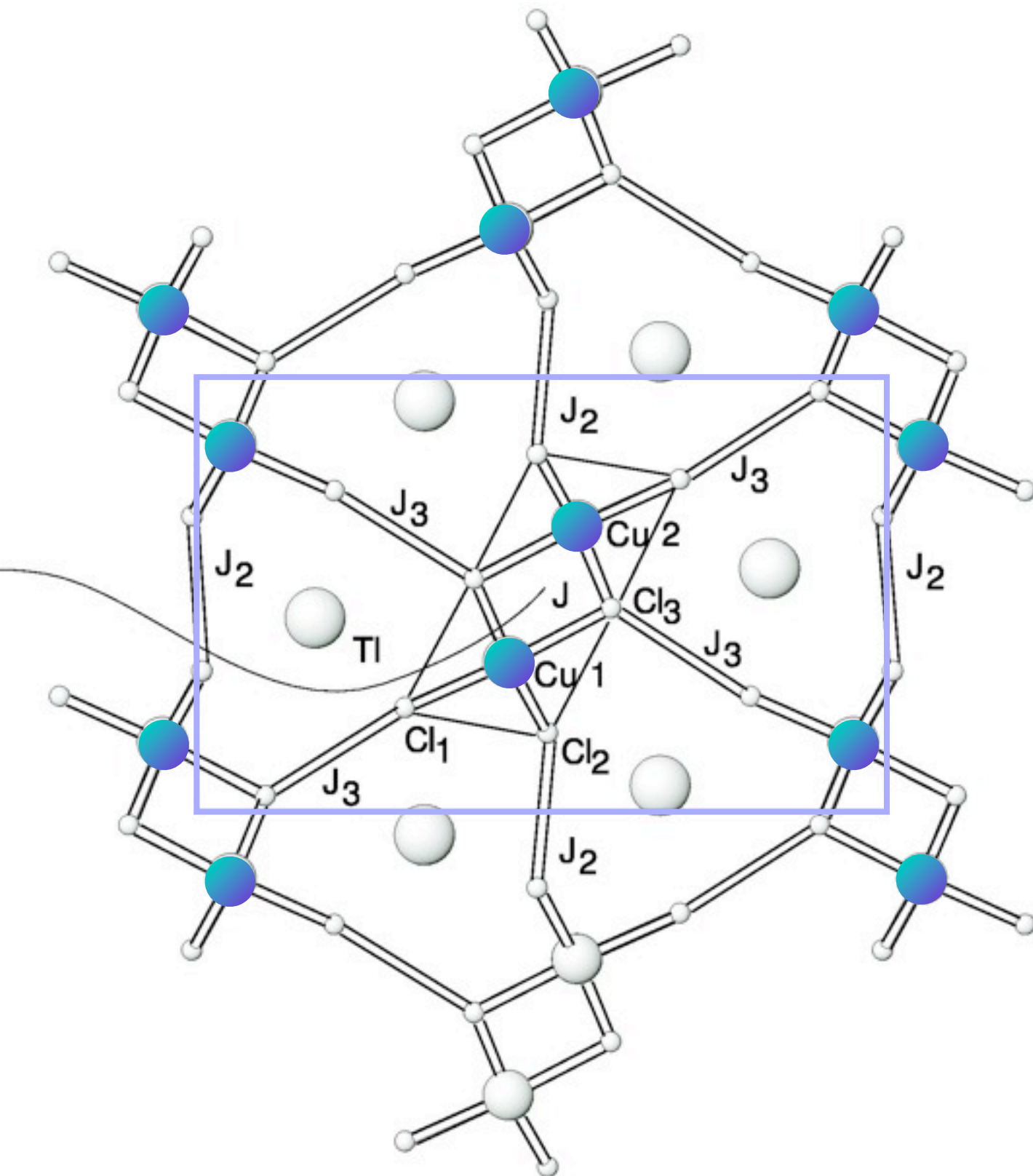
Einstein-Podolsky-Rosen “paradox”: Non-local correlations between observations arbitrarily far apart

Quantum superposition and entanglement

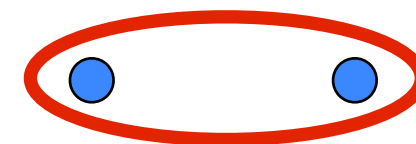
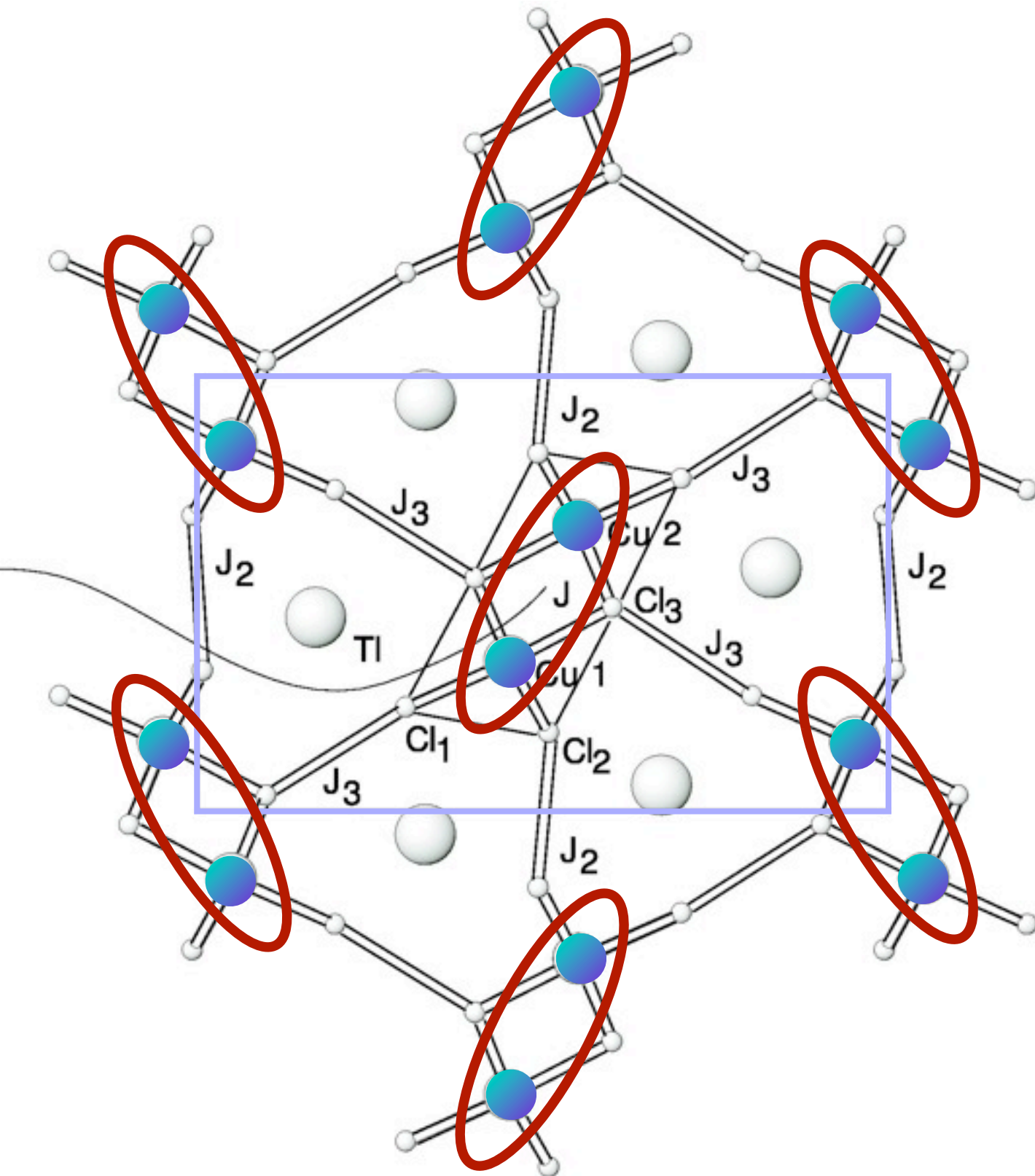
Quantum
criticality



Quantum
superposition and
entanglement

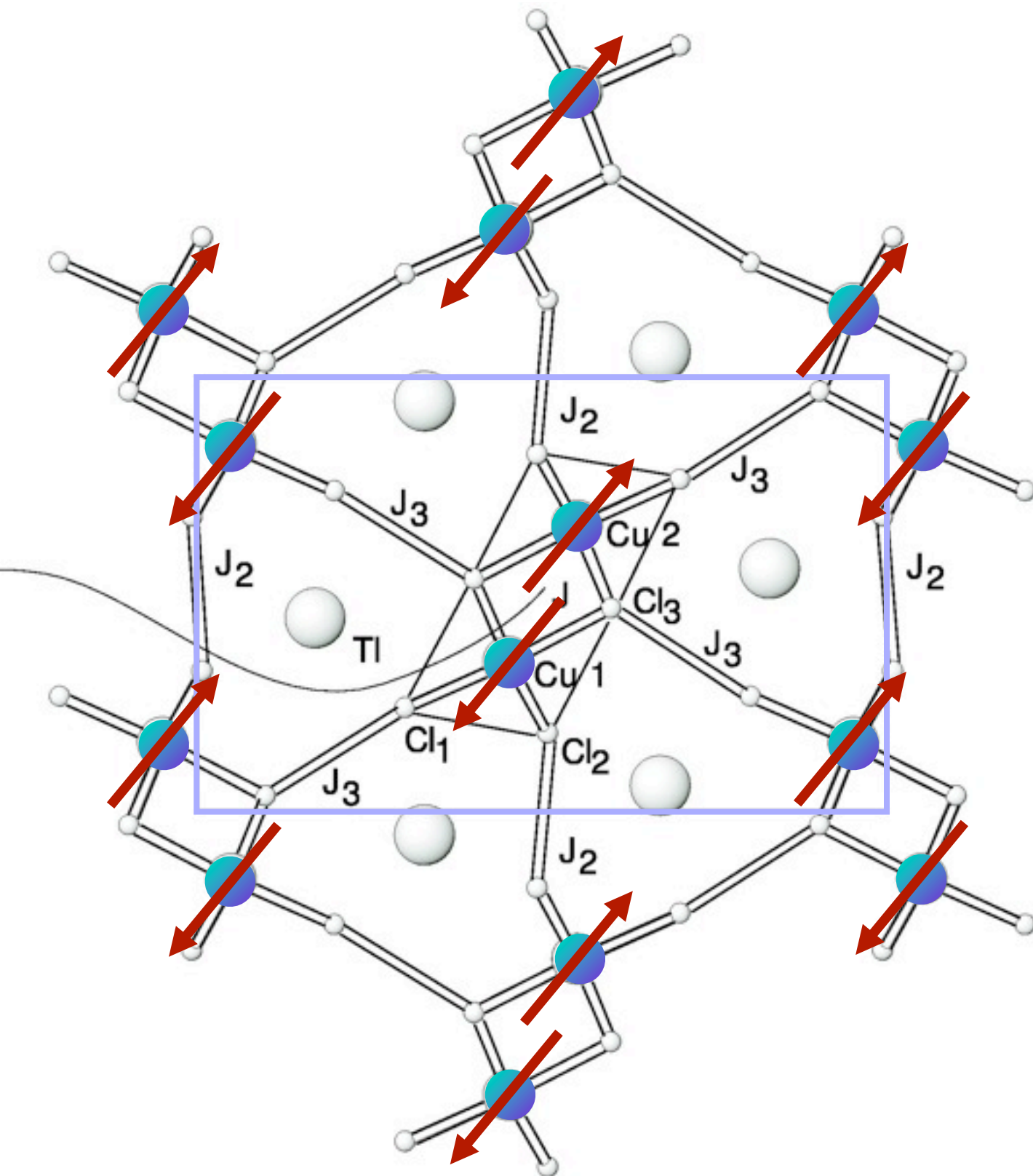


An insulator
whose magnetic
susceptibility
vanishes
exponentially at
low
temperatures



$$= \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(|\uparrow\downarrow\rangle - |\downarrow\uparrow\rangle \right)$$

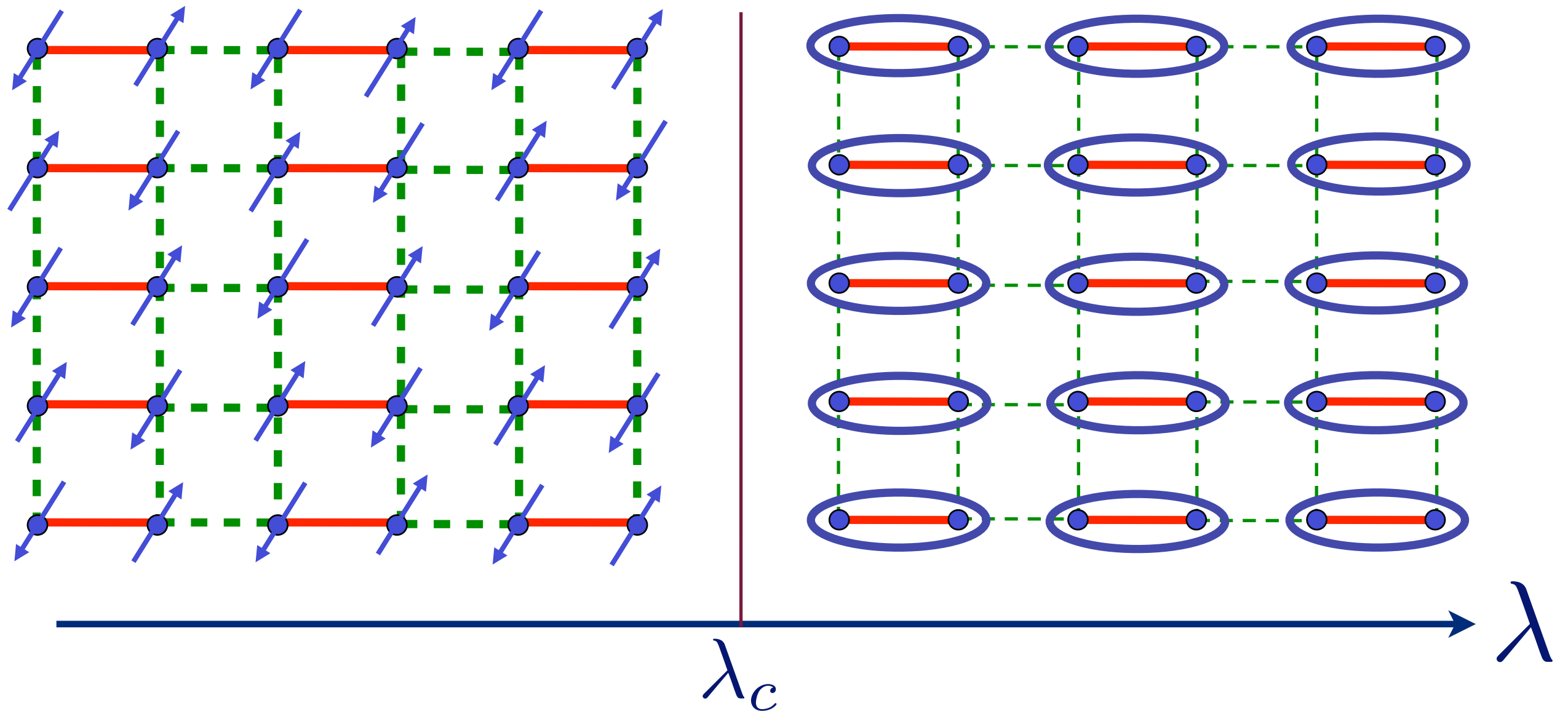
Nearest
neighbor
electrons are
entangled



Application of
pressure reduces
entanglement and
leads to
antiferromagnetism
(Neel order)

A. Oosawa, K. Kakurai, T. Osakabe, M. Nakamura, M. Takeda, and H. Tanaka,
Journal of the Physical Society of Japan, **73**, 1446 (2004).

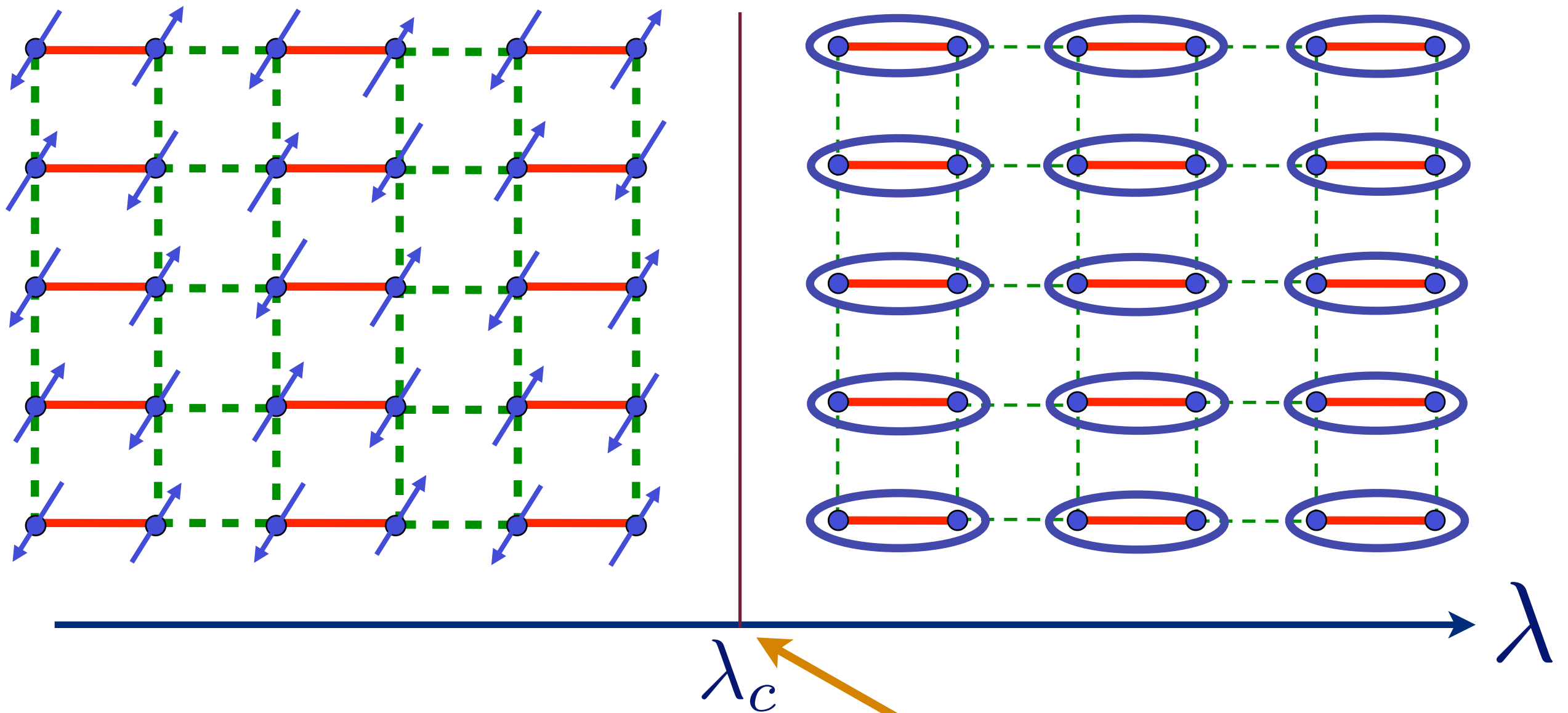
$$\text{Diagram of a dimer} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(|\uparrow\downarrow\rangle - |\downarrow\uparrow\rangle \right)$$



Pressure in TiCuCl_3

A. Oosawa, K. Kakurai, T. Osakabe, M. Nakamura, M. Takeda, and H. Tanaka,
Journal of the Physical Society of Japan, **73**, 1446 (2004).

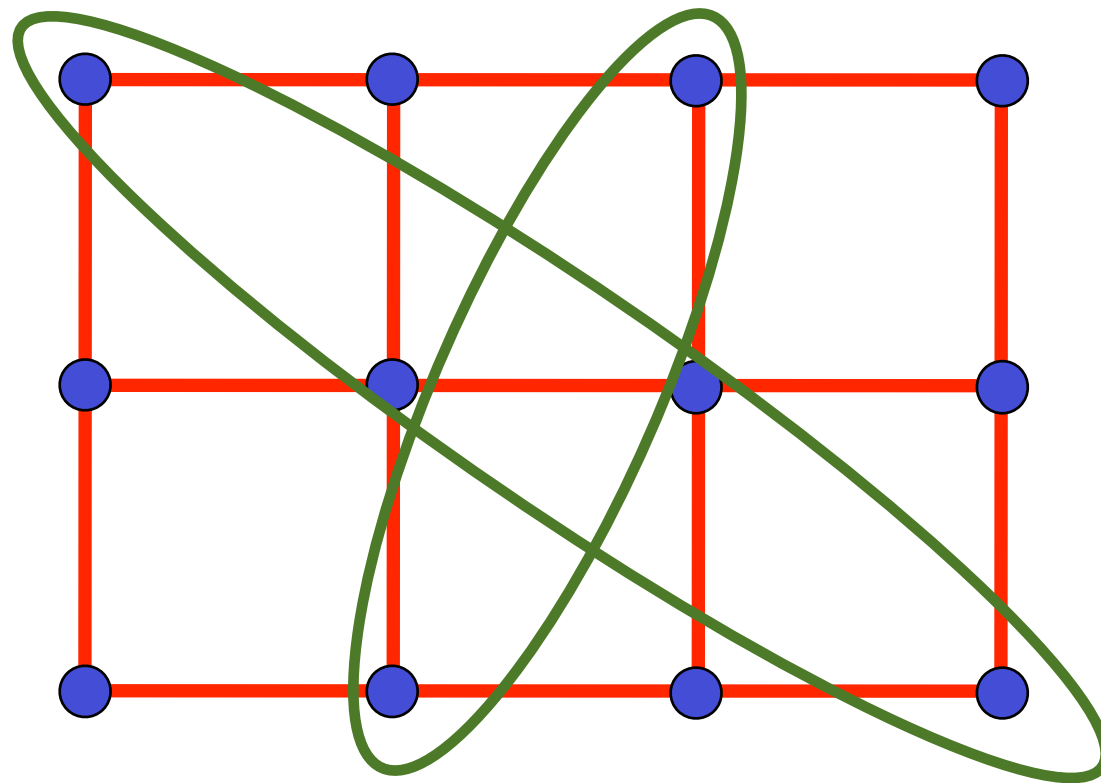
$$\text{[Diagram: Two blue dots connected by a red line, enclosed in a blue oval]} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}} \left(|\uparrow\downarrow\rangle - |\downarrow\uparrow\rangle \right)$$



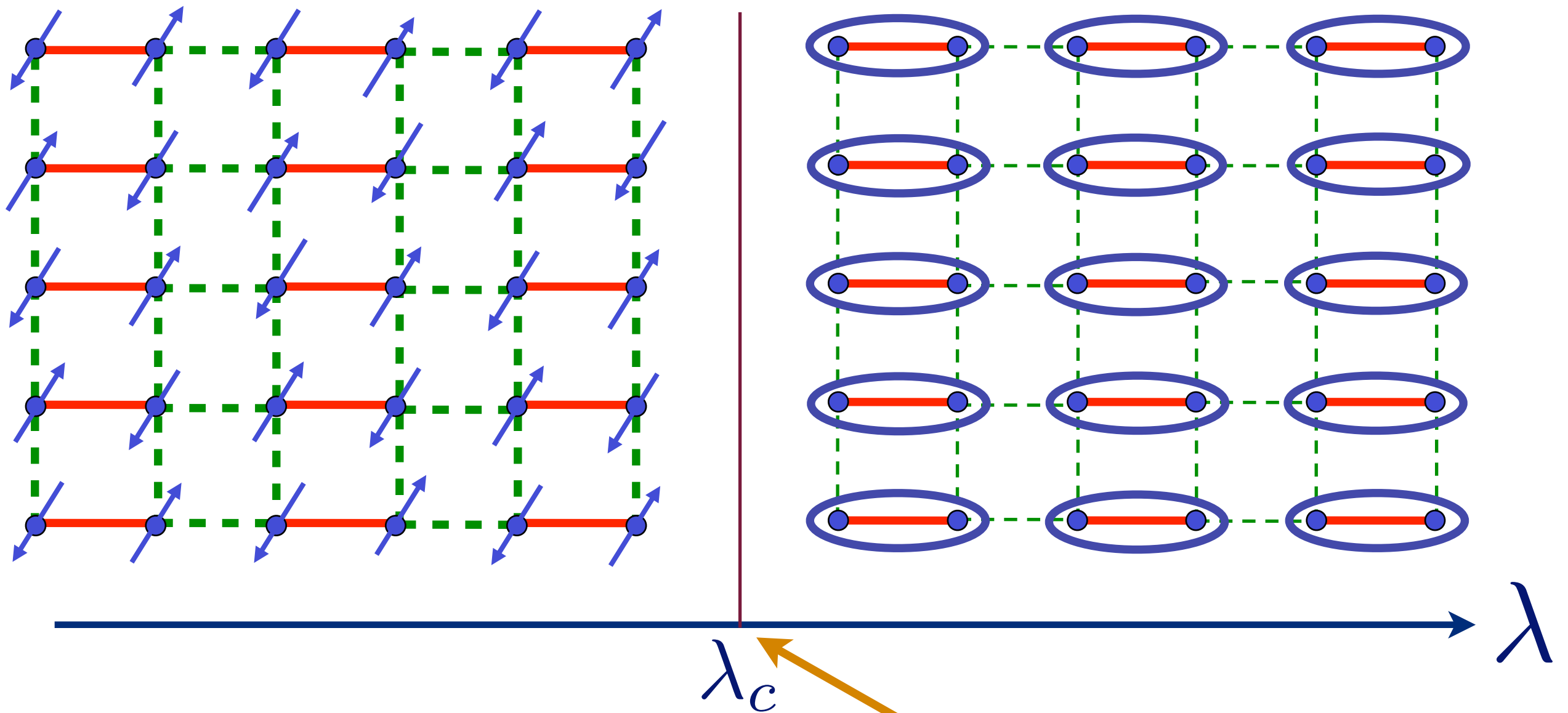
Quantum critical point with non-local entanglement in spin wavefunction

A “quantum critical point” is a special point between quantum phases where quantum entanglement is truly long-range

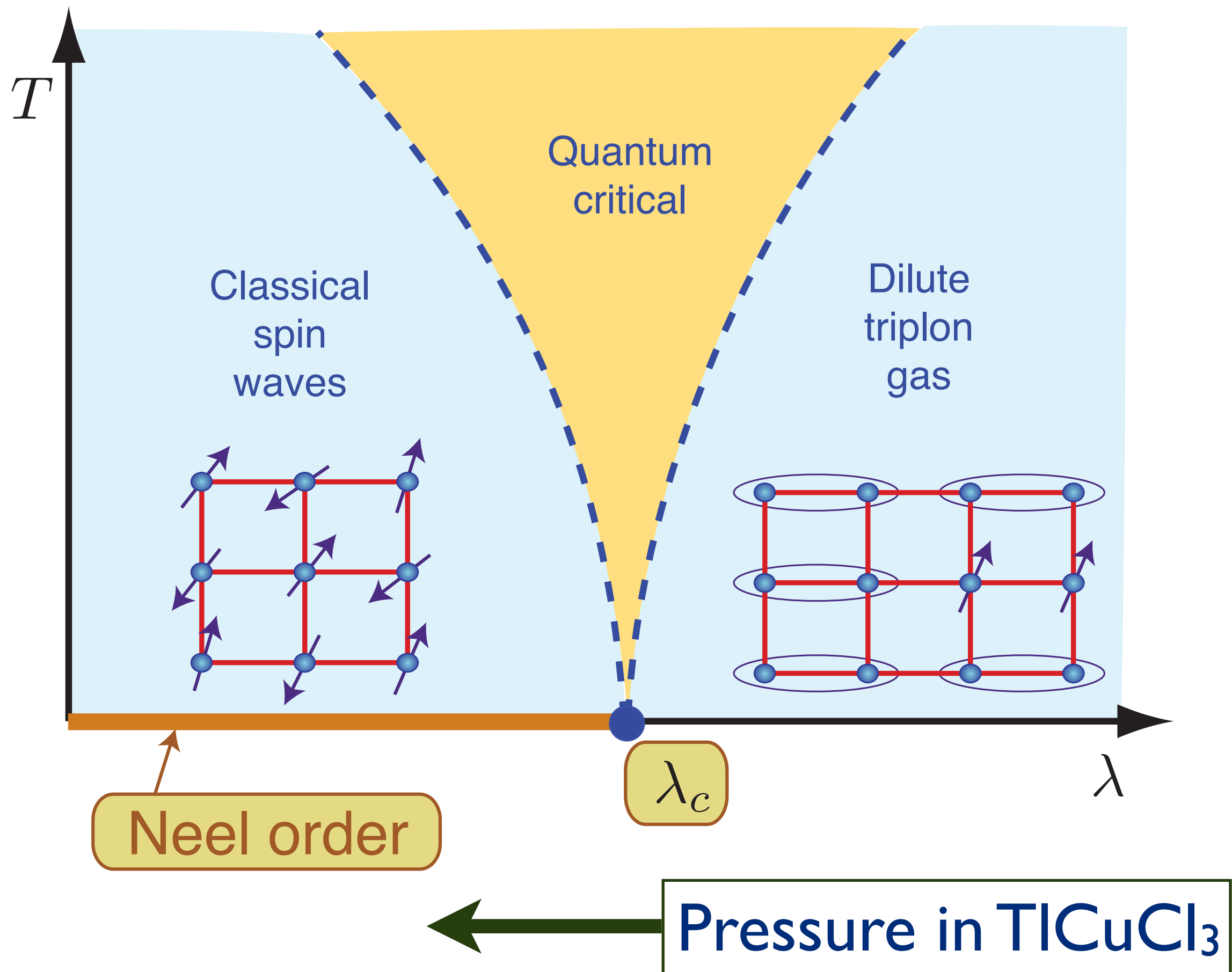
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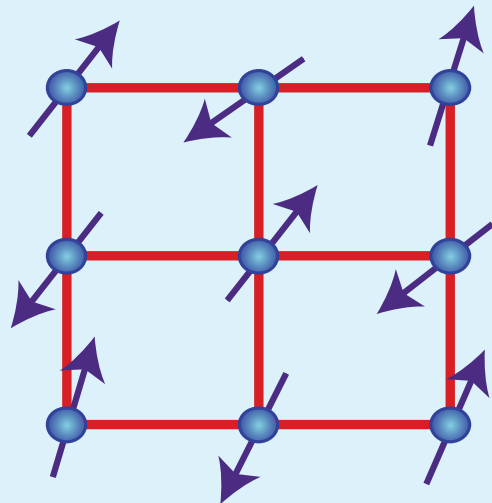
Quantum critical point with non-local entanglement in spin wavefunction



Non-local entanglement
controls dynamics of
electrons

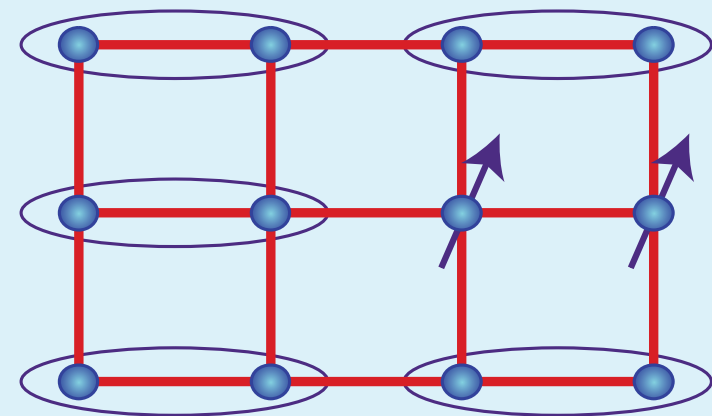
T

Classical
spin
waves



Quantum
critical

Dilute
triplon
gas



λ_c

λ

Neel order

Pressure in TlCuCl_3

Quantum
criticality

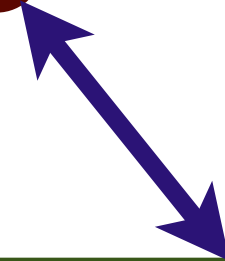


Quantum
superposition and
entanglement

Quantum
criticality

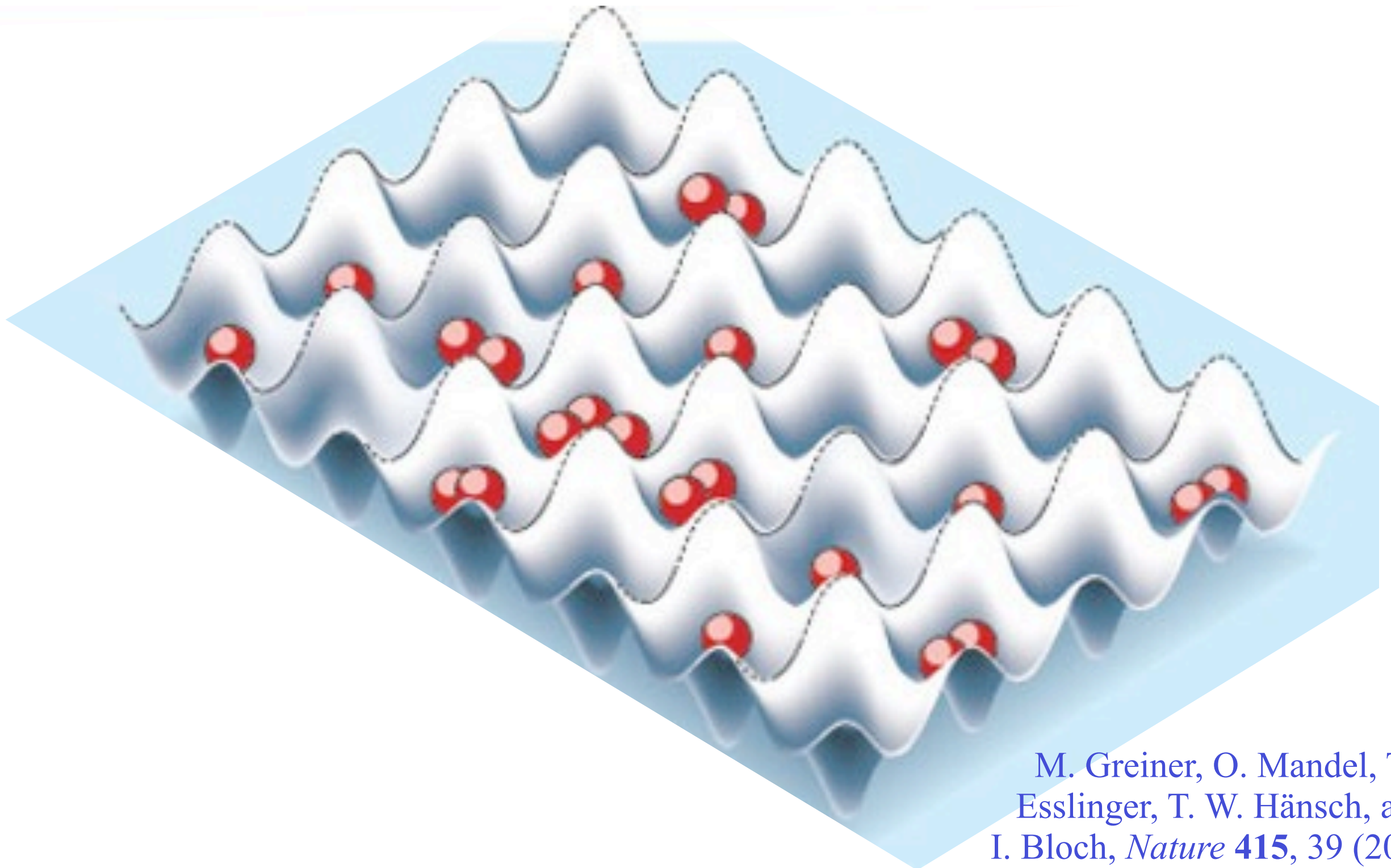


Quantum
superposition and
entanglement



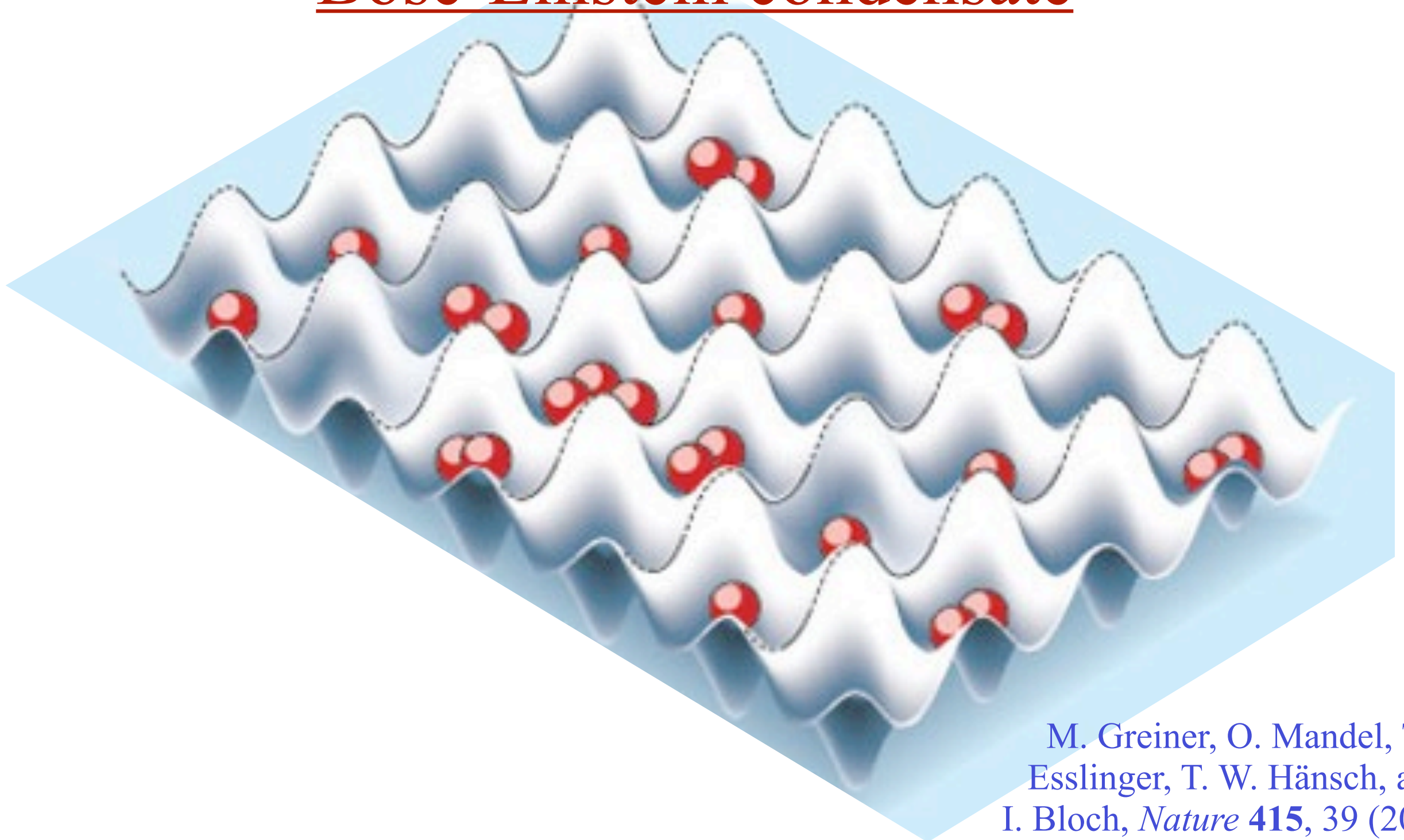
Superconductivity

Rubidium atoms in a magnetic trap and standing waves of laser light



M. Greiner, O. Mandel, T.
Esslinger, T. W. Hänsch, and
I. Bloch, *Nature* **415**, 39 (2002).

At very low temperatures and for a weak laser light, the Rubidium atoms obey quantum mechanics and form a Bose-Einstein condensate

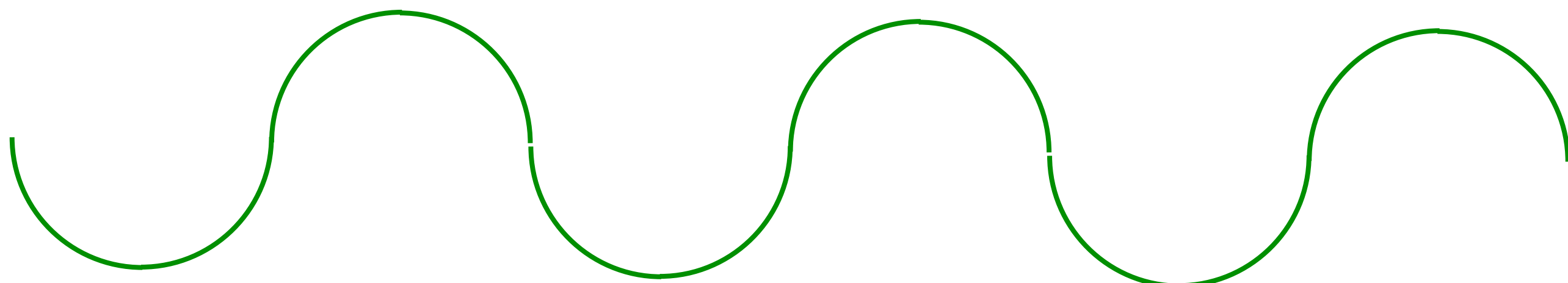


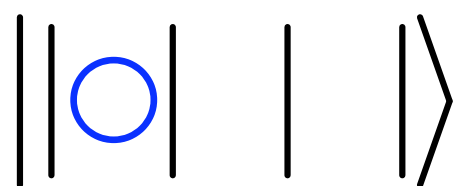
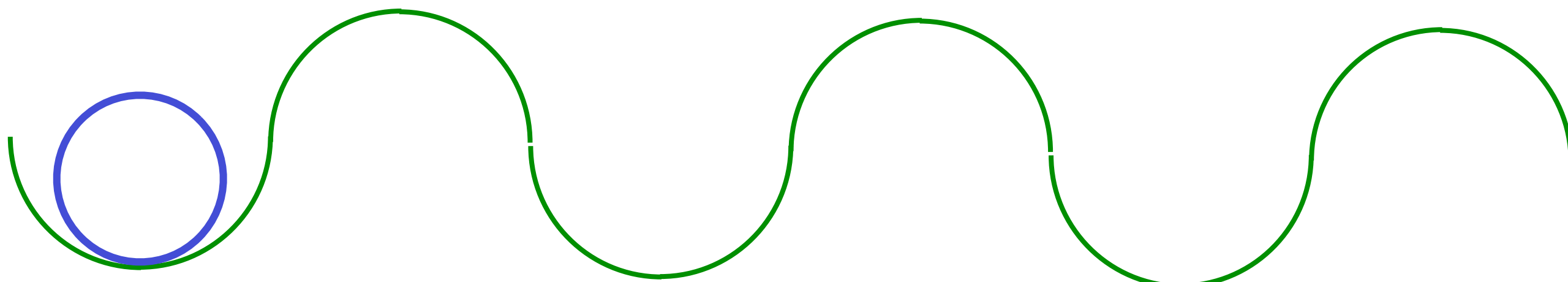
M. Greiner, O. Mandel, T. Esslinger, T. W. Hänsch, and I. Bloch, *Nature* **415**, 39 (2002).

A Bose-Einstein condensate:

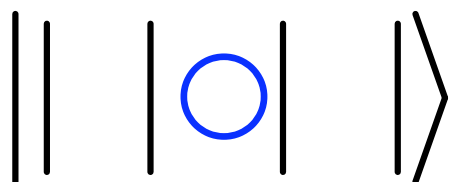
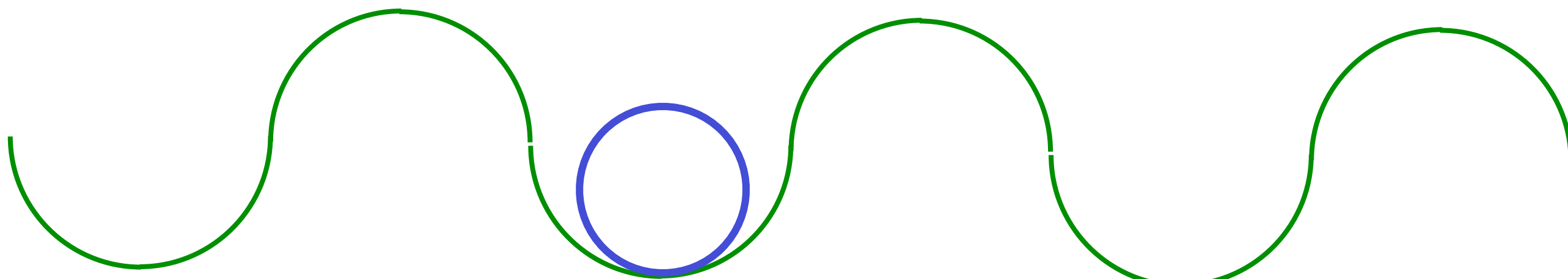
An quantum superposition of all the atoms in all positions

A liquid which flows without resistance (a superfluid)

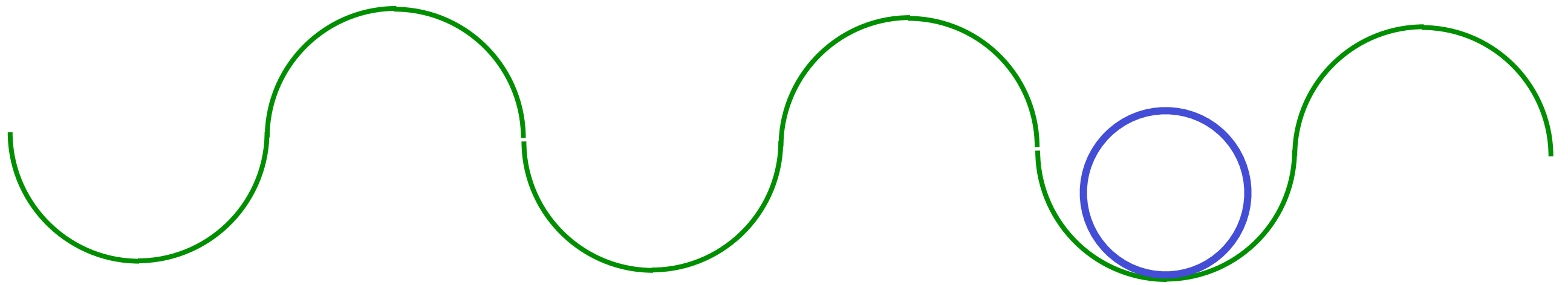




A single atom is superposed
between all positions

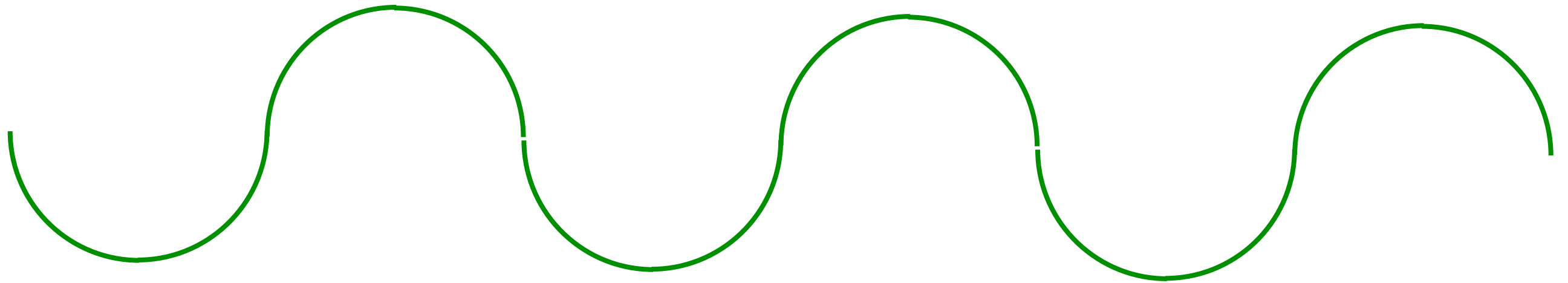


A single atom is superposed
between all positions



$$| \quad | \quad | \quad \bigcirc \rangle$$

A single atom is superposed
between all positions



$$|G\rangle = \left(\begin{array}{c} | \\ \bigcirc \\ | \end{array} \begin{array}{c} | \\ | \\ | \end{array} \begin{array}{c} | \\ | \\ | \end{array} \right\rangle + \begin{array}{c} | \\ | \\ | \end{array} \begin{array}{c} | \\ \bigcirc \\ | \end{array} \begin{array}{c} | \\ | \\ | \end{array} \right\rangle + \begin{array}{c} | \\ | \\ | \end{array} \begin{array}{c} | \\ | \\ \bigcirc \end{array} \begin{array}{c} | \\ | \\ | \end{array} \right\rangle \right)$$

A single atom is superposed
between all positions

Bose-Einstein condensate:
superposition between all atoms

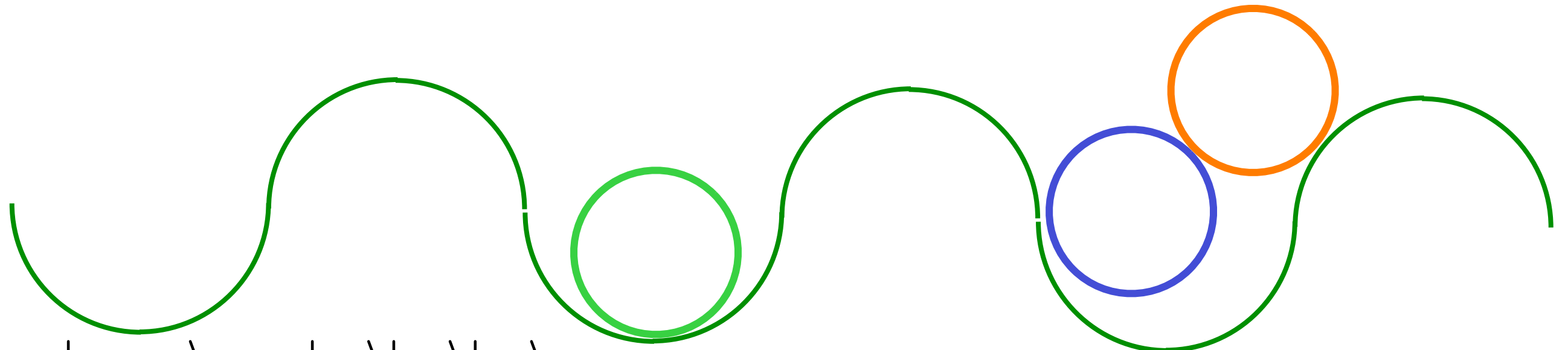
$$|\text{BEC}\rangle = |G\rangle |G\rangle |G\rangle$$

Bose-Einstein condensate: superposition between all atoms

$$\begin{aligned}
 |\text{BEC}\rangle &= |G\rangle|G\rangle|G\rangle \\
 &= \left(\begin{aligned}
 &||\text{blue}\rangle|\text{red}\rangle|\text{green}\rangle + ||\text{red}\rangle|\text{blue}\rangle|\text{green}\rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{blue} \end{array} \right\rangle |\text{green}\rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right\rangle |\text{blue}\rangle \\
 &+ \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right\rangle |\text{blue}\rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{blue} \end{array} \right\rangle |\text{green}\rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{blue} \\ \text{red} \end{array} \right\rangle |\text{green}\rangle + \dots 27 \text{ terms}
 \end{aligned} \right)
 \end{aligned}$$

Large fluctuations in number of atoms in each site –
superfluidity (atoms can “flow” without dissipation)

Bose-Einstein condensate: superposition between all atoms

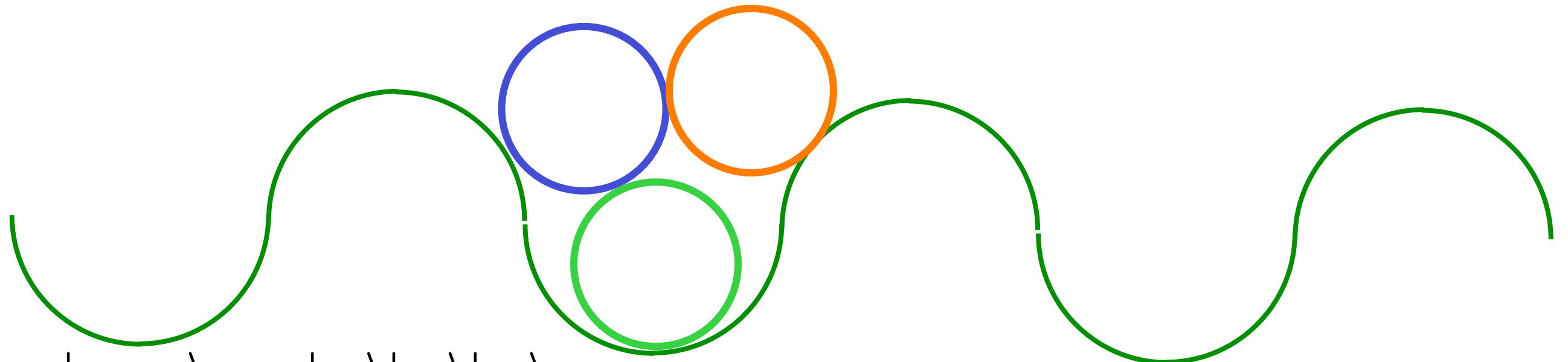


$$|\text{BEC}\rangle = |G\rangle|G\rangle|G\rangle$$

$$= \left(\begin{aligned} &||\text{blue}|\text{red}|\text{green}\rangle + ||\text{red}|\text{blue}|\text{green}\rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{blue} \end{array} \right| \text{green} \rangle + \left| \text{red} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{blue} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \rangle \\ &+ \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \left| \text{blue} \right| \rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{blue} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{blue} \\ \text{red} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \rangle + \dots 27 \text{ terms} \end{aligned} \right)$$

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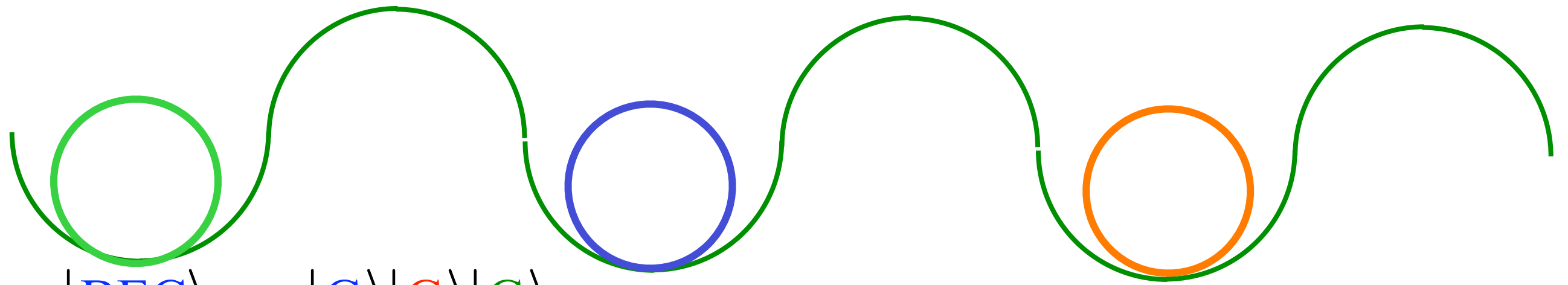


$$|\text{BEC}\rangle = |G\rangle|G\rangle|G\rangle$$

$$= \left(\begin{aligned} &||\text{blue}|\text{orange}|\text{green}\rangle + ||\text{orange}|\text{blue}|\text{green}\rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{orange} \\ \text{blue} \end{array} \right| \text{green} \rangle + \left| \text{orange} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{blue} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \rangle \\ &+ \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{orange} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \left| \text{blue} \right| \rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{orange} \\ \text{blue} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{blue} \\ \text{orange} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \rangle + \dots 27 \text{ terms} \end{aligned} \right)$$

Large fluctuations in number of atoms in each site –
superfluidity (atoms can “flow” without dissipation)

Bose-Einstein condensate: superposition between all atoms

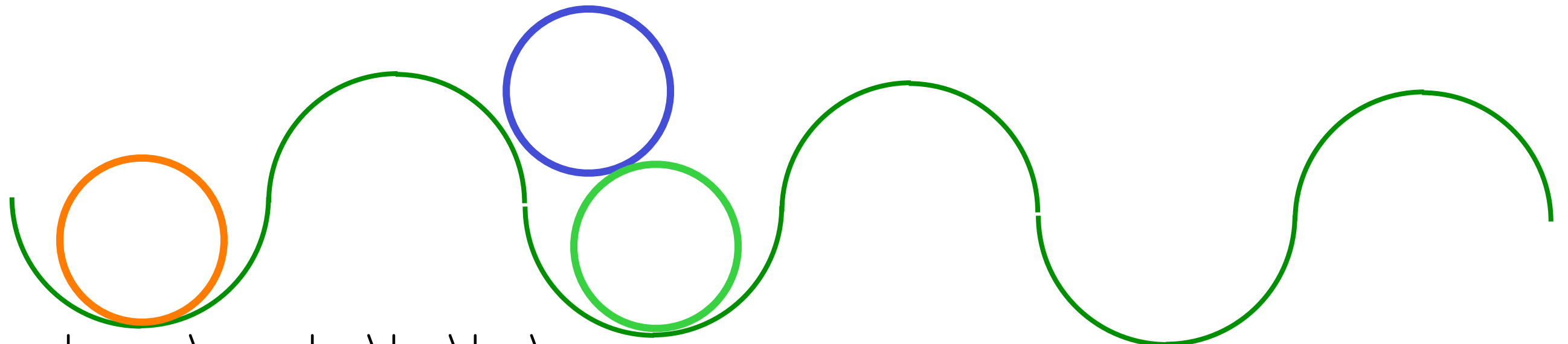


$$|\text{BEC}\rangle = |G\rangle|G\rangle|G\rangle$$

$$= \left(\begin{aligned} &||\text{blue}|\text{red}|\text{green}\rangle + ||\text{red}|\text{blue}|\text{green}\rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{blue} \end{array} \right| \text{green} \rangle + \left| \text{red} \right| \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{blue} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \rangle \\ &+ \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \left| \text{blue} \right| \rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{red} \\ \text{blue} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \rangle + \left| \begin{array}{c} \text{blue} \\ \text{red} \\ \text{green} \end{array} \right| \rangle + \dots 27 \text{ terms} \end{aligned} \right)$$

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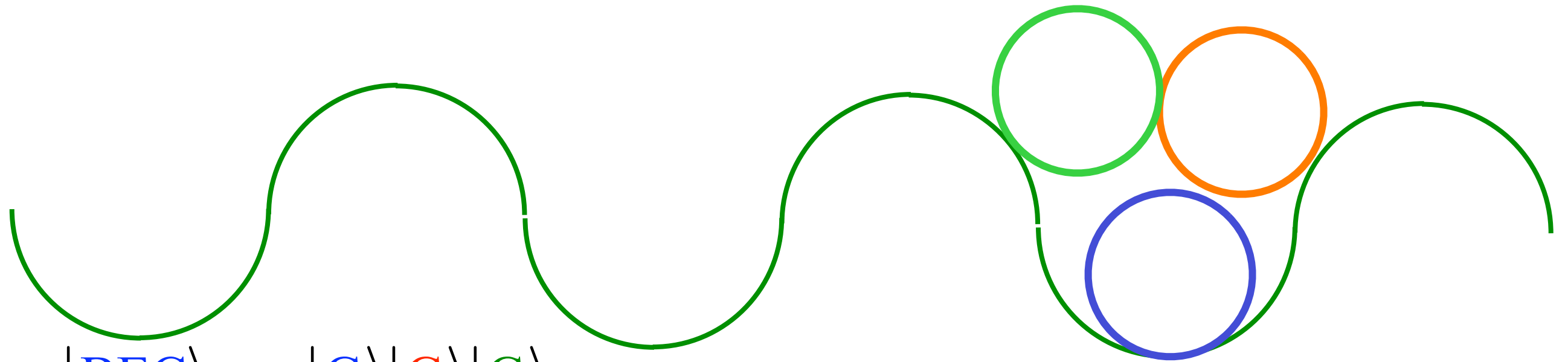


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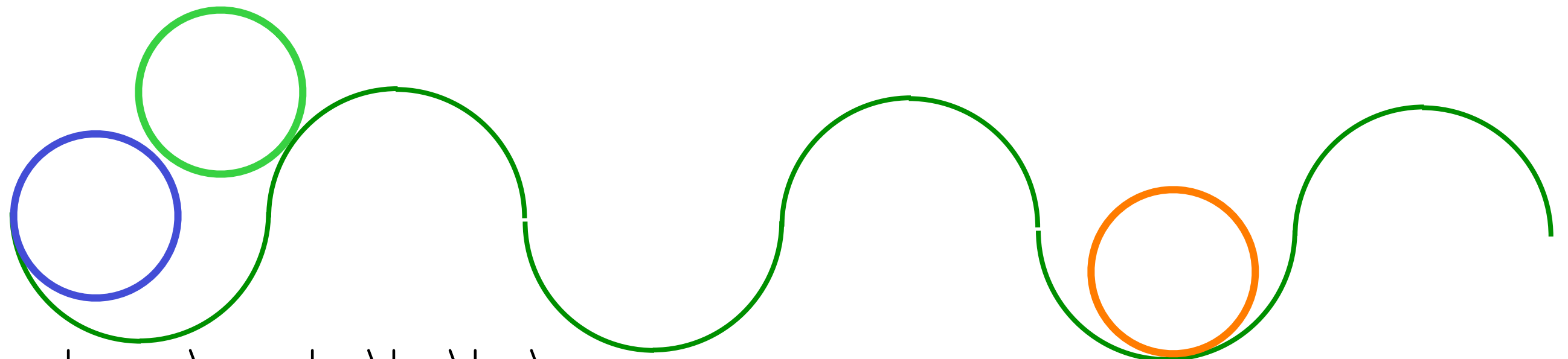


$$|\text{BEC}\rangle = |G\rangle|G\rangle|G\rangle$$

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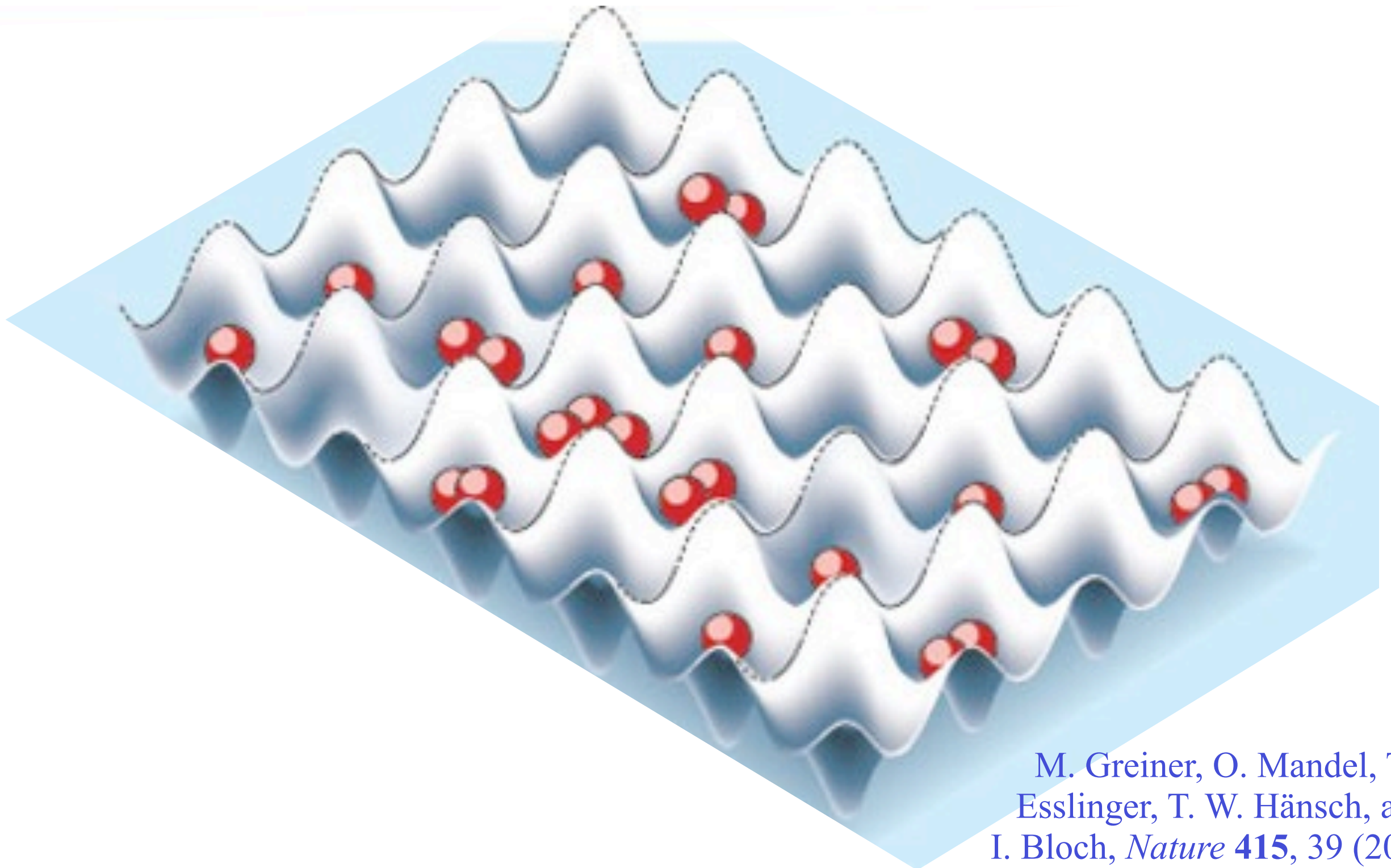


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Large fluctuations in number of atoms in each site –
superfluidity (atoms can “flow” without dissipation)

At very low temperatures and for a weak laser light, the Rubidium atoms form a
Bose-Einstein condensate



M. Greiner, O. Mandel, T. Esslinger, T. W. Hänsch, and I. Bloch, *Nature* **415**, 39 (2002).

Bose-Einstein condensate:
superposition between all atoms

$$|\text{BEC}\rangle = |G\rangle |G\rangle |G\rangle$$

(Strictly speaking: this is not entanglement
between the atoms because the BEC is a
product of simple “wave” states of the atoms)

A superconductor: a Bose condensate of pairs of electrons in a “chemical bond” in a metal

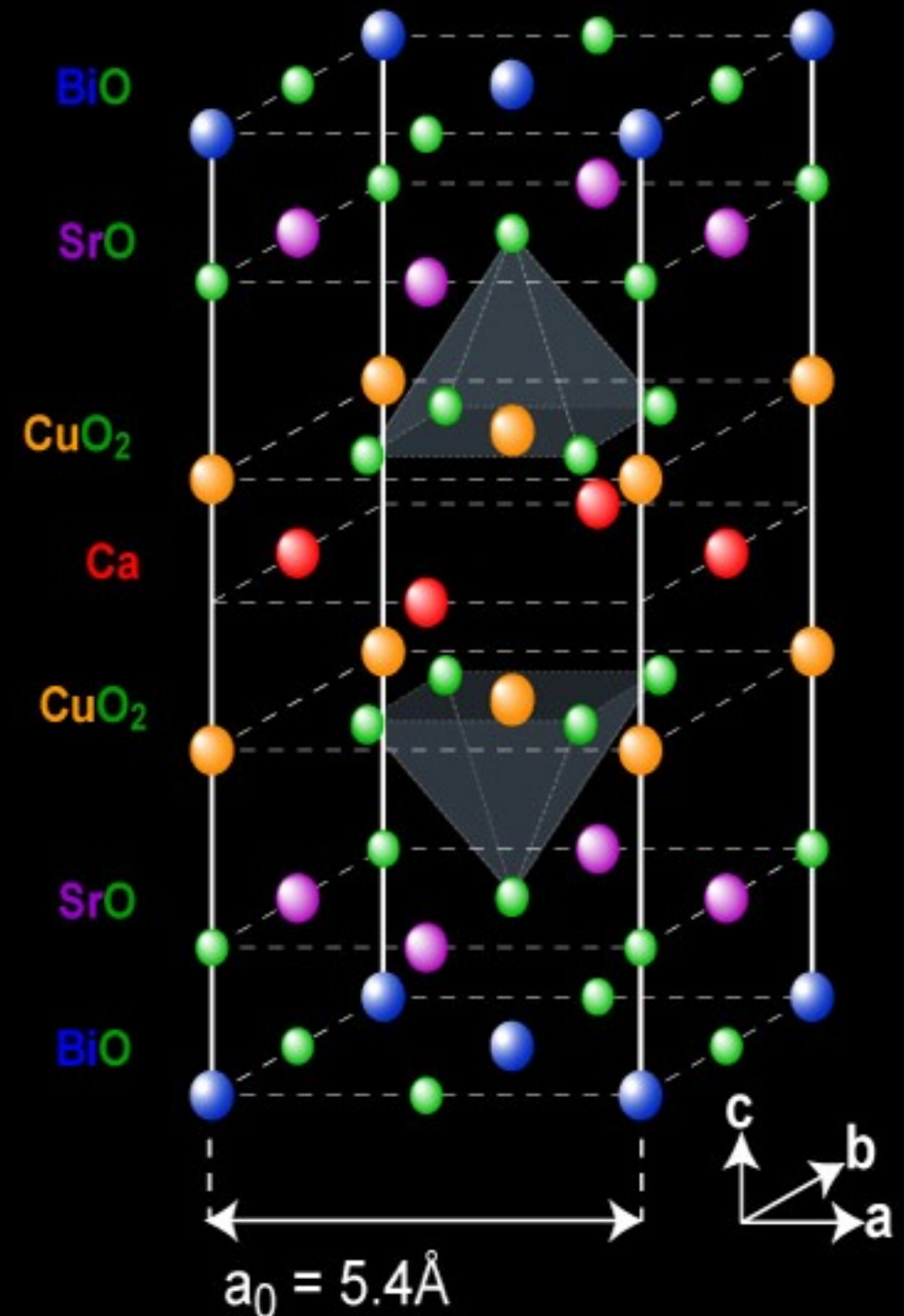
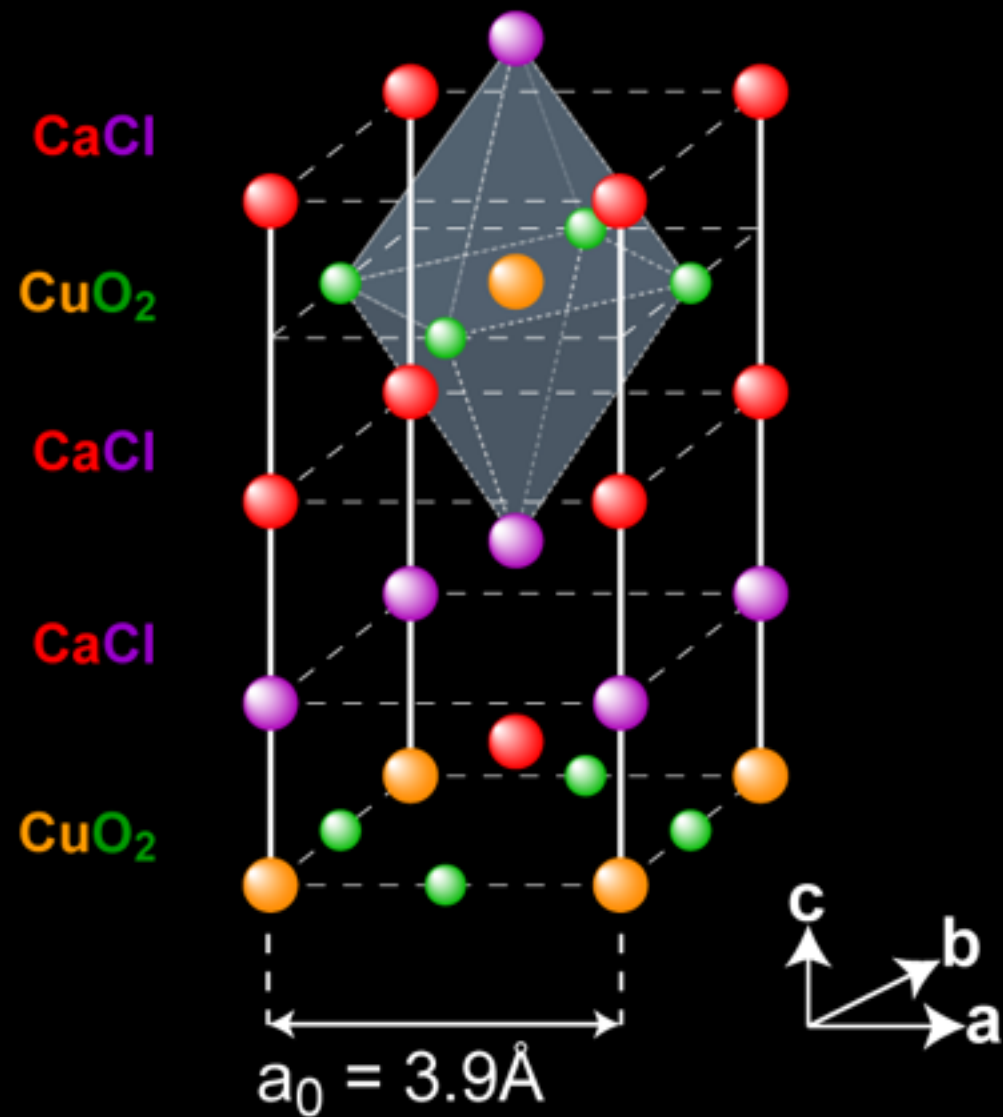
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$$|G\rangle \equiv |\uparrow\downarrow - \downarrow\uparrow\rangle$$

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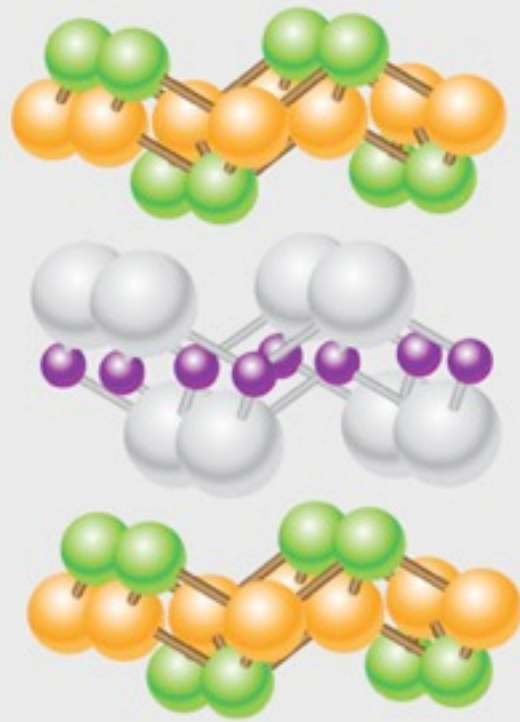
$$|G\rangle \equiv |\uparrow\downarrow - \downarrow\uparrow\rangle$$

High temperature superconductors

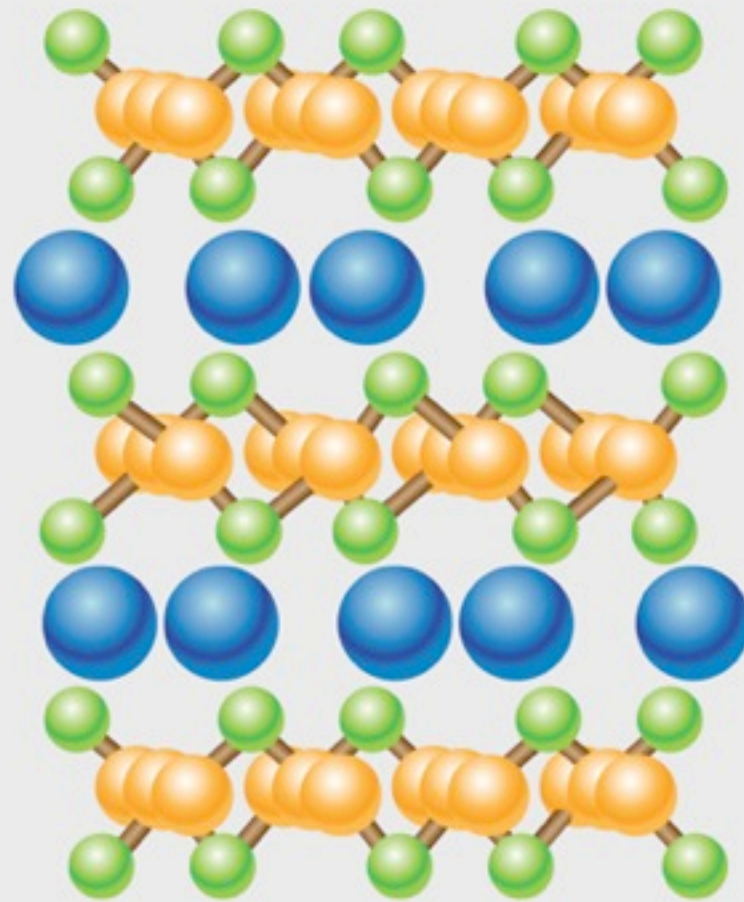


Iron pnictides:

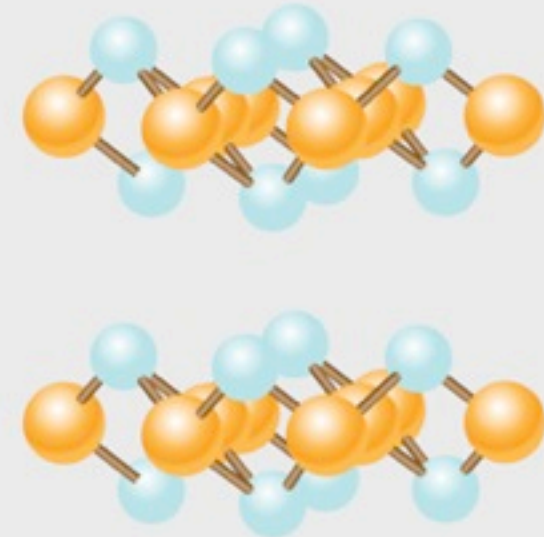
a new class of high temperature superconductors



LaOFeAs

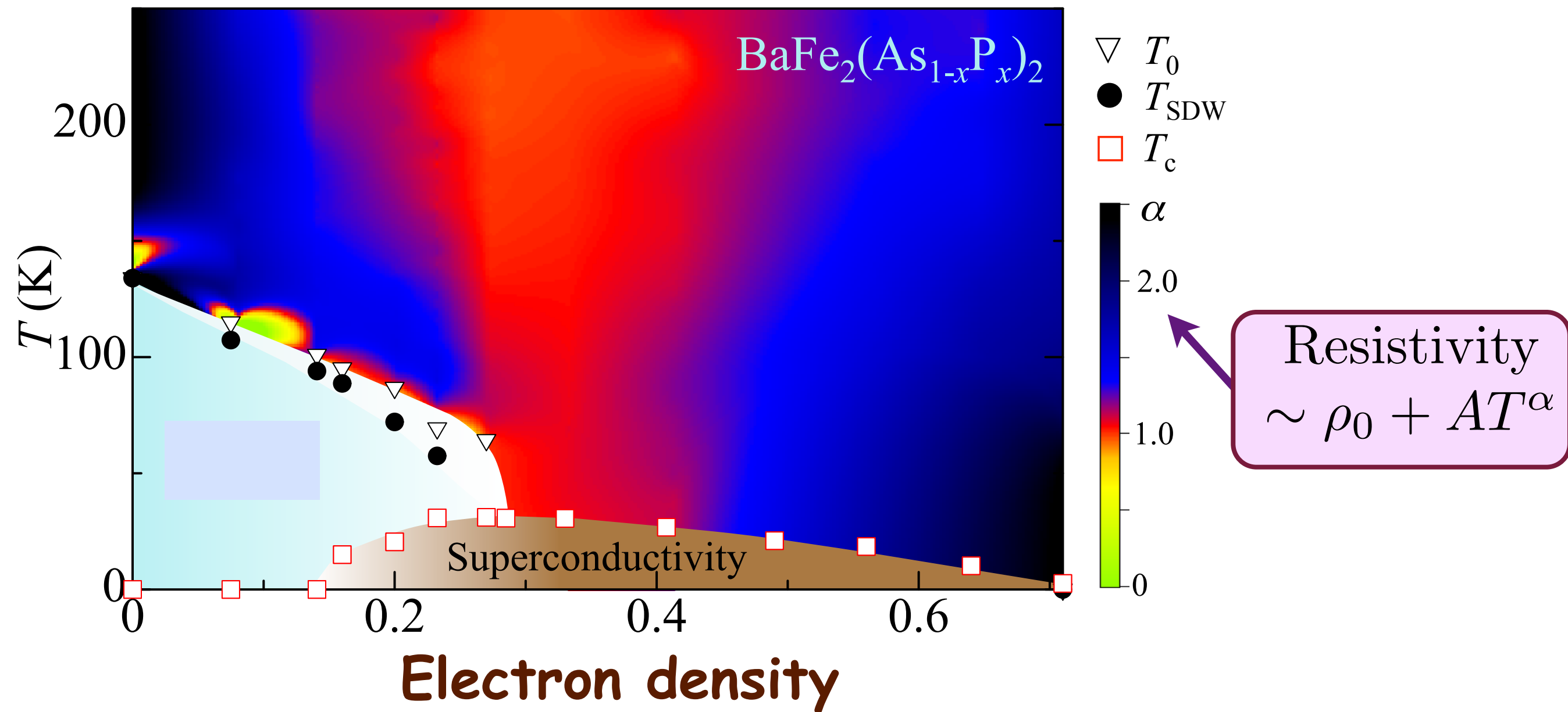


BaFe₂As₂



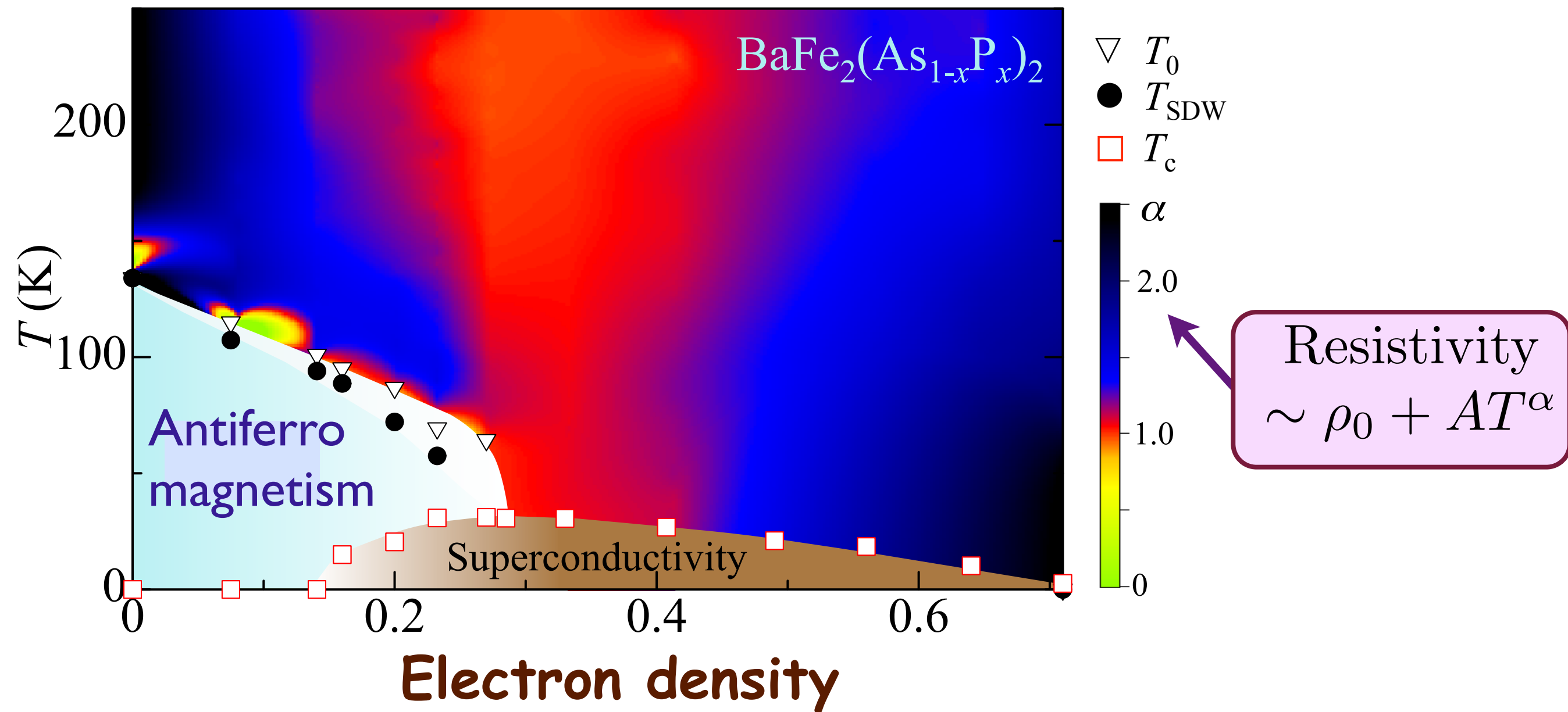
FeSe

Temperature-density phase diagram of the iron pnictides:

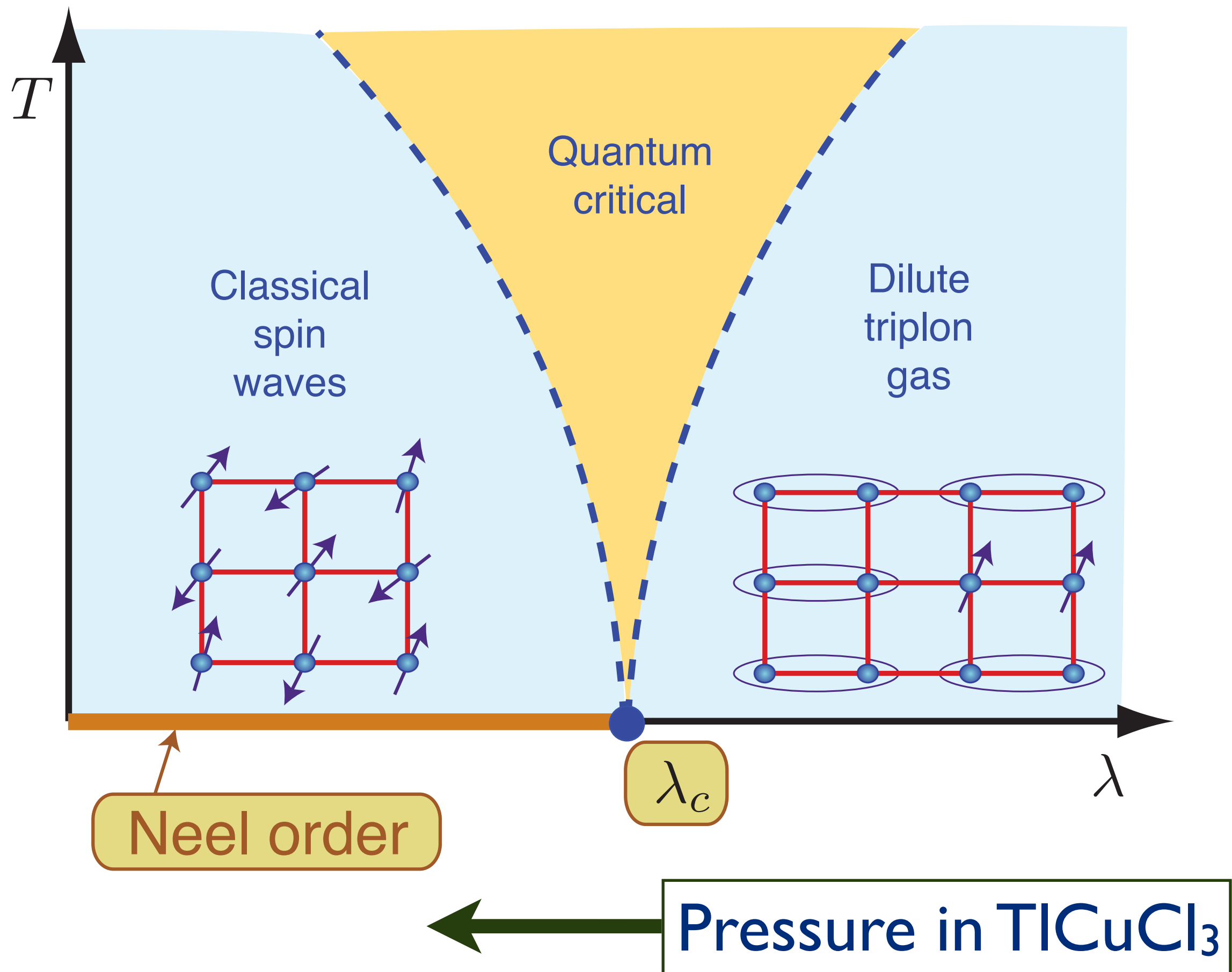


S. Kasahara, T. Shibauchi, K. Hashimoto, K. Ikada, S. Tonegawa, R. Okazaki, H. Shishido, H. Ikeda, H. Takeya, K. Hirata, T. Terashima, and Y. Matsuda,
Physical Review B **81**, 184519 (2010)

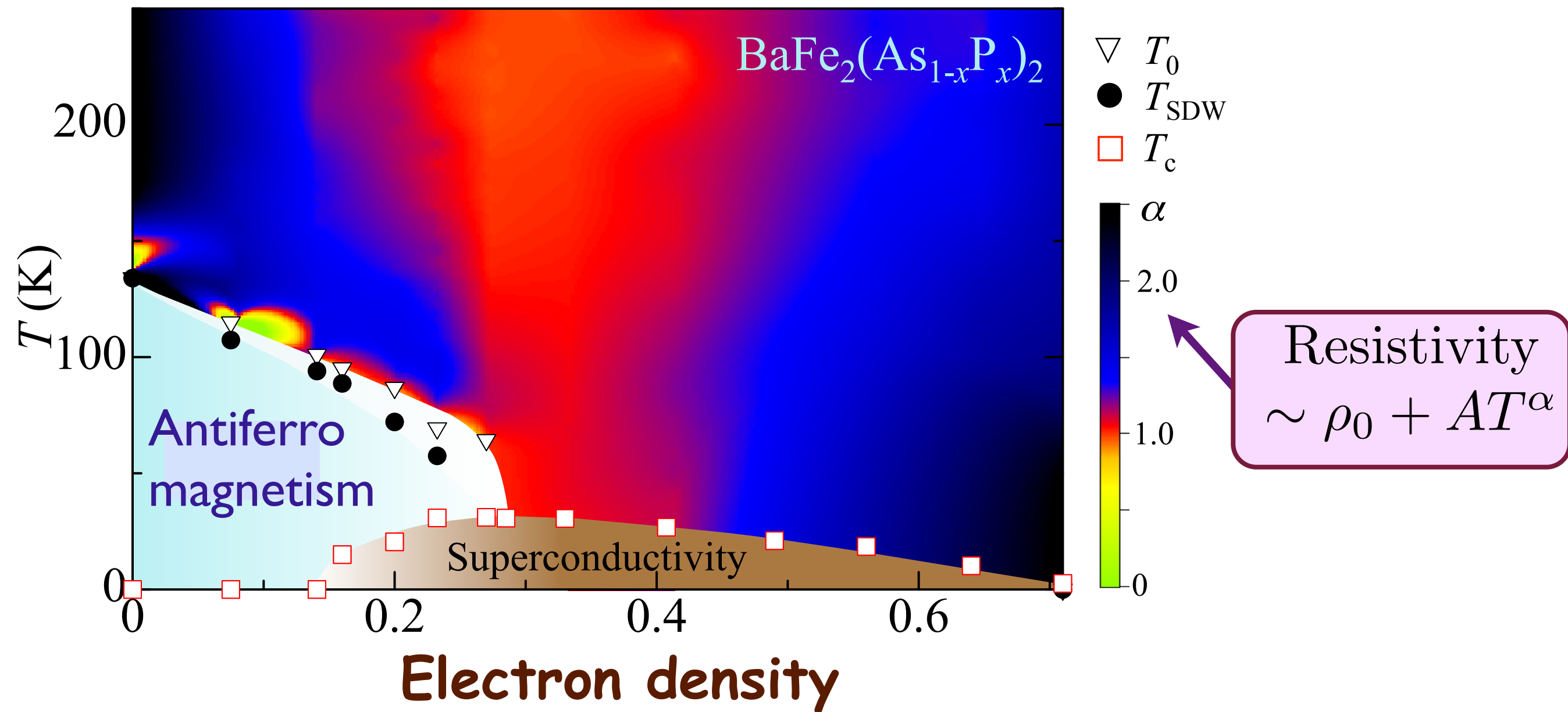
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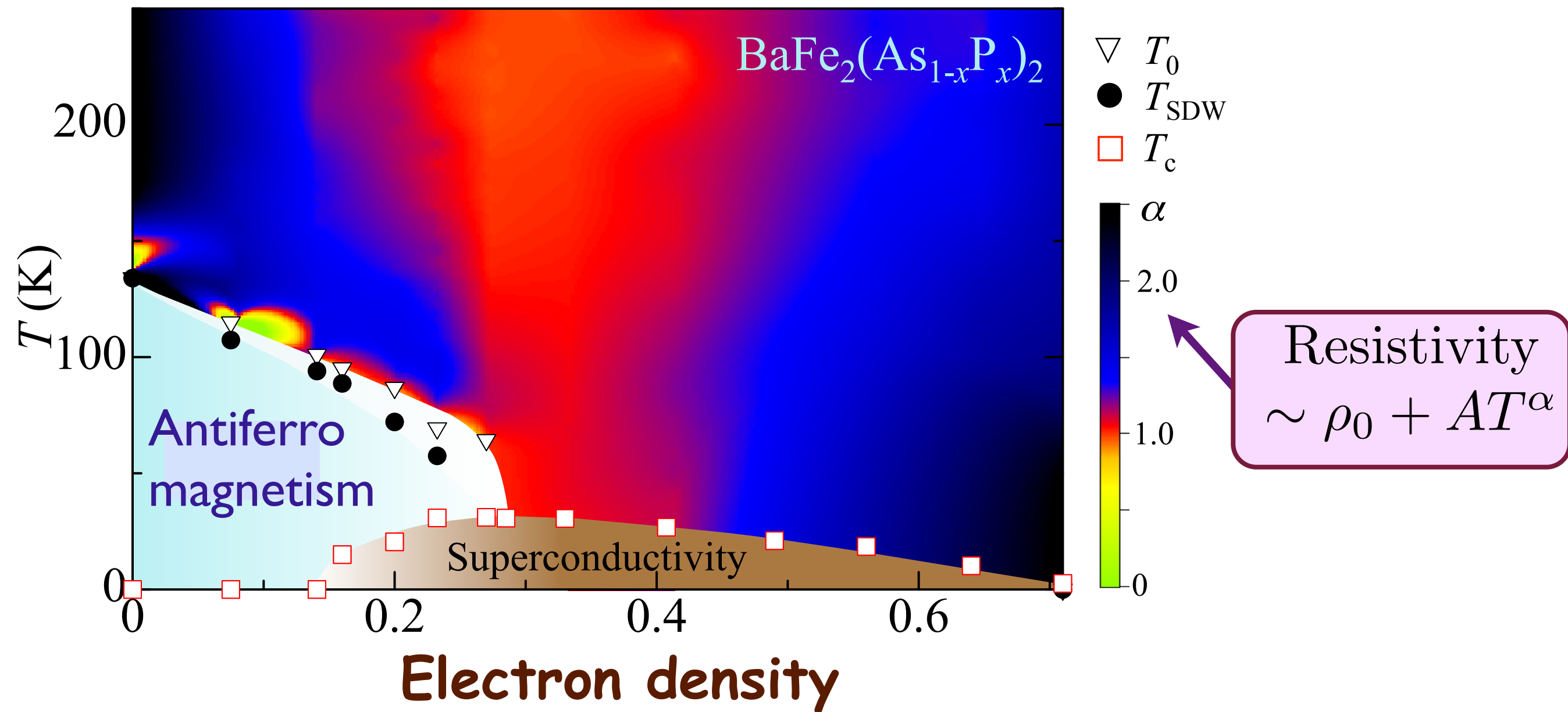


Temperature-doping phase diagram of the iron pnictides:



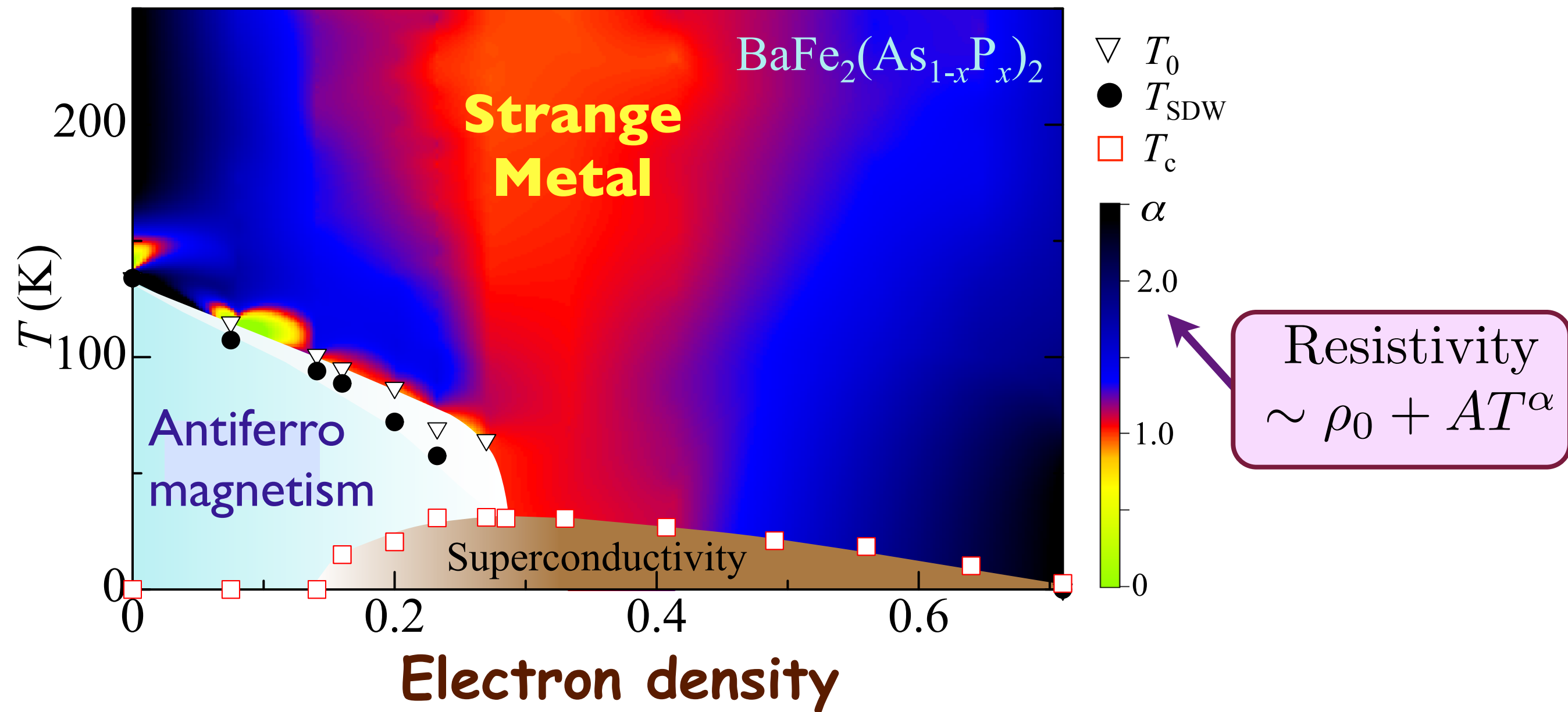
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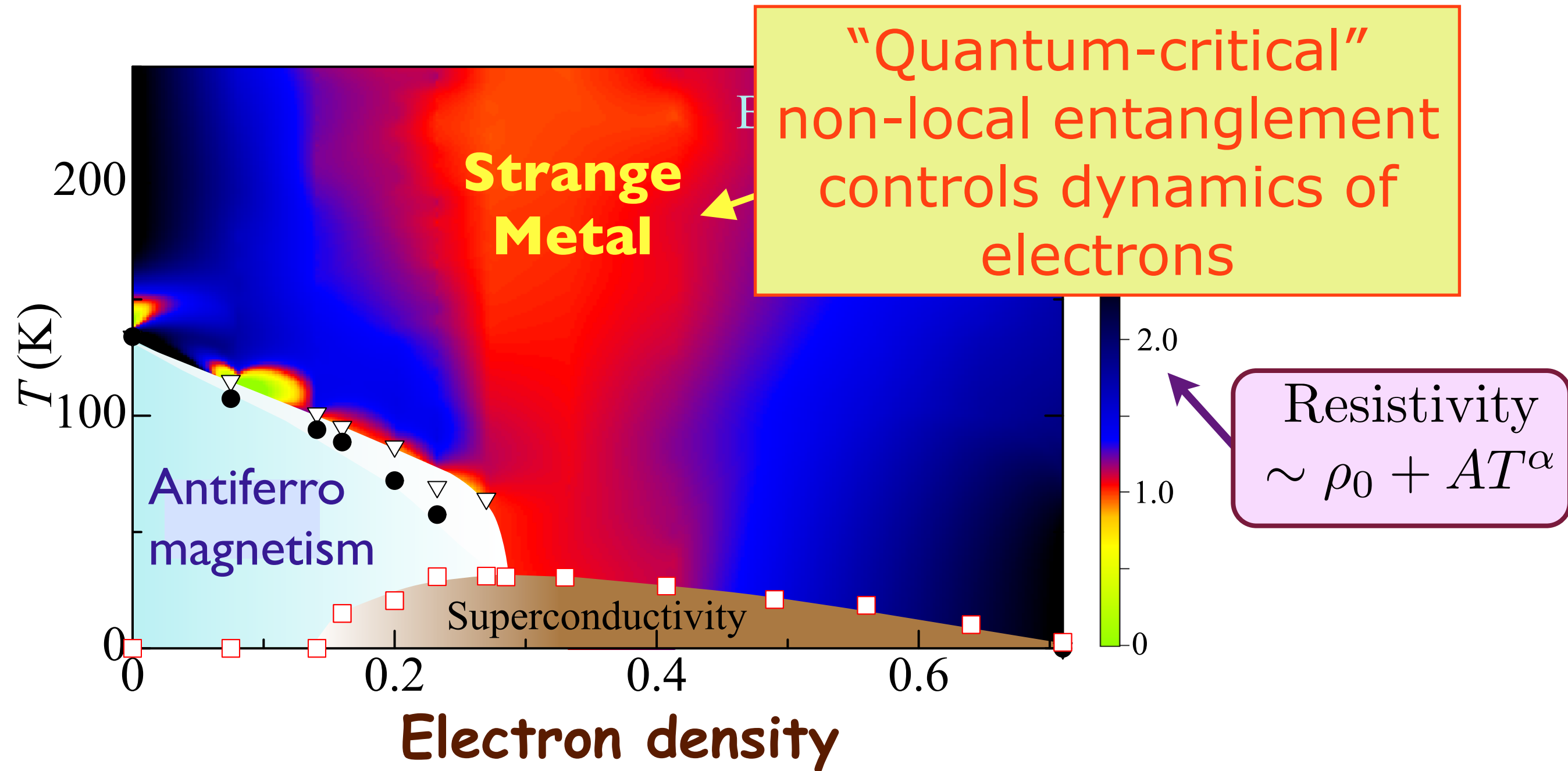
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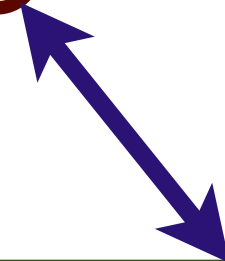


S. Kasahara, T. Shibauchi, K. Hashimoto, K. Ikada, S. Tonegawa, R. Okazaki, H. Shishido, H. Ikeda, H. Takeya, K. Hirata, T. Terashima, and Y. Matsuda,
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Quantum
criticality



Quantum
superposition and
entanglement

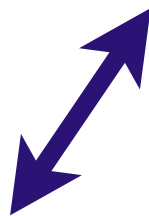


Superconductivity

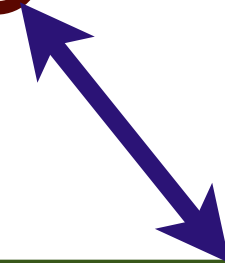
**Quantum
criticality**



**Quantum
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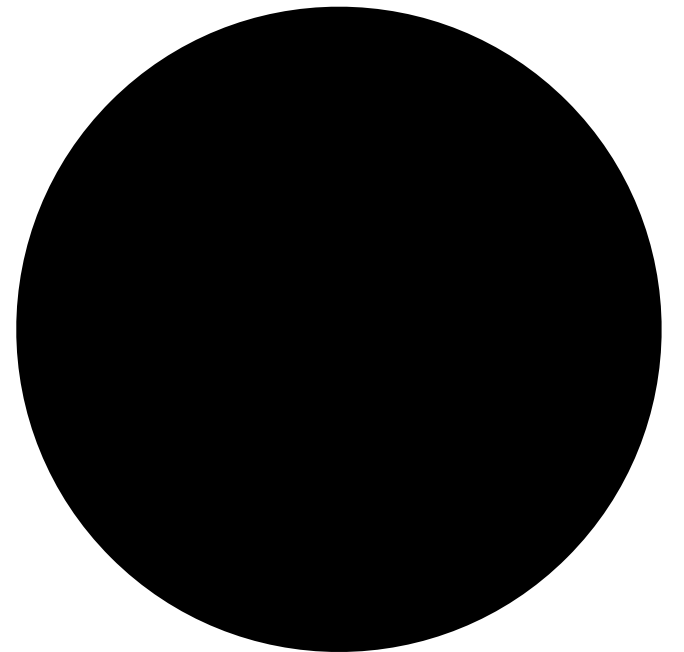
**Black Holes and
String Theory**



Superconductivity

Black Holes

Objects so massive that light is gravitationally bound to them.

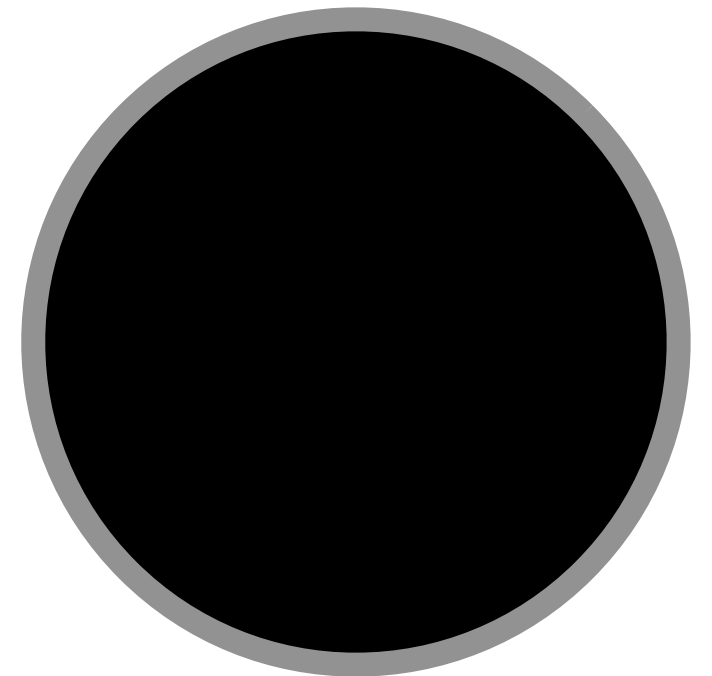


Black Holes

Objects so massive that light is gravitationally bound to them.

In Einstein's theory, the region inside the black hole **horizon** is disconnected from the rest of the universe.

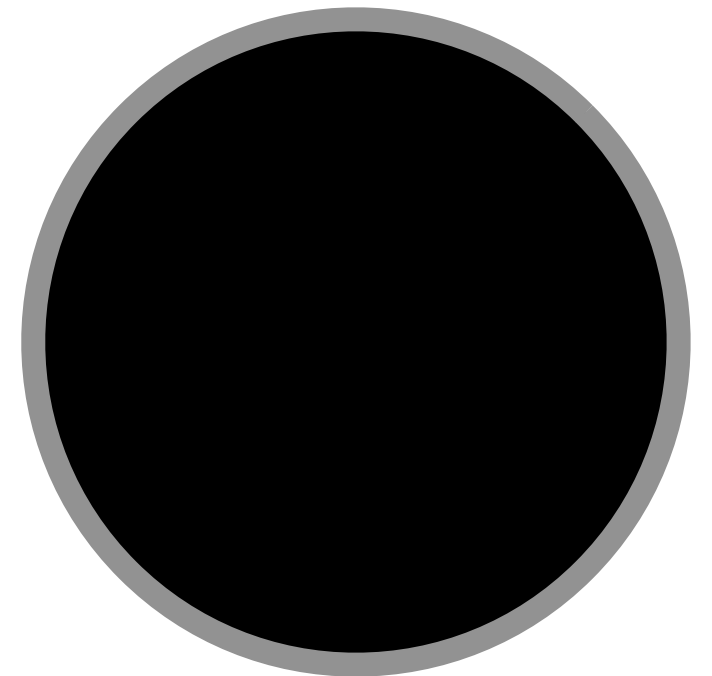
Horizon radius $R = \frac{2GM}{c^2}$



Black Holes

Objects so massive that light is gravitationally bound to them.

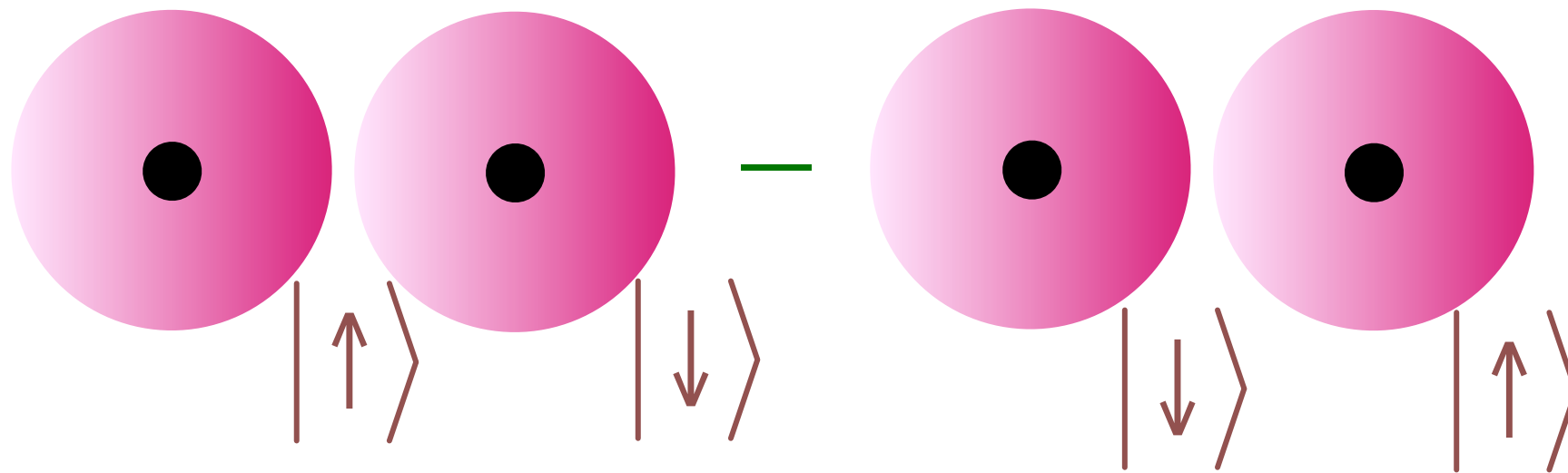
Chandrasekhar showed that certain stars were unstable, and these can collapse to black holes



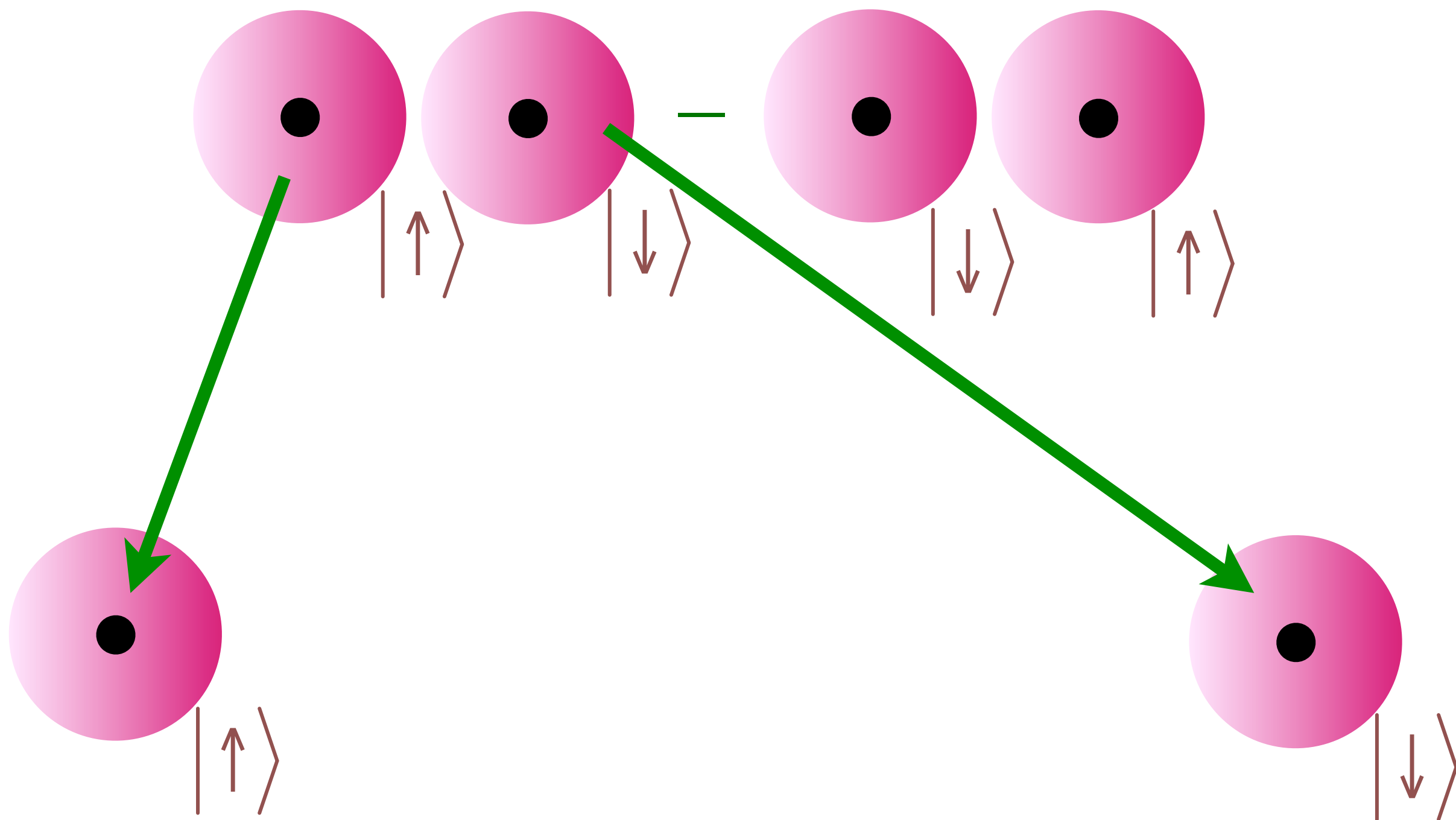
Black Holes + Quantum theory

Around 1974, Bekenstein and Hawking showed that the application of the quantum theory across a black hole horizon led to many astonishing conclusions

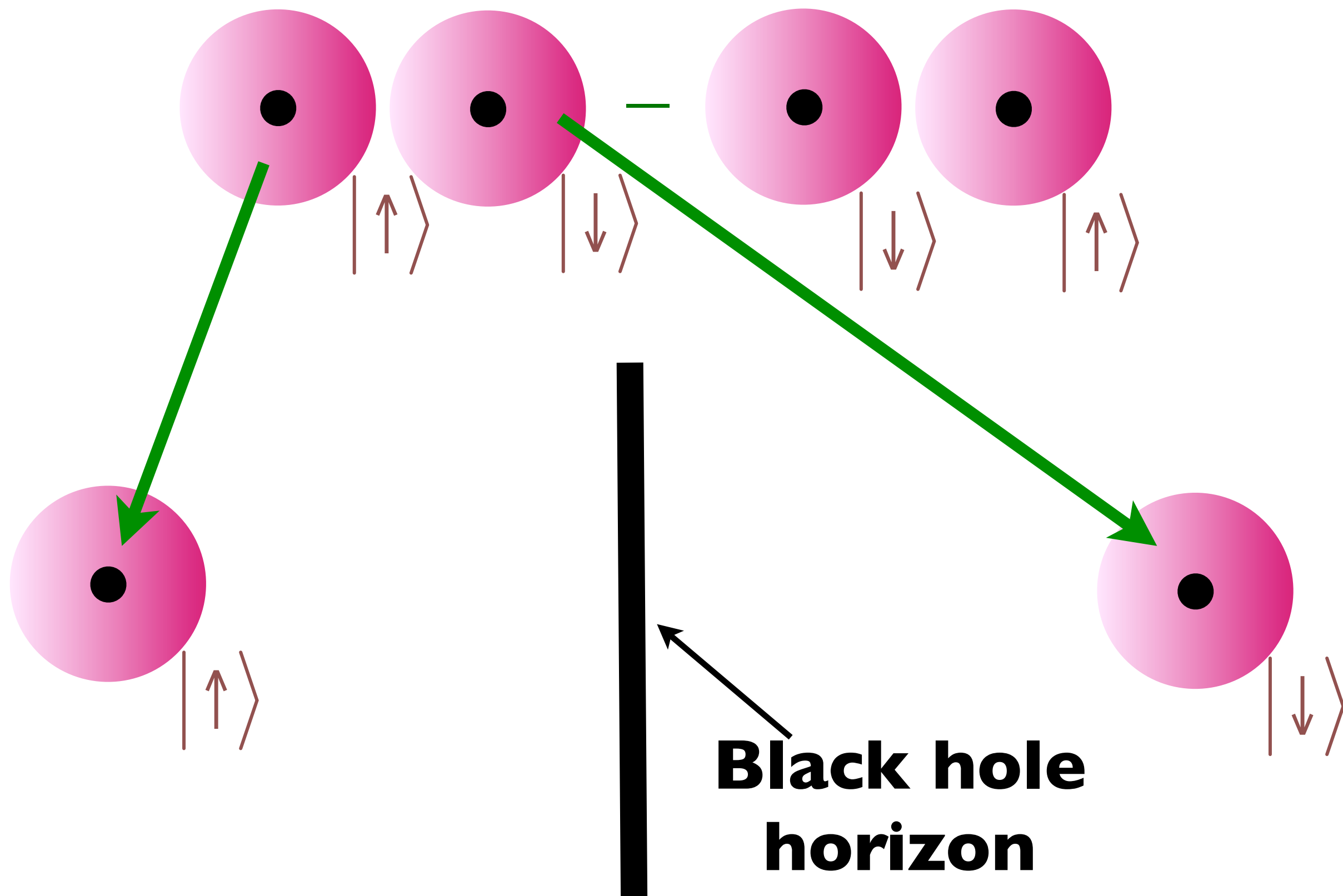
Quantum Entanglement across a black hole horizon



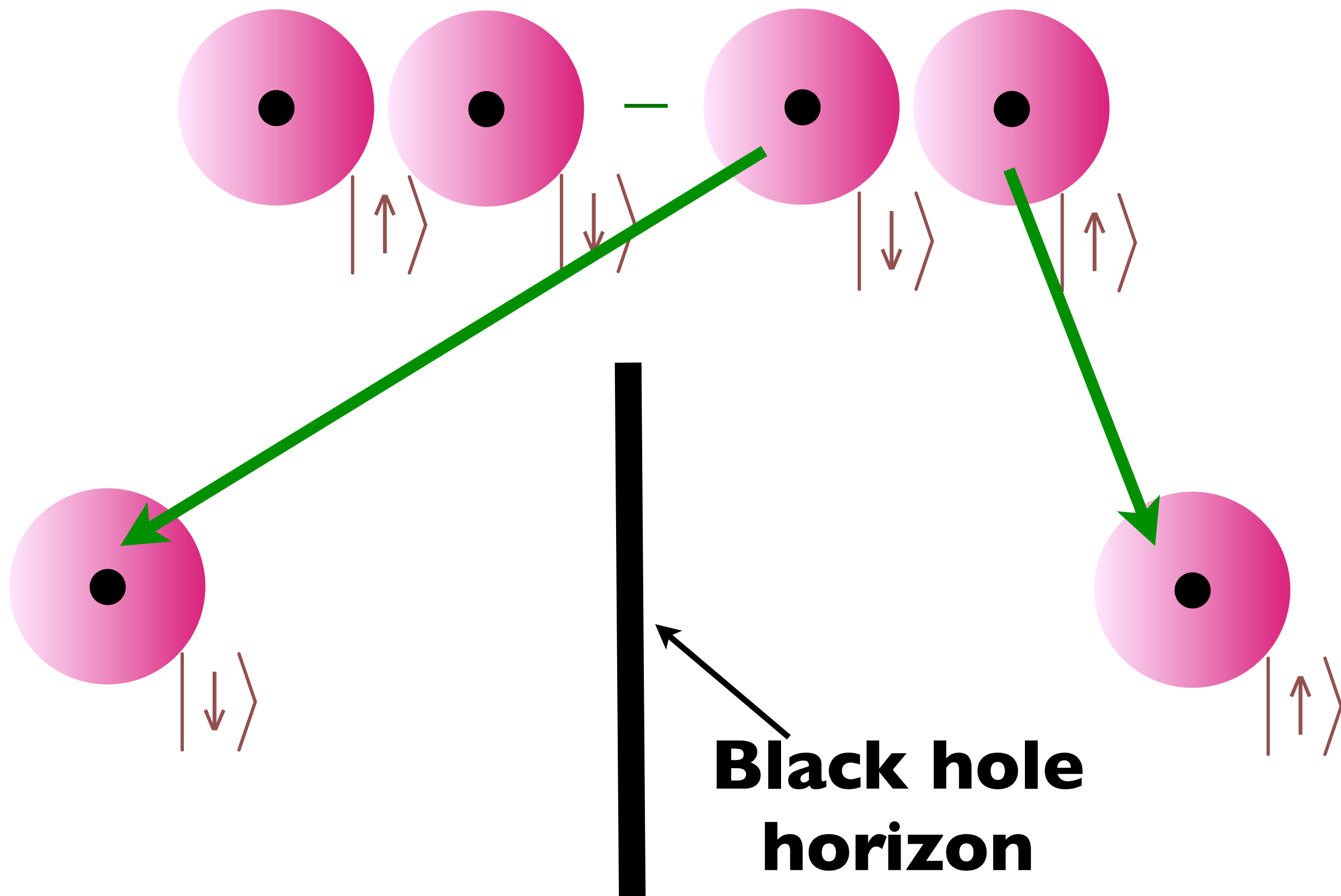
Quantum Entanglement across a black hole horizon



Quantum Entanglement across a black hole horizon

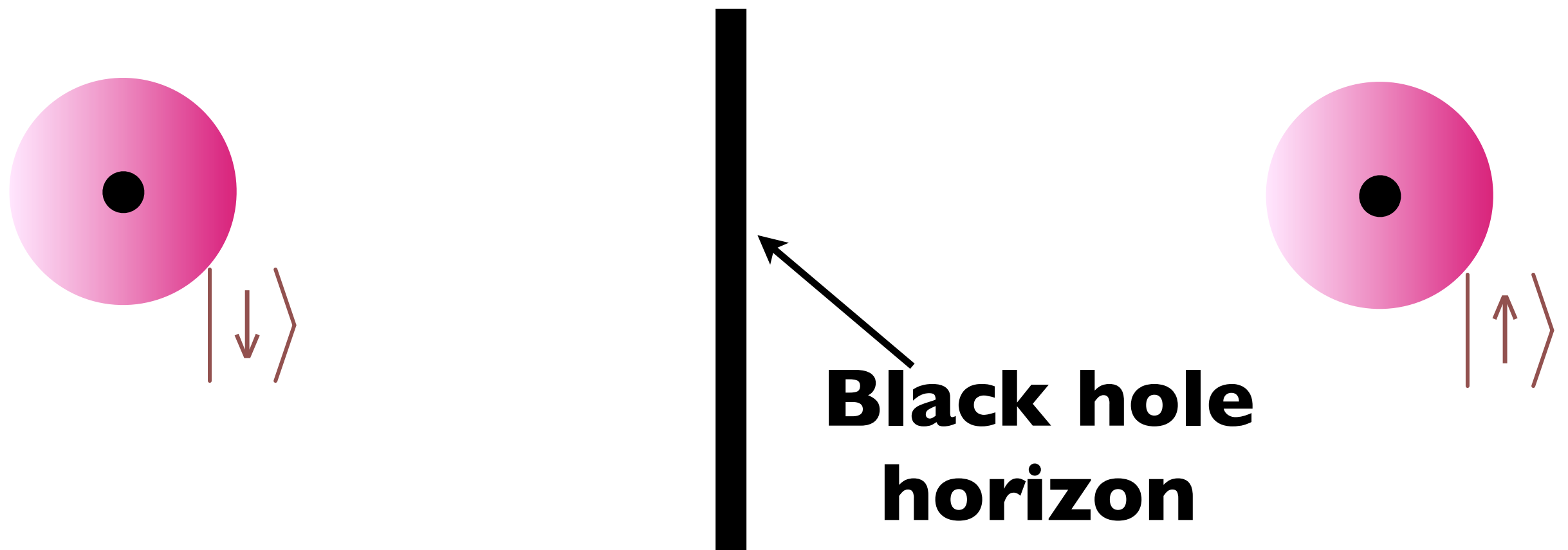


Quantum Entanglement across a black hole horizon



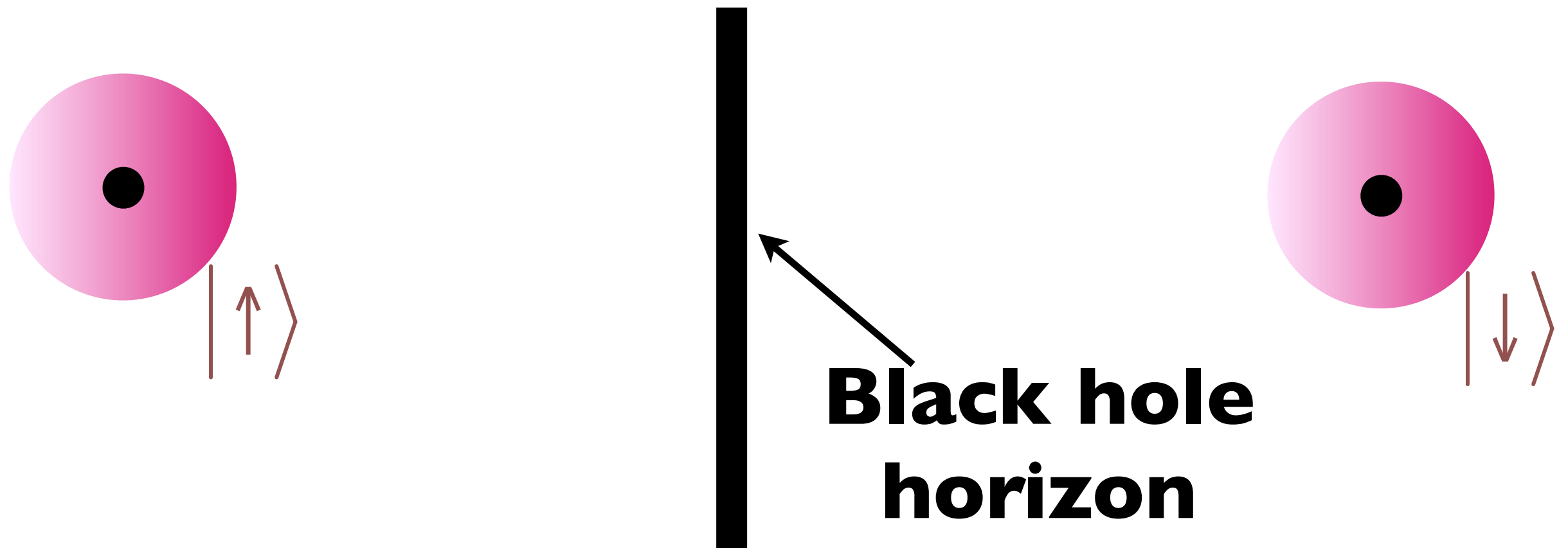
Quantum Entanglement across a black hole horizon

There is a non-local quantum entanglement between the inside and outside of a black hole



Quantum Entanglement across a black hole horizon

There is a non-local quantum entanglement between the inside and outside of a black hole



Quantum Entanglement across a black hole horizon

There is a non-local quantum entanglement between the inside and outside of a black hole

This entanglement leads to a black hole temperature (the Hawking temperature) and a black hole entropy (the Bekenstein entropy)

**Quantum
superposition and
entanglement**

Superconductivity

**Black Holes and
String Theory**

**Quantum
superposition and
entanglement**

```
graph TD; A[Quantum superposition and entanglement] <--> B[Black Holes and String Theory]; A --> C[Superconductivity];
```

The diagram consists of three rectangular boxes with rounded corners. The top box is light orange with a dark red border and contains the text 'Quantum superposition and entanglement'. The bottom box is light gray with a black border and contains the text 'Black Holes and String Theory'. The right box is light green with a dark green border and contains the text 'Superconductivity'. A vertical double-headed red arrow connects the top and bottom boxes. A single-headed red arrow points from the top box to the right box.

Superconductivity

**Black Holes and
String Theory**

**Quantum
superposition and
entanglement**

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graph TD; A[Quantum superposition and entanglement] <--> B[Black Holes and String Theory]; A --> C[Superconductivity]; B --> C;
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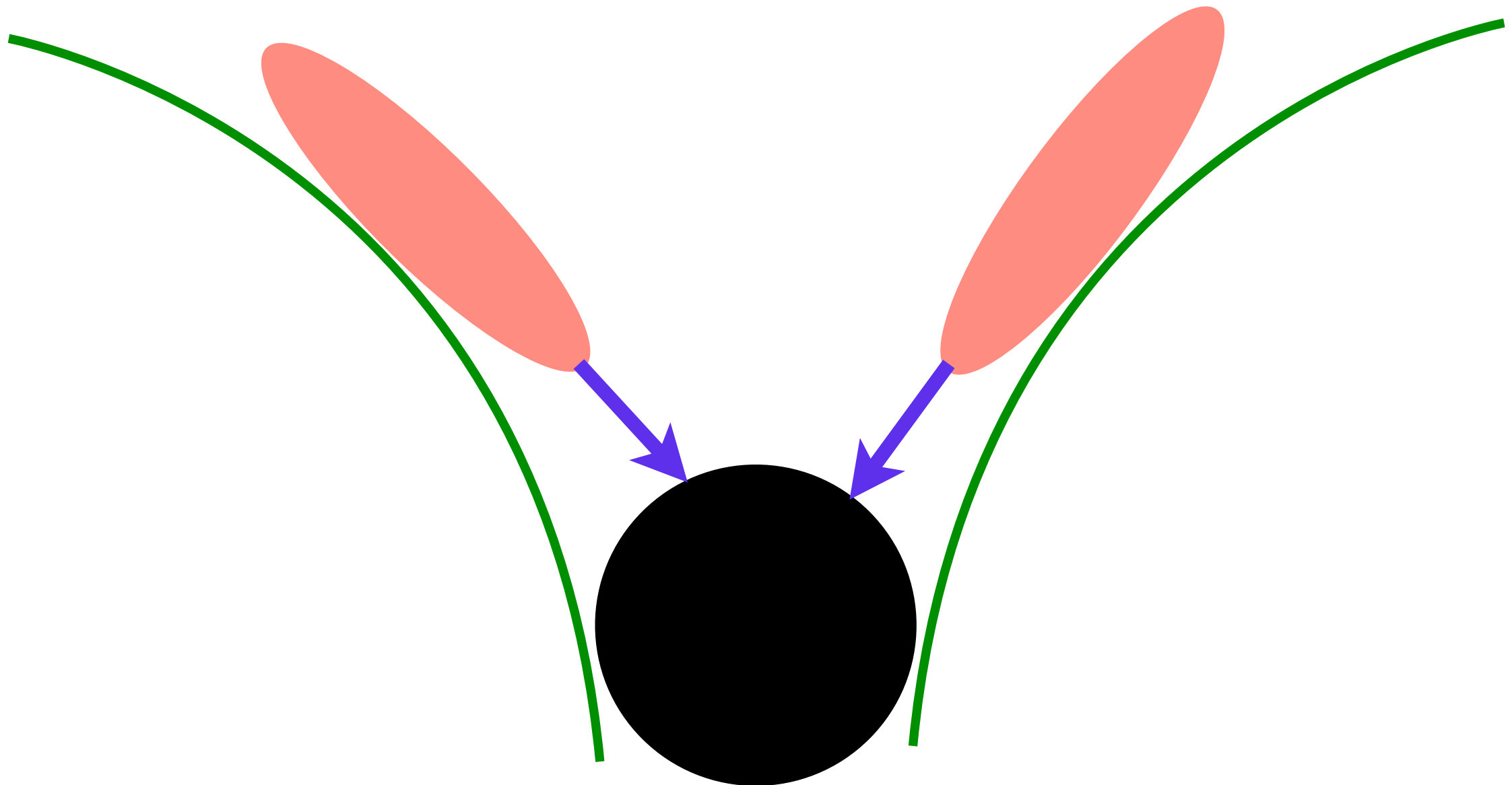
The diagram consists of three rectangular boxes with rounded corners. The top box is light red with a dark red border and contains the text 'Quantum superposition and entanglement'. The bottom box is light gray with a black border and contains the text 'Black Holes and String Theory'. The right box is light green with a dark green border and contains the text 'Superconductivity'. A vertical double-headed red arrow connects the top and bottom boxes. A red arrow points from the top box to the right box. A red arrow points from the bottom box to the right box.

Superconductivity

**Black Holes and
String Theory**

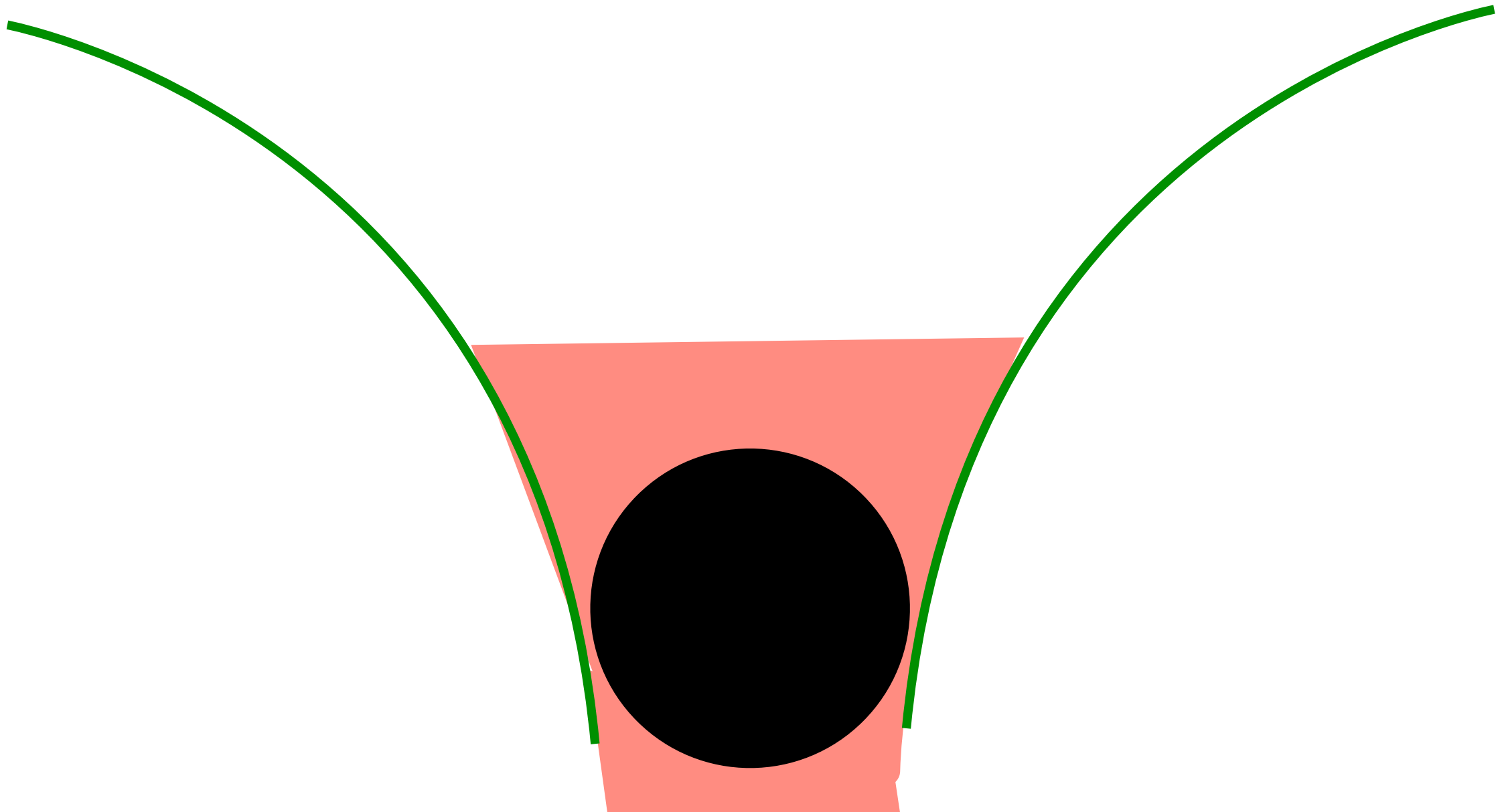
Superconducting Black Holes

Add electrical charge to a black hole in a curved spacetime: initially the charges fall past the horizon into the black hole



Superconducting Black Holes

However, eventually there is a balance between the gravitational forces pulling the charges into the black hole, and the repulsive electrical forces which push them out, and the resulting state is a superconductor !



More generally, string theory shows that there is a correspondence between the states of a black hole, and the quantum phases of matter (AdS/CFT correspondence)

More generally, string theory shows that there is a correspondence between the states of a black hole, and the quantum phases of matter (AdS/CFT correspondence)

This has helped enrich our understanding of the physics of black holes, and also of the possible quantum phases of electrons in crystals

In experiments on antiferromagnets and superconductors, we found long-range entanglement near quantum critical points and in the poorly understood “strange metal”

In experiments on antiferromagnets and superconductors, we found long-range entanglement near quantum critical points and in the poorly understood “strange metal”

Long-range quantum entanglement is also found in string theories of black holes

In experiments on antiferromagnets and superconductors, we found long-range entanglement near quantum critical points and in the poorly understood “strange metal”

Can string theory improve our understanding of quantum critical points, and of high temperature superconductors like YBCO ?