

Galileo Galilei Colloquium  
University of Pisa  
1/15/09

# What is relativity?

## From Galileo Galilei to Albert Einstein and beyond

Toshi Tajima  
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Acknowledgments for Advice and Collaboration: S. Bulanov, G. Mourou, T. Esirkepov, C. Barty, M. Fujiwara, M. Kando, K. Nakajima, A. Chao, Y. Fukuda, D. Habs, F. Krausz, M. Nozaki, T. Tauchi, K. Fujii, T. Takahashi, K. Homma, K. Ueda, K. Kawase, T. Omori, K. Yokoya, K. Kondo, F. Takasaki, A. Suzuki, Y. Kamiya, M. Hegelich, H. Gies, G. Dunne, T. Tanaka, V. Serbo, J. Rafelski, F. Pegoraro, M. Teshima, H. Sato, Y. Takahashi, G. Korn, P. Chen

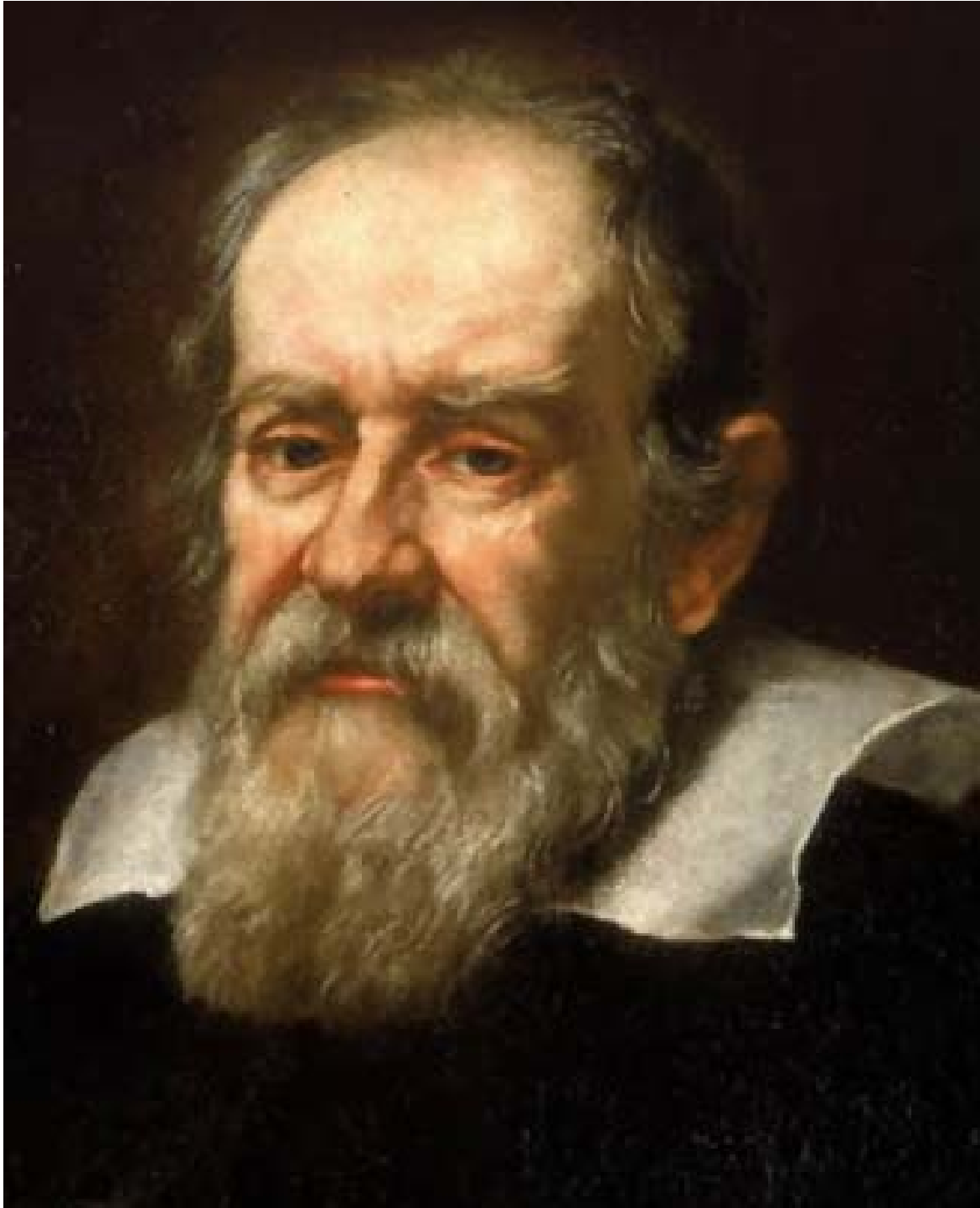
# What is relativity?

## from Galileo Galilei to Albert Einstein and beyond

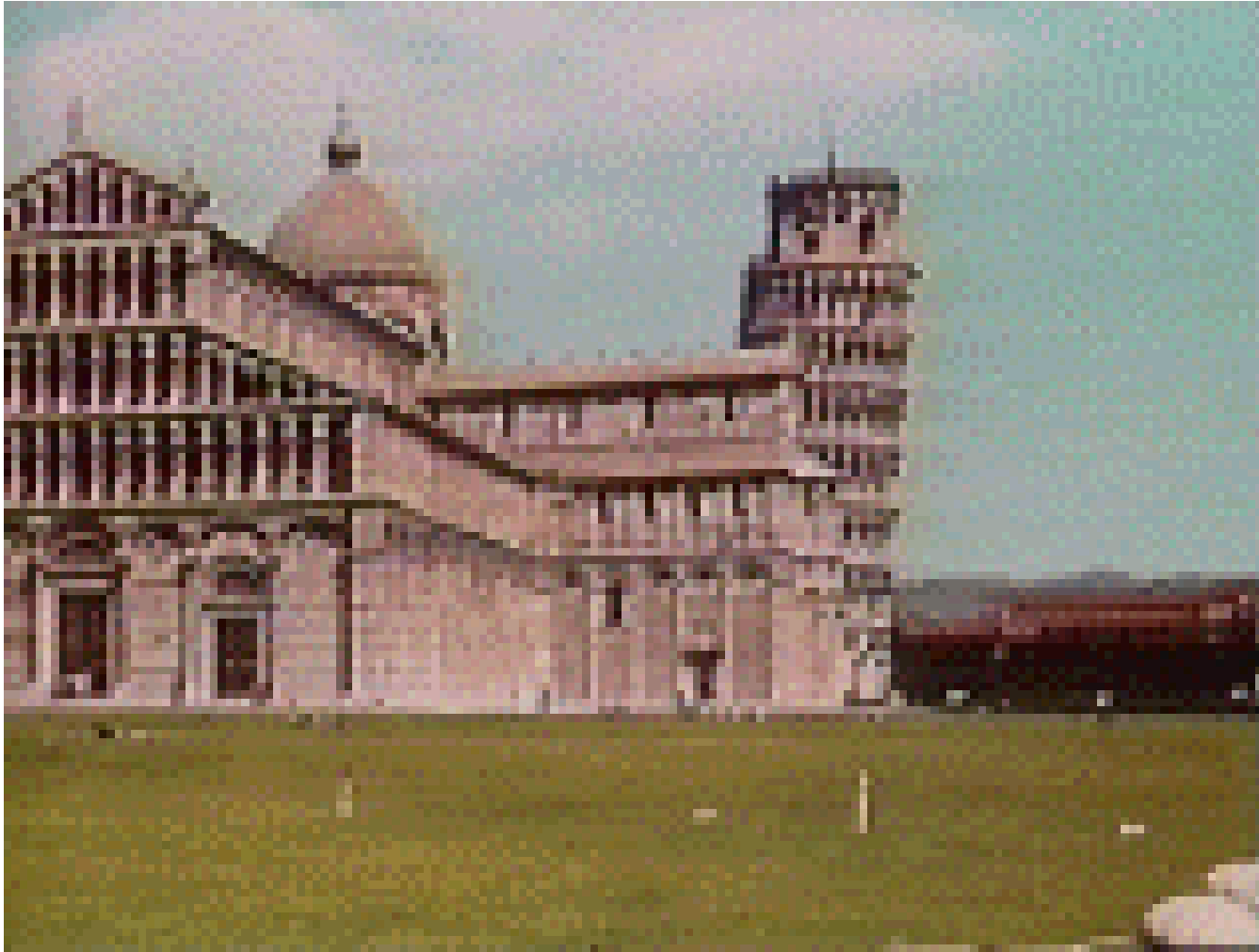
*Toshi Tajima*

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Galileo Galilei showed that the Earth moves relative to the Sun. Einstein showed that everything moves relative to light. In the current 'relativity' light takes the absolute place in spacetime. No matter how fast stars move, they are only relative to light. Light always, it is said, moves at the speed of light that is absolute constant by definition, according to Einstein. This view revolutionized the notion we believed for several hundred years since Galilei. Into the new Century, new challenges may be waiting us. We see the minute distribution of the 'cosmic microwave background' light wave remnant from the Big Bang radiation, which seems to show a definite preference to a particular frame rather than no preference to any inertial frame. Cosmos may be even accelerating as spacetime goes on. Now, thanks to the advent of intense lasers, we begin to feel that vacuum, the nothingness and the absolute frame from which light is declared to be absolute, might be a just a texture and a 'material' that exhibits some property as if it is matter.... We would like to explore the current and future prospect of what intense lasers can bring in exploring what vacuum is and what relativity means. For example, is the speed of light constant? Does it slow down if and when light is very very intense? What is vacuum that supports absolute light? Is Einstein's relativity an absolute truth? What is the connection between special theory of relativity and general theory of relativity? In this Century, like in the past Century, can we see some peek into a newer vision or revision of the orthodoxy view of relativity that has been established since Galilei and over Einstein?



Galileo Galilei  
(1564-1642)



The most famous site for experimental science,  
the *birth place of (empirical) physics* (as distinct from  
Aristotelean metaphysics): **Pisa**

(This morning I paid a tribute to the revered Pisa tower, which was glistening in the morgenshein with its intimidating tilt, where I could almost hear the whirling clamor of people watching Galilei dropping balls 400 years ago .)

# Challenges

Frontier science driven by advanced **accelerator**

Table-top X-ray FEL

1000 times higher energy

3rd-generation Synchrotron Light Source

PeV=10<sup>15</sup> eV

$\alpha = \frac{h^2}{eC}$  PeV Accelerator

“New paradigm”

Leptogenesis

SUSY breaking

Extra dimension

Dark matter

Supersymmetry

TeV=10<sup>12</sup> eV

“Standard model”

Higgs

Quarks

Leptons

100 GV/m

Plasma Acceleration Technology

10/39

1 fs = 10<sup>-15</sup> s

1000 times shorter time resolution

Rhodopsin ~200 fs

Photosynthetic reaction in leaves ~100 fs

Femto-sec Beam Technology

Photo-switching of metal-to-insulator

1 ps = 10<sup>-12</sup> s

13/39

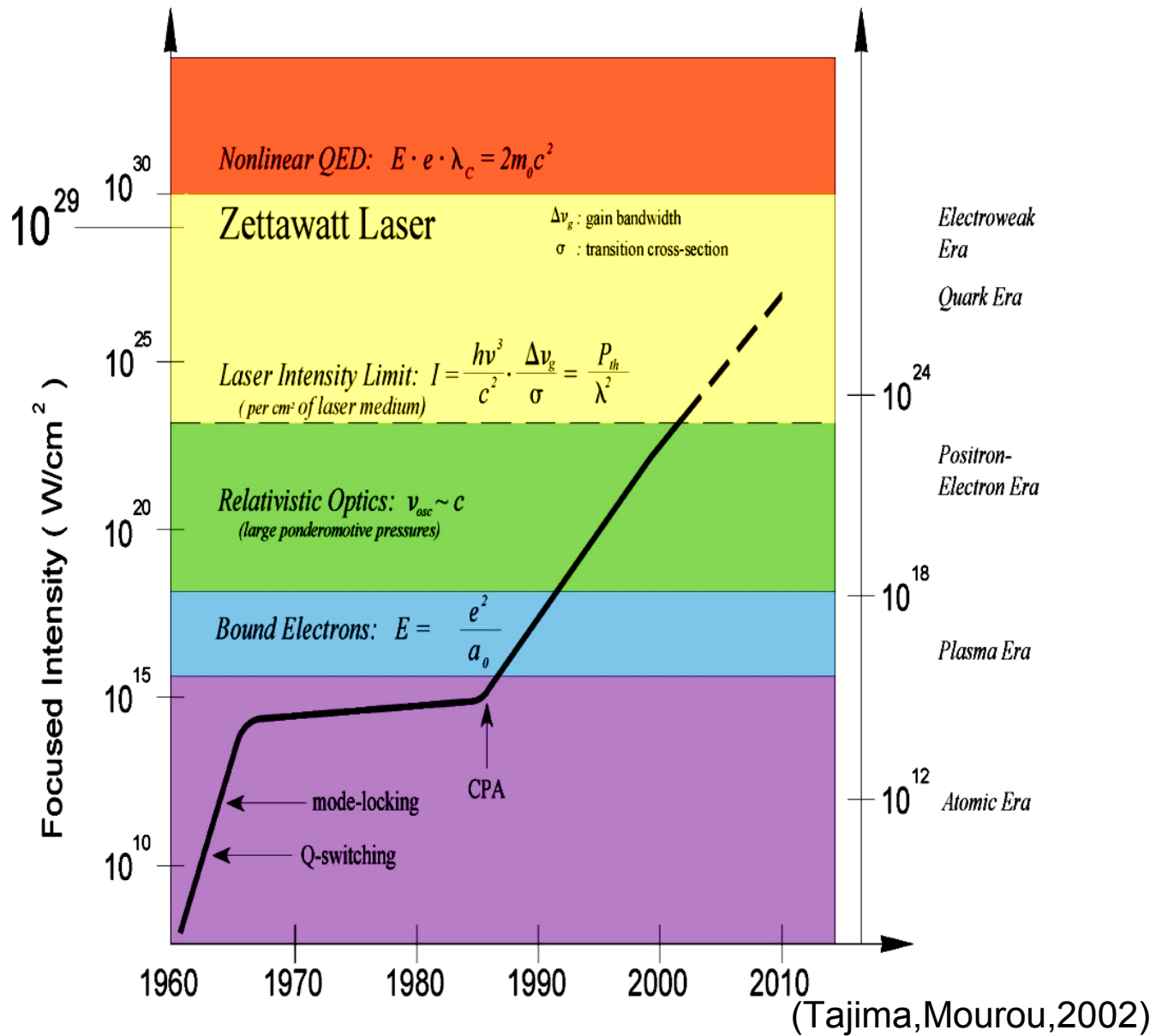
(Suzuki,KEK,2007)

compact, ultrastrong *a*

atto-, zeptosecond

*Can we meet the challenge?  
How can we meet it ?*

# Lasers



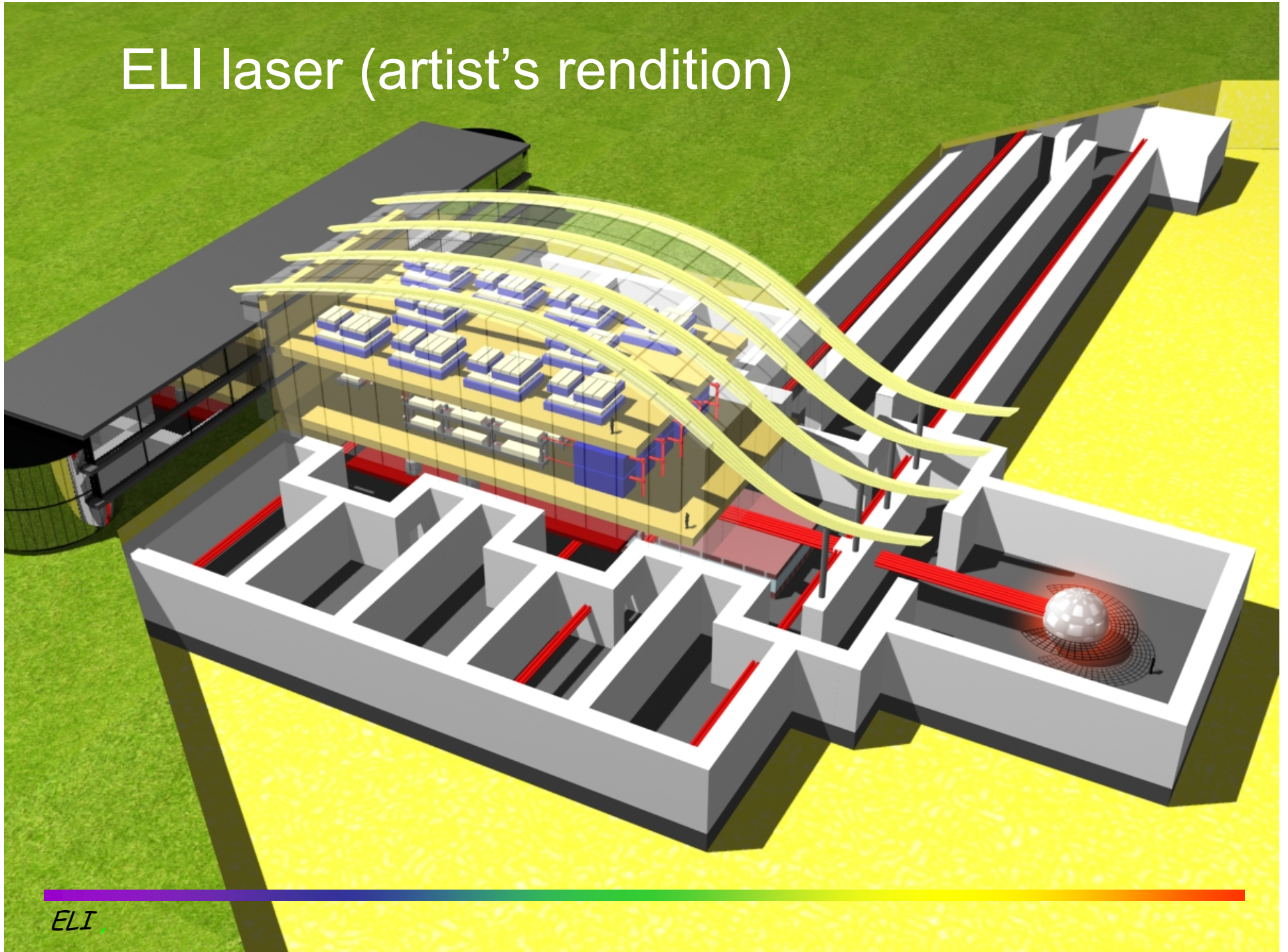
# High Peak Power Laser

- 100TW/10Hz system is on a commercial base.
- 1PW with a low rep. rate system is also on a commercial base.
- 1PW/10Hz system could be possible with improving 100TW/10Hz system.

A larger aperture ceramic YAG could be used for pumping the final Ti:S amplifier.

- A large aperture deformable can be used for tight focusing.
  - $10^{22}$  W/cm<sup>2</sup> has been already achieved.
- now ELI ----- and other systems

# ELI laser (artist's rendition)

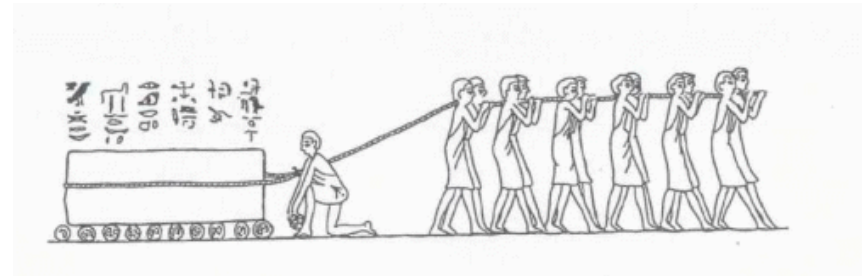




# What is *collective force* ?

---

How can a Pyramid have been built?



## Individual particle dynamics vs. Coherent movement

**Collective acceleration (Veksler,1956; Tajima & Dawson,1979)**

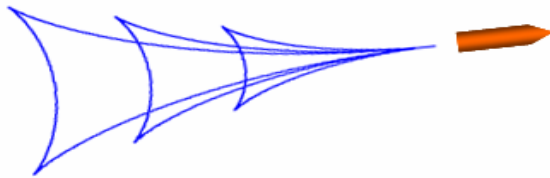
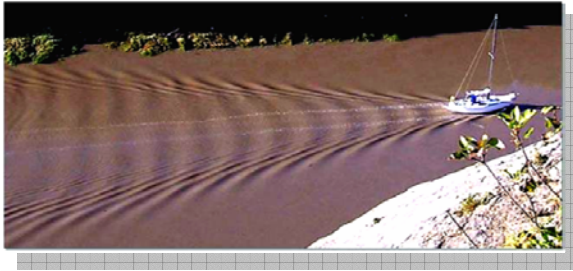
Collective radiation ( $N^2$  radiation)

Collective ionization ( $N^2$  ionization)

Collective deceleration (Tajima & Chao,2007; Kando et al,2008)

# Wake

## Kelvin's Ship Wake



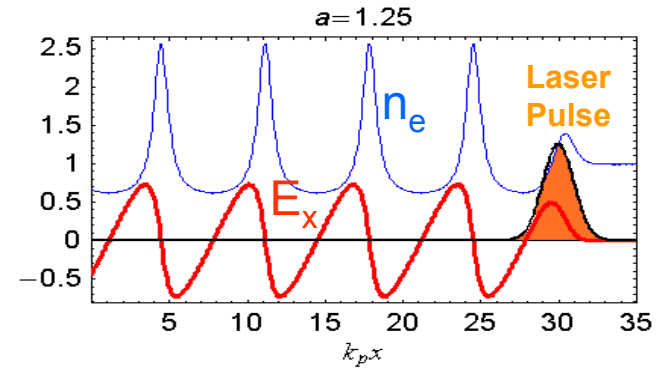
$$\omega = \sqrt{kg}$$

$$x = X_1 \cos \theta \left( 1 - \frac{1}{2} \cos^2 \theta \right)$$

$$y = X_1 \cos^2 \theta \sin \theta$$

$$-\pi/2 < \theta < \pi/2$$

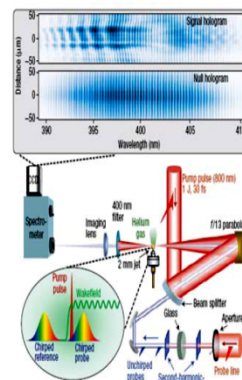
## Laser Plasma Wake



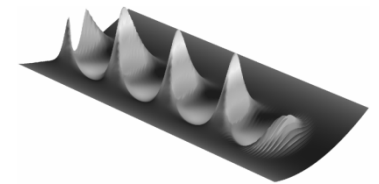
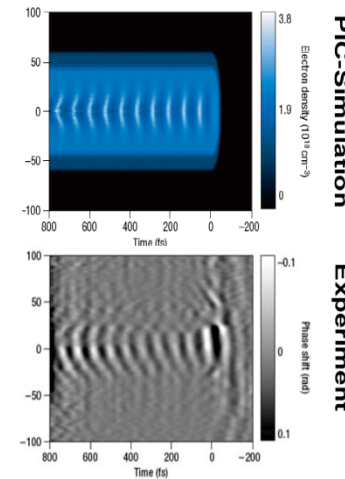
$$\lambda_p = 2\pi / k_p \quad k_p v_{ph} = \omega_{pe}$$

$$\omega_{pe} = \left( 4\pi n e^2 / m_e \right)^{1/2}$$

## Snapshots of Laser Wake Waves

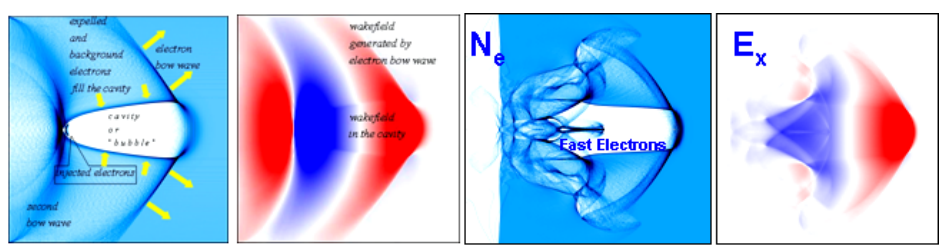
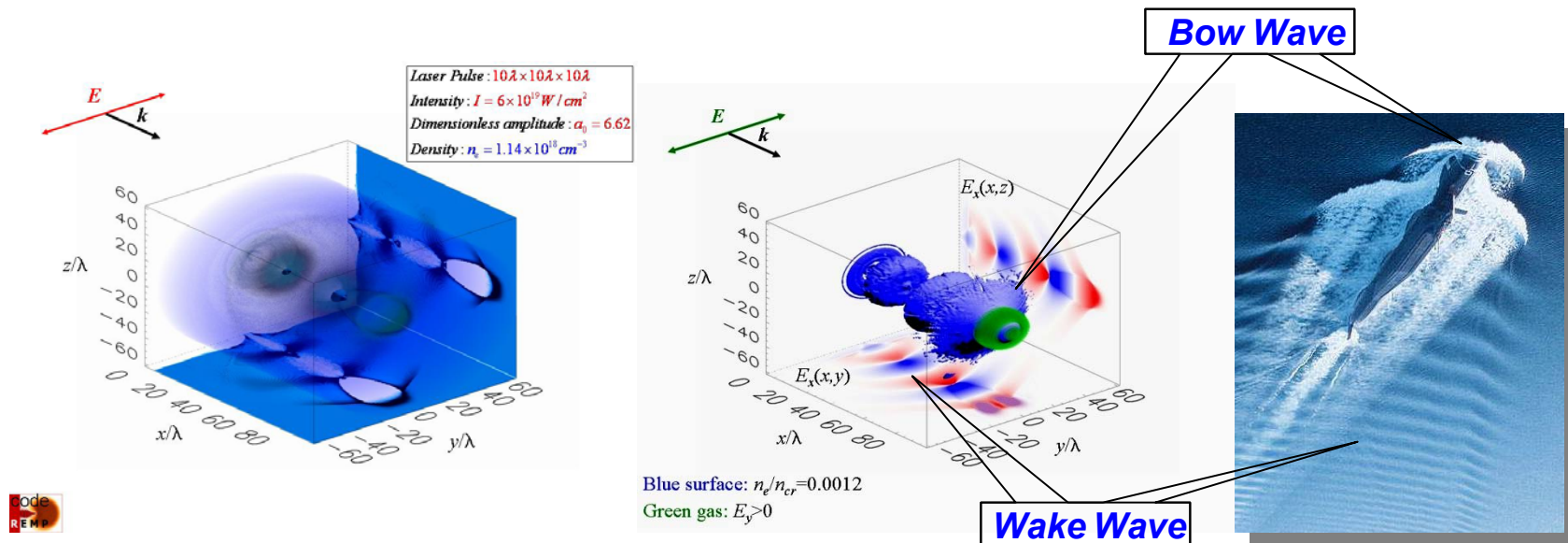


Experiment setup



Paraboloidal Form of the Wake

# Laser-driven Bow and Wake



$$r = r_c \cos(\omega_{pe}(t - x/v_{ph}))$$

Depletion length

$$l_{depl} = l_{las} \frac{n_{cr}}{n} a_0$$



M87

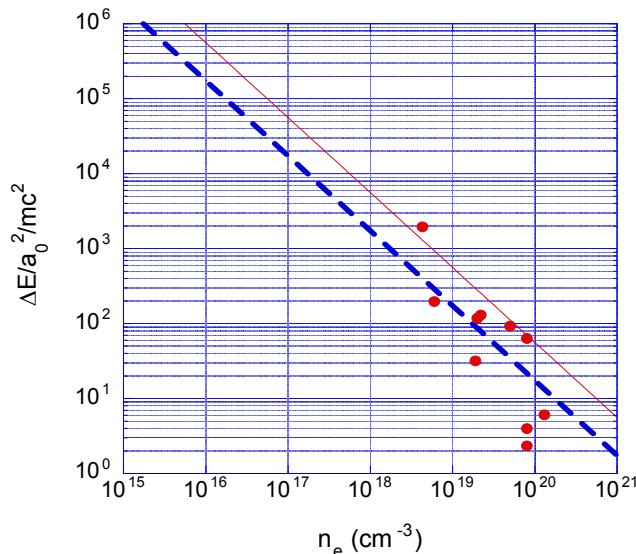
(Bulanov, Esirkepov)

# Meeting Suzuki's Challenge:

## Laser acceleration toward ultrahigh energies

$$\Delta E \approx 2m_0c^2 a_0^2 \gamma_{ph}^2 = 2m_0c^2 a_0^2 \left( \frac{n_{cr}}{n_e} \right), \quad (\text{when 1D theory applies})$$

$$L_d = \frac{2}{\pi} \lambda_p a_0^2 \left( \frac{n_{cr}}{n_e} \right), \quad L_p = \frac{1}{3\pi} \lambda_p a_0 \left( \frac{n_{cr}}{n_e} \right),$$



		case I	case II	case III
$a_0$		10	3.2	1
energy gain	GeV	1000	1000	1000
plasma density	cm <sup>-3</sup>	5.7x10 <sup>16</sup>	5.7x10 <sup>15</sup>	5.7x10 <sup>14</sup>
acceleration length	m	2.9	29	290
spot radius	μm	32	100	320
peak power	PW	2.2	2.2	2.2
pulse duration	ps	0.23	0.74	2.3
laser pulse energy	kJ	0.5	1.6	5

Even 1PeV electrons (and gammas) are possible, albeit with lesser amount  
 → exploration of new physics such as the reach of relativity and beyond?  
 (laser energy of 50kJ, plasma density of 10<sup>16</sup>/cc)

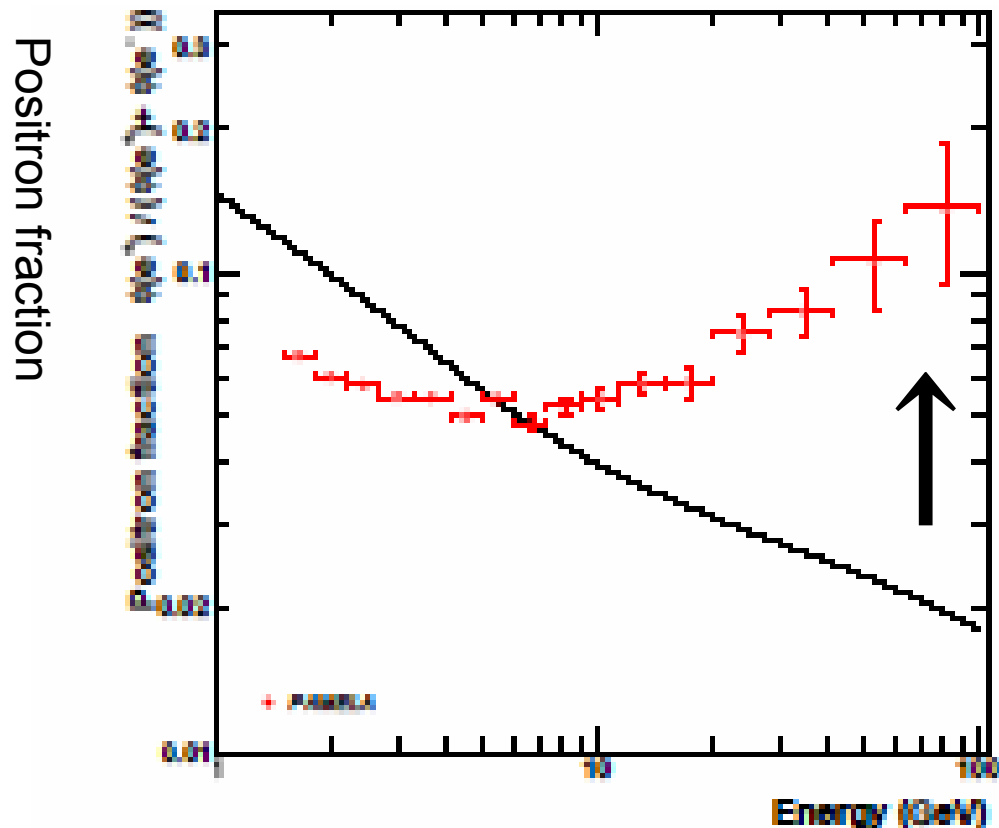
# Quantum Gravity:

“Why is the sky blue?”  
(for high energy gamma rays)

- Amelino-Camelia et al., Nature (1998)  
high energy  $\gamma$  has dispersion:  
$$\omega = kc + (\text{extra mass-like term?})$$
- May be regarded as scattering off quantum fluctuations of vacuum (gravitational origin).
- Other proposals, such as H. Sato (1972); Coleman-Glashow(1997), ....  
breakdown of Lorentz invariance?

Non-luminosity paradigm possible (though in very high energies)?

# Observation of positron excess from high energy gamma rays (PAMELA observation)



O. Adriani, et al. (2008)  
(Pamela collaboration):  
“Observation of an anomalous  
positron abundance in the  
cosmic radiation”

→ Sky seems **bluer** than  
we expected in TeV range.

FIG. 4: PAMELA positron fraction with theoretical models. The PAMELA positron fraction compared with theoretical model. The solid line shows a calculation by Moskalenko & Strong[39] for pure secondary production of positrons during the propagation of cosmic-rays in the galaxy. One standard deviation error bars are shown. If not visible, they lie inside the data points.

# One way Preparing for the Future following Galilei's adventure

- **Laser** acceleration (and intense laser irradiation in 'vacuum'):  
revolutionary step, 3-4 orders of magnitude leap in size and accuracy
- Collider paradigm (smaller and cheaper collider?)  
quantum mechanics  $\Delta E \Delta t \sim \hbar \rightarrow \mathcal{L} \propto E^2$
- Non-collider approaches  
relativity: the higher the energy, the pronounced the effect  
horizon  $\sim 1/a$  (extradimensions?)  
 $a = g$  ?  
Unruh-Hawking radiation?  
special theory (*no preferred frame?*) vs Big Bang  
coherence and macroscopic field effects---temporal  
domain  
extreme field physics (merger of research on special and general  
theories of relativity)  
property of vacuum ( QED, QCD(axion), dark energy,...)

# From an ELI Workshop Talk (Gies, 2008)

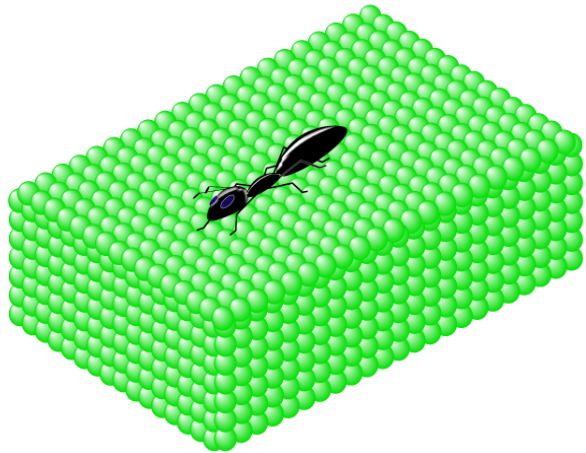
## Conclusions

### ▷ Why strong-field physics ... ?

- "...exploring some issues of fundamental physics that have eluded man's probing so far" (TAJIMA '01)
- QFT: high energy (momentum) vs. high amplitude
- "Fundamental-Physics" discovery potential:
  - ALPs: hypothetical NG bosons (axion, majoron, familon, etc.)
  - MCPs: minicharged particles
  - paraphotons
  - sub-millimeter forces
  - ...
- high physics/costs ratio



# What is vacuum? What is relativity?

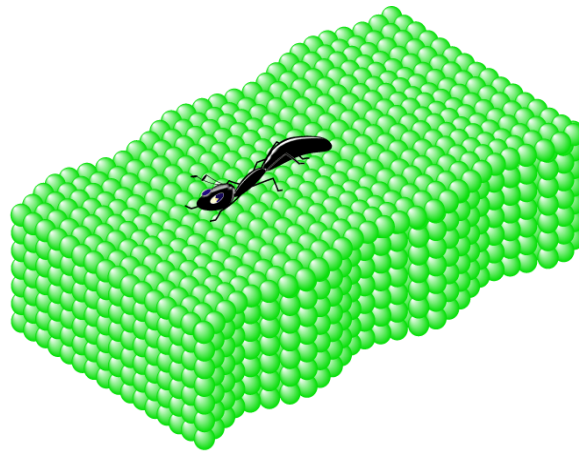


An observer in a crystal as vacuum



「(真)空」  
'(true) vacuum'

「Wiltanschauung of Buddhist」



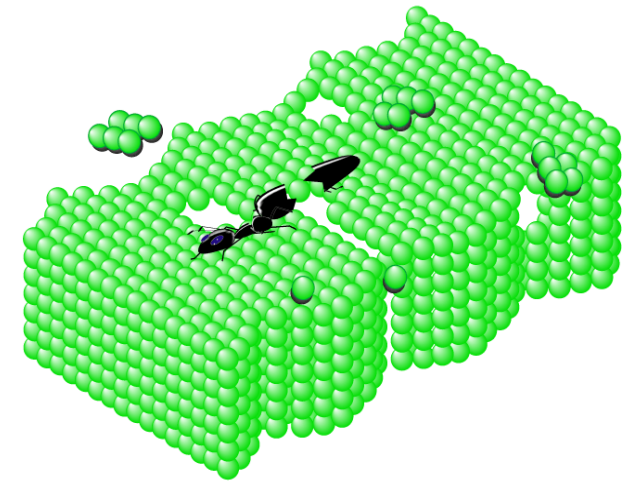
Phonon is an excitation of vacuum



Photon is a distortion of vacuum

「色即是空」

“color (phenomena)” = vacuum’



Strong field breaks vacuum



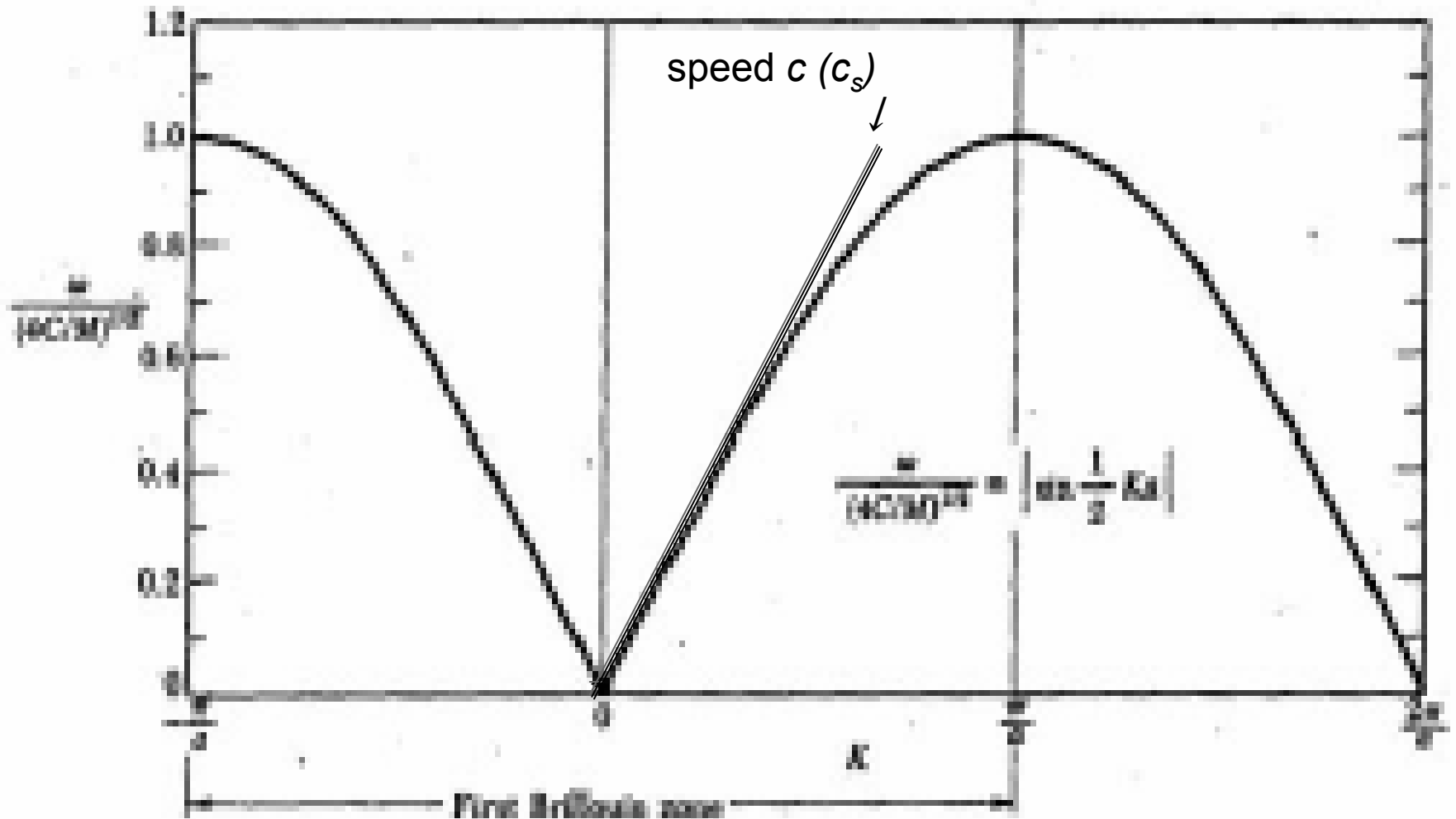
e+e- pair production  
out of vacuum

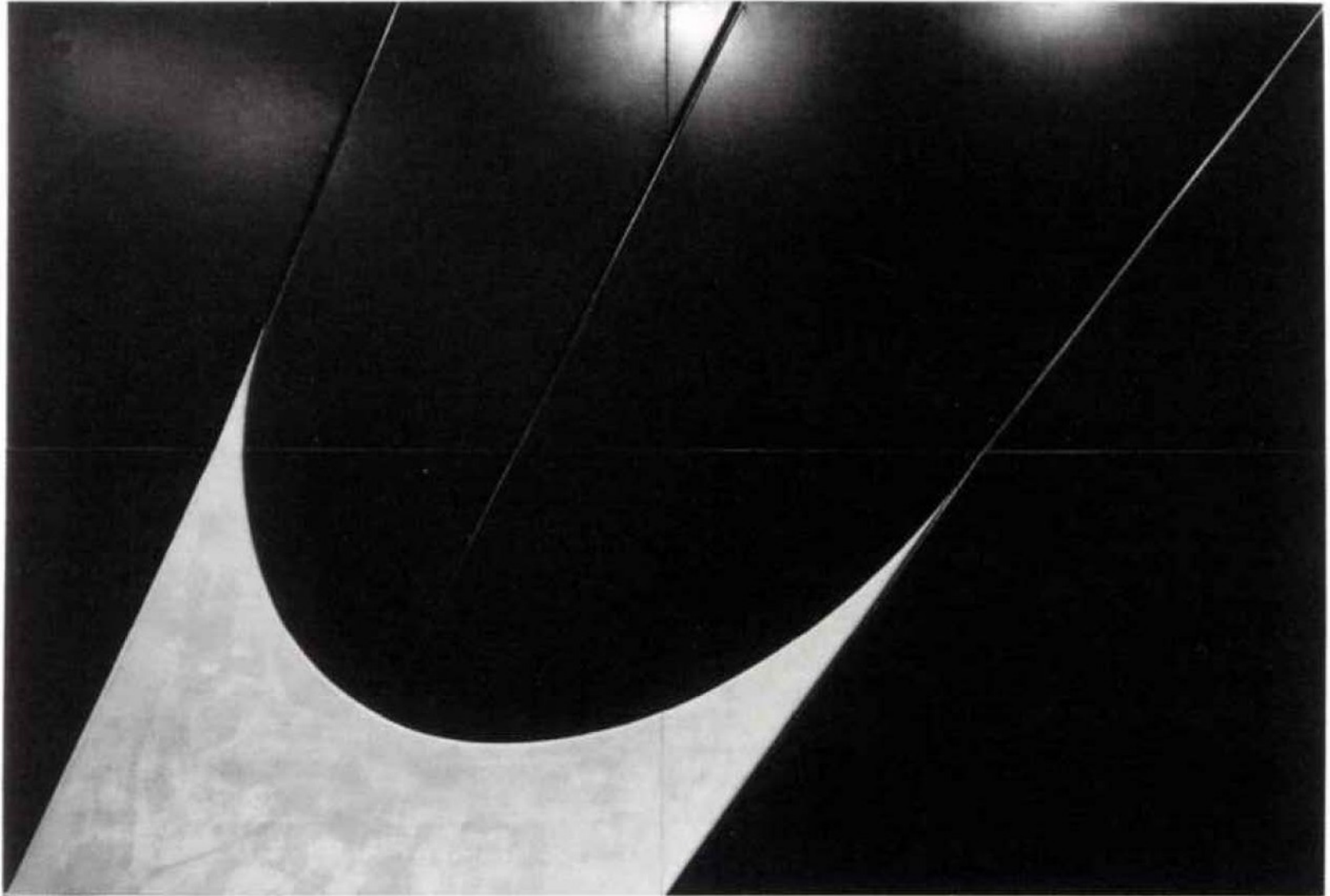
「空即是色」

‘vacuum = “color (matter)” ’

# Waves slower than c

Dispersion relation of  $\omega = kc$  deviates from a line to yield less than  $c$  slope at high momentum region (called the edge of the Brillouin zone in a crystal). At the edge of the Brillouin zone, the wavelength  $\sim$  atomic distance.





98 高橋 秀 《宇宙起源》 1988年  
TAKAHASHI, Shu *Principio dell'Universo*

(original colors are red and black)

Lucio Fontana (1961)  
*Space Concept M364*



# Check of Special and General Relativity

Check of Equivalence Principle  
(General Relativity)  
by neutron interferometry →  
under small mechanical  $a$

How far have we checked,  
can we check how far?

## Observation of Gravitationally Induced Quantum Interference\*

R. Colella and A. W. Overhauser

Department of Physics, Purdue University, West Lafayette, Indiana 47907

and

S. A. Werner

Scientific Research Staff, Ford Motor Company, Dearborn, Michigan 48121

(Received 14 April 1975)

We have used a neutron interferometer to observe the quantum-mechanical phase shift of neutrons caused by their interaction with Earth's gravitational field.

In most phenomena of interest in terrestrial physics, gravity and quantum mechanics do not *simultaneously* play an important role. Such an experiment, for which the outcome necessarily depends upon both the gravitational constant and Planck's constant, has recently been proposed by two of us.<sup>1</sup>

A neutron beam is split into two beams by an interferometer of the type first developed by Bonse and Hart<sup>2</sup> for x rays. The relative phase of the two beams where they recombine and interfere, at point  $D$  of Fig. 1, is varied by rotating the interferometer about the line  $AB$  of the incident beam. The dependence of the relative phase  $\beta$  on the rotation angle  $\varphi$  is

$$\beta = q_{\text{grav}} \sin\varphi, \quad (1)$$

where

$$q_{\text{grav}} = 4\pi\lambda gh^{-2}M^2 d(d+a\cos\theta)\tan\theta. \quad (2)$$

The neutron wavelength is  $\lambda = 1.445 \text{ \AA}$ ,  $g$  is the

acceleration of gravity,  $h$  is Planck's constant,  $M$  is the neutron mass, and  $\theta$  is the Bragg angle,  $22.1^\circ$ . The dimensions  $a = 0.2 \text{ cm}$  and  $d = 3.5 \text{ cm}$  are shown in Fig. 1.  $q_{\text{grav}}/\pi = (\Delta N)_{180^\circ}$ , the number of fringes which will occur during a  $180^\circ$  rotation. Except for the term  $a\cos\theta$ , which accounts for the thickness of the interferometer slabs, Eq. (2) is equivalent to Eq. (8) of Ref. 1. For our experiment  $(\Delta N)_{180^\circ} \approx 19$  fringes.

The interferometer was cut from a dislocation-free silicon crystal approximately 2 in. in diameter and 3 in. long. Our particular design was chosen so that the experiment could also be carried out with  $0.71\text{-\AA}$  x rays. This is extremely important because the bending of the interferometer under its own weight varies with  $\varphi$  and introduces a contribution  $q_{\text{bend}}$  to  $\beta$ :

$$\beta = (q_{\text{grav}} + q_{\text{bend}}) \sin\varphi. \quad (3)$$

The major problem was finding<sup>3</sup> a method for mounting the crystal so that the relative phase  $\beta$  is constant across the transverse dimensions ( $3 \text{ mm} \times 6 \text{ mm}$ ) of the interfering beams at  $D$ . The best results were obtained with the crystal freely resting on two felt strips ( $3 \text{ mm}$  wide and perpendicular to the axis of the cylindrical crystal). These strips were located  $15 \text{ mm}$  from either end of a V block equal in length to the crystal. This arrangement limited rotations to  $-30^\circ < \varphi < 30^\circ$ .

Three small, high-pressure  $\text{He}^3$  detectors were used to monitor one noninterfering beam ( $C_1$ ) and the two interfering beams ( $C_2$  and  $C_3$ ) as shown in Fig. 1. These detectors, the interferometer, and an entrance slit were rigidly mounted in a metal box which could be rotated about the incident beam. This entire assembly was placed inside an auxiliary neutron shield.

The counting rates at  $C_2$  and  $C_3$  are expected to

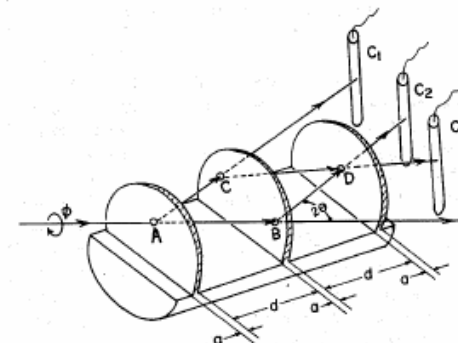


FIG. 1. Schematic diagram of the neutron interferometer and  $^3\text{He}$  detectors used in this experiment.

# PHYSICAL REVIEW

## LETTERS

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NUMBER 15

### Results of a New Test of Local Lorentz Invariance: A Search for Mass Anisotropy in $^{21}\text{Ne}$

T. E. Chupp, R. J. Hoare, R. A. Loveman, E. R. Oteiza, J. M. Richardson, and M. E. Wagshul  
*The Physics Laboratories, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138*

A. K. Thompson

*Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge Massachusetts 02139*

(Received 23 March 1989; revised manuscript received 10 July 1989)

We test Lorentz invariance by searching for a time-dependent quadrupole splitting of Zeeman levels in  $^{21}\text{Ne}$ . A component at twice the Earth's sidereal frequency would suggest a preferred direction which affects the local physics of the nucleus. The technique employs polarized  $^{21}\text{Ne}$  and  $^3\text{He}$  gases produced by spin exchange with laser optically pumped Rb. Both species are contained in the same glass cell;  $^3\text{He}$  provides magnetometry and a monitor of systematic effects. Our data produce an upper limit ( $1\sigma$  confidence level) of  $2 \times 10^{-21}$  eV ( $0.45 \times 10^{-6}$  Hz) on the Lorentz-invariance-violating contribution to the binding energy. This result is comparable to that of the most precise previous experiment.

PACS numbers: 04.80.+z, 07.58.+g, 32.60.+i

Local Lorentz invariance (LLI) along with the postulates of local position invariance and the weak equivalence principle form the Einstein equivalence principle, the basis of all single-metric gravitational theories.<sup>1,2</sup> LLI requires that the local, nongravitational physics of a bound system of particles be independent of its velocity and orientation relative to any preferred frame, for example, the rest frame of the Universe.<sup>3</sup> If LLI were violated and such a frame existed, the energy levels of a bound system such as a nucleus could be shifted in a way that correlates the motion of the bound particles in each state with the preferred direction. Such a shift would lead to an orientation-dependent binding energy, i.e., an anisotropy of inertial mass. The lowest-order, nonvanishing effect of this sort would lead to a quadrupole splitting of the nuclear Zeeman levels since a dipole coupling of the preferred direction to the position or velocity of the particles in the bound system would have vanishing expectation value. (We note, however, that there may exist the coupling of the dipole moment of the nucleus to a cosmic field such as that of relic neutrinos or that postulated to be produced by axions.<sup>4</sup>) The first tests of this sort, known as Hughes-Drever experiments, were performed by Hughes, Robinson, and Beltran-Lopez<sup>5</sup> and by Drever,<sup>6</sup> with modern, much more precise measurements by Prestage *et al.*<sup>7</sup> and by Lamoreaux *et al.*<sup>8</sup> The

most precise previous measurement<sup>8</sup> set a  $2\sigma$  upper limit of  $0.5 \times 10^{-6}$  Hz on any such LLI-violating quadrupole splitting, which is  $10^{-28}$  of the binding energy per nucleon. Our work provides a comparable limit.

We have chosen  $^{21}\text{Ne}$  with nuclear spin  $I_{21} = \frac{1}{2}$  to perform such a test. A mixture of  $^{21}\text{Ne}$  and  $^3\text{He}$  (nuclear spin  $I_3 = \frac{1}{2}$ ) can be simultaneously polarized by spin exchange with laser optically pumped Rb vapor.<sup>9-11</sup> The energy differences among the Zeeman levels of each species are measured by observing the free precession of the spins. The  $^{21}\text{Ne}$  would be sensitive to the preferred direction, leading to a shift of the  $m = \pm \frac{1}{2}$  levels different from that of the  $m = \pm \frac{1}{2}$  levels. The  $^3\text{He}$  is not sensitive to the quadrupole splitting and has the multiple role of a magnetometer and a monitor of systematic effects.

The apparatus is shown in Fig. 1. The laser system is a krypton-ion laser pumping LD-700 dye in a standing-wave, multimode dye laser. A 500-mW diode-laser array has also been used; however, the results presented here are based on runs with the dye-laser system. The laser light optically pumps the Rb-D1 resonance line which is pressure broadened so that the absorption linewidth is about 25 GHz. The Rb is contained in a nearly spherical alumino-silicate glass cell with about 400 Torr (at 300 K) each of  $^{21}\text{Ne}$  and  $^3\text{He}$  and 60 Torr of  $\text{N}_2$  to

More Check of  
Equivalence Principle  
(General Relativity)  
using an atom

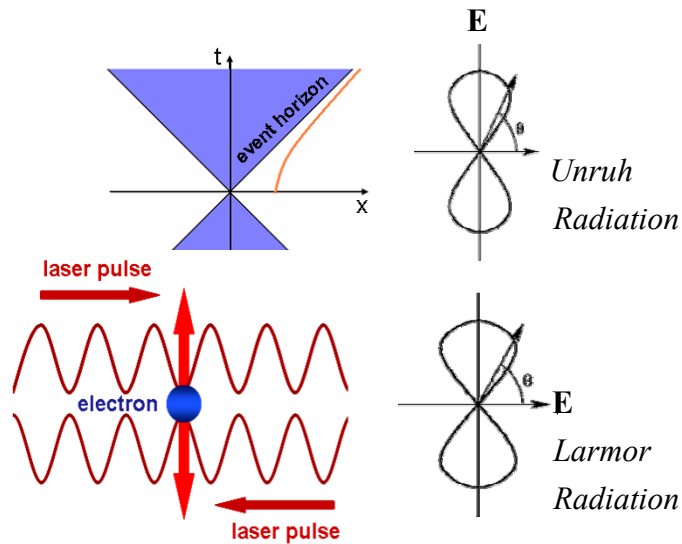
# Fundamental Physics following (and beyond) Einstein

## Laser x Accelerator, Laser x Laser

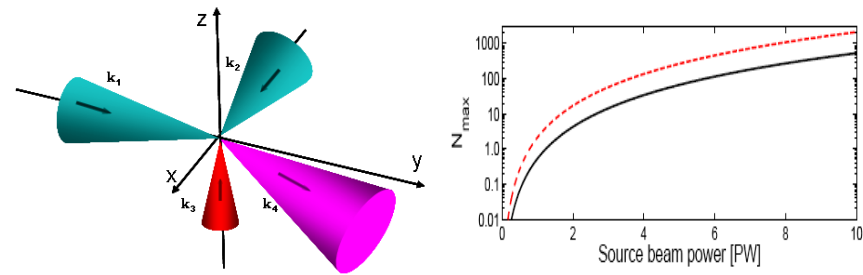
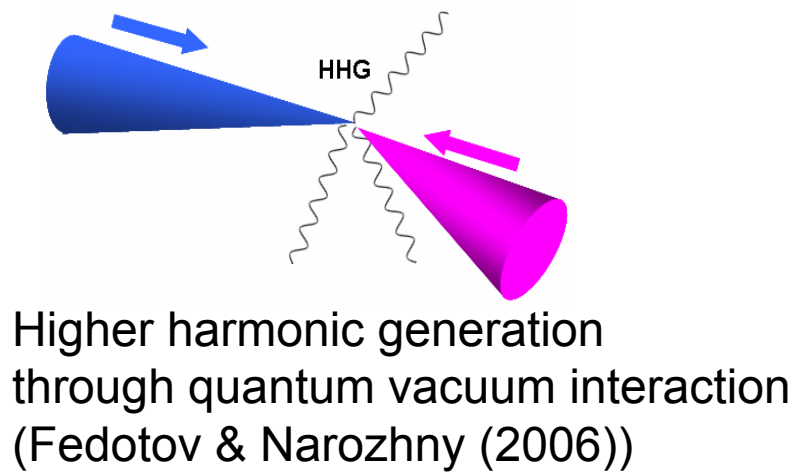


→ ELI's special unique capacity beyond any other infrastructure

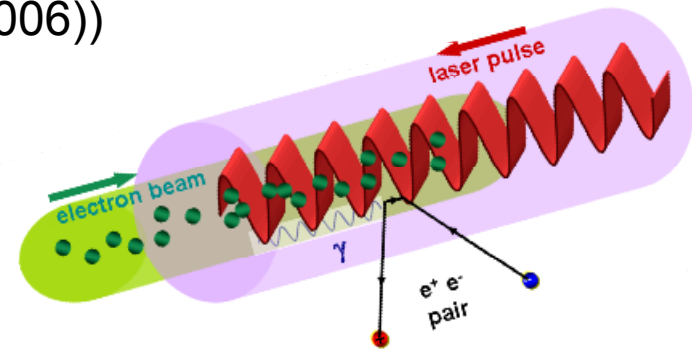
# Some on Horizon of High Field Science



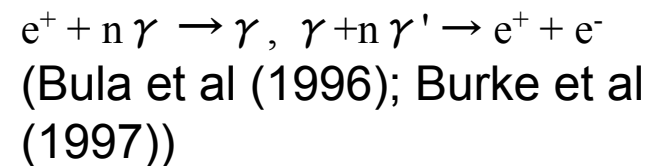
Unruh radiation (Chen&Tajima (1999))



4-wave mixing (Lundström et al (2006))

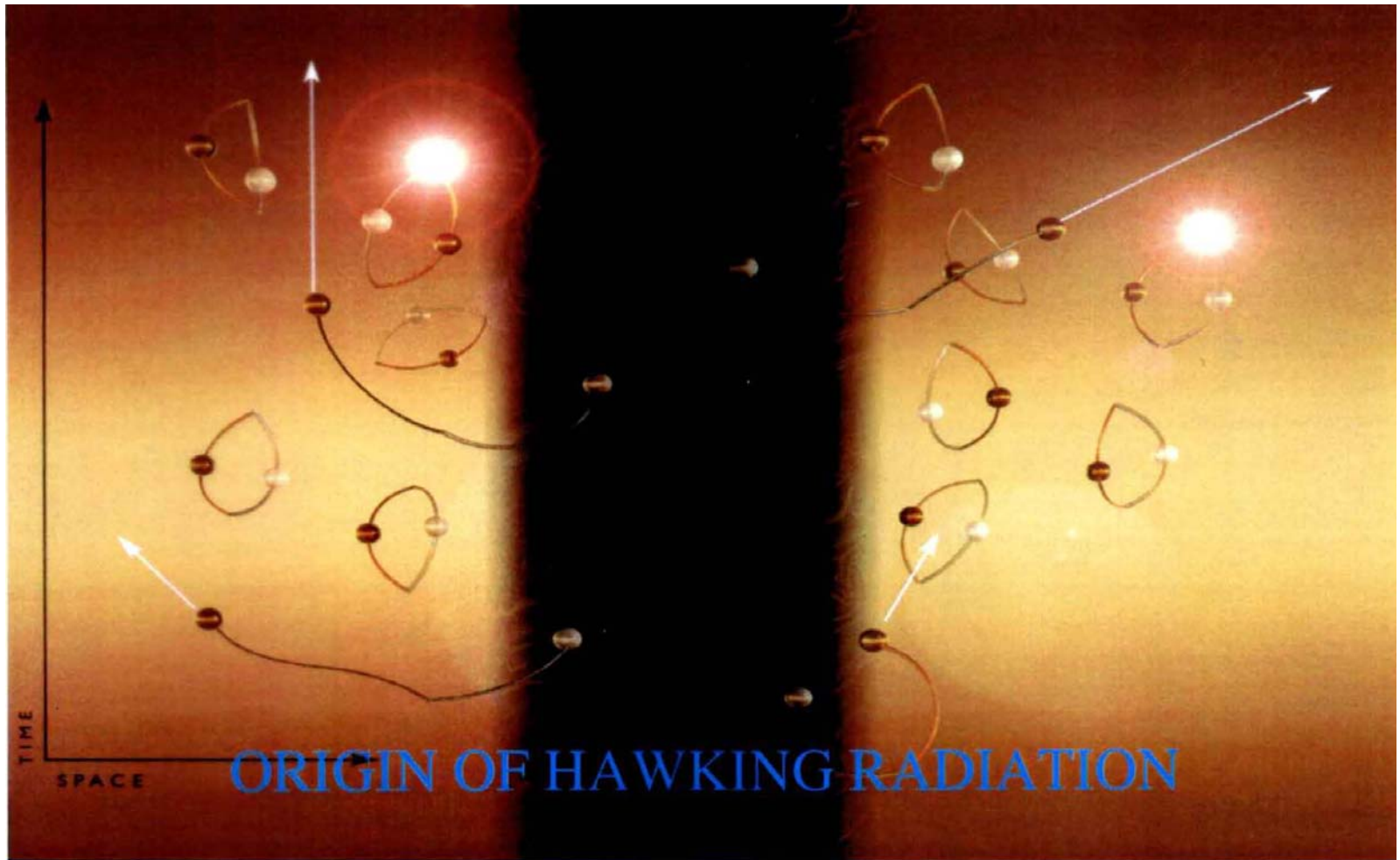


Electron-positron pair production in the laser interaction with the electron beam





# Hawking radiation



What is 'vacuum'? Does 'something' emerge from 'nothing'?

「空」 = 「色」 ?

vacuum = 'matter' ?

「混沌」 ⇔ 「秩序」 ?

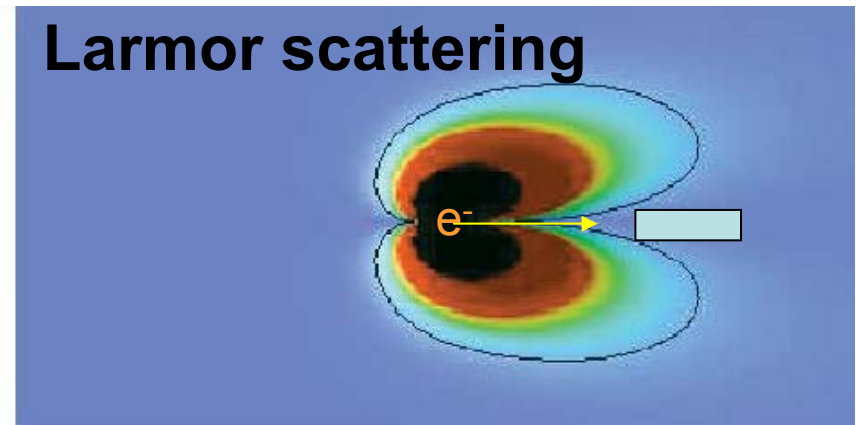
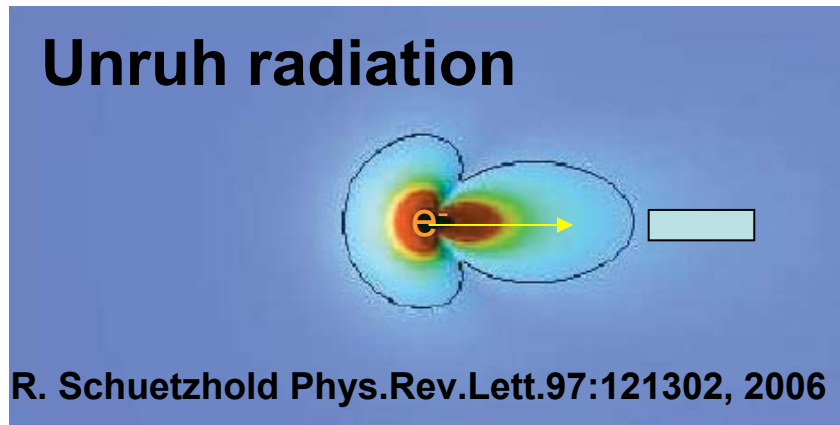
chaos ⇔ information ?

# Explore relativity with strong fields (Unruh radiation)

$$I = 10^{17} [W / cm^2] \Rightarrow E \approx 10^{12} [V / m]$$

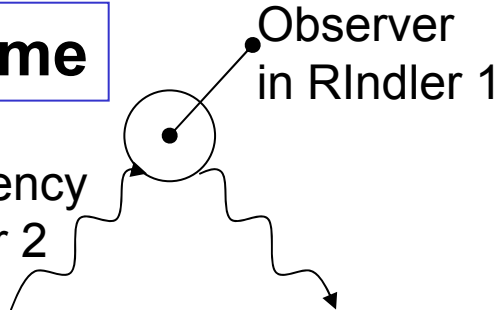
(Chen, Tajima, 1999)

$$\Rightarrow k_B T = 0.06 eV \Rightarrow \sim 10 eV \text{ (blue shift in lab. frame)}$$



### Rindler frame

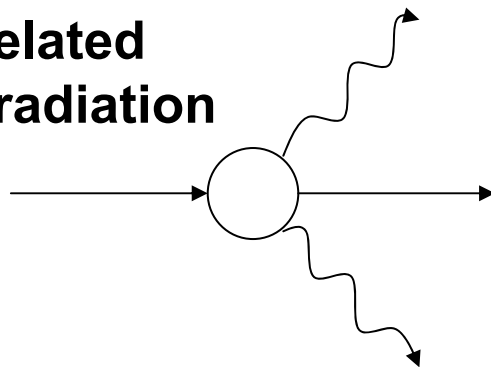
negative frequency mode in Rindler 2



**Strong correlation between absorption and emission despite of causal disconnection**

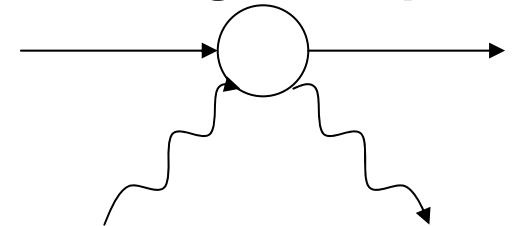
G. Unruh PRD 29 1047-1056, 1984

**Correlated pair radiation**



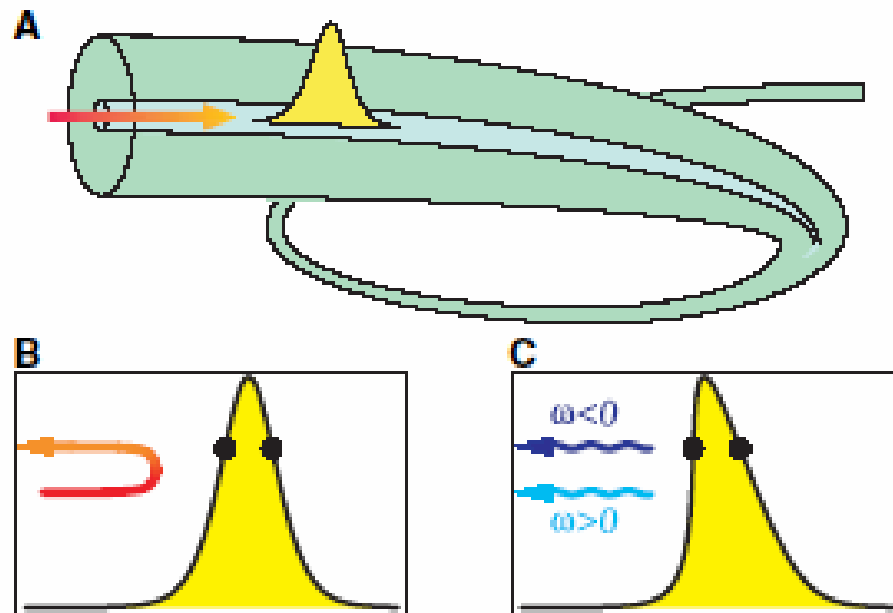
### Inertial frame

**No correlated pair in background process**



# Event Horizon Analog?.....

**Fig. 1.** Fiber-optical horizons. (A) A light pulse in a fiber slows down infrared probe light, attempting to overtake it. The diagrams below are in the co-moving frame of the pulse. (B) Classical horizons. The probe is slowed down by the pulse until its group velocity matches the pulse speed at the points indicated by black dots, establishing a white-hole horizon at the back and a black-hole horizon at the front of the pulse. The probe light is blue-shifted at the white hole until the optical dispersion releases it from the horizon. (C) Quantum pairs. Even if no probe light is incident, the horizon emits photon pairs corresponding to waves of positive frequencies from the outside of the horizon paired with waves at negative frequencies from beyond the horizon. An optical shock has steepened the pulse edge, increasing the luminosity of the white hole.



# Superstrong acceleration $a$ = superstrong gravity $g$

The horizon approaches from  
infinity to a close vicinity:

$$d = c^2/a$$

Quantum gravity extra-  
dimension leaks out? →



ELSEVIER

18 June 1998

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PHYSICS LETTERS B

## The hierarchy problem and new dimensions at a millimeter

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### Abstract

We propose a new framework for solving the hierarchy problem which does not rely on either supersymmetry or technicolor. In this framework, the gravitational and gauge interactions become united at the weak scale, which we take as the only fundamental short distance scale in nature. The observed weakness of gravity on distances  $\geq 1$  mm is due to the existence of  $n \geq 2$  new compact spatial dimensions large compared to the weak scale. The Planck scale  $M_{\text{Pl}} \sim G_N^{-1/2}$  is not a fundamental scale; its enormity is simply a consequence of the large size of the new dimensions. While gravitons can freely propagate in the new dimensions, at sub-weak energies the Standard Model (SM) fields must be localized to a 4-dimensional manifold of weak scale “thickness” in the extra dimensions. This picture leads to a number of striking predictions for accelerator and laboratory experiments. For the case of  $n=2$  new dimensions, planned sub-millimeter measurements of gravity may observe the transition from  $1/r^2 \rightarrow 1/r^4$  Newtonian gravitation. For any number of new dimensions, the LHC and NLC could observe strong quantum gravitational interactions. Furthermore, SM particles can be kicked off our 4 dimensional manifold into the new dimensions, carrying away energy, and leading to an abrupt decrease in events with high transverse momentum  $p_T \gtrsim \text{TeV}$ . For certain compact manifolds, such particles will keep circling in the extra dimensions, periodically returning, colliding with and depositing energy to our four dimensional vacuum with frequencies of  $\sim 10^{12}$  Hz or larger. As a concrete illustration, we construct a model with SM fields localized on the 4-dimensional throat of a vortex in 6 dimensions, with a Pati-Salam gauge symmetry  $SU(4) \times SU(2) \times SU(2)$  in the bulk. © 1998 Published by Elsevier Science B.V. All rights reserved.

### 1. Introduction

There are at least two seemingly fundamental energy scales in nature, the electroweak scale  $m_{\text{EW}} \sim 10^3$  GeV and the Planck scale  $M_{\text{Pl}} = G_N^{-1/2} \sim 10^{18}$  GeV. Explaining the enormity of the ratio  $M_{\text{Pl}}/m_{\text{EW}}$  has been the prime motivation for constructing extensions of the Standard Model such as

models with technicolor or low-energy supersymmetry. It is remarkable that these rich theoretical structures have been built on the assumption of the existence of two very disparate fundamental energy scales. However, there is an important difference between these scales. While electroweak interactions have been probed at distances approaching  $\sim m_{\text{EW}}^{-1}$ , gravitational forces have not remotely been probed at

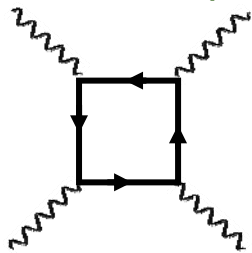
# Schwinger Field to Break Vacuum by Intense Laser

The driver and source must carry **10 kJ** and **30 J**, respectively  
(Parameters on the order of **ELI and HiPER Lasers**)

Reflected intensity can approach **the Schwinger limit**

$$E_{QED} = \frac{m_e^2 c^3}{e \hbar}$$

It becomes possible to investigate such the fundamental problems of nowadays physics, as e.g. the **electron-positron pair creation in vacuum** and the **photon-photon scattering**



$$\mathcal{L} = \frac{1}{16\pi} F_{\alpha\beta} F^{\alpha\beta} - \frac{\kappa}{64\pi} \left[ 5 \left( F_{\alpha\beta} F^{\alpha\beta} \right)^2 - 14 F_{\alpha\beta} F^{\beta\gamma} F_{\gamma\delta} F^{\delta\mu} \right]$$

The **critical power** for nonlinear vacuum effects is

$$\mathcal{P}_{cr} = \frac{45\pi^2}{\alpha} \frac{c E_{QED}^2 \lambda^2}{4\pi}$$

for  $\lambda = 1 \mu m$  it yields  $\mathcal{P}_{cr} \approx 2.5 \times 10^{24} W$

Light compression and focusing with the **FLYING MIRRORS** yields

for  $\lambda = \lambda_0 / 4\gamma_{ph}^2$   $\mathcal{P} = \mathcal{P}_0 \gamma_{ph}^2$  with  $\gamma_{ph} \approx 30$  the driver power  **$\mathcal{P}_{cr} \approx 10PW$**

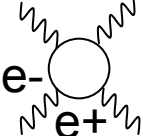
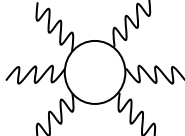
(Bulanov et al 2003)

# Higher order QED and QCD

hep-ph/9806389

Euler-Heisenberg effective action in constant Abelian field U(1) can be expressed as

$$L^{1-loop}_{LO+NLO}(A_\mu) = -\frac{1}{90} \frac{\pi^2}{m^4} \left[ \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi} F^2\right)^2 + \frac{7}{4} \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi} F\tilde{F}\right)^2 \right] + \frac{1}{315} \frac{\pi^4}{m^8} \left[ 4\left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi} F^2\right)^3 + \frac{13}{2} \frac{\alpha}{\pi} F^2 \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi} F\tilde{F}\right)^2 \right] +$$

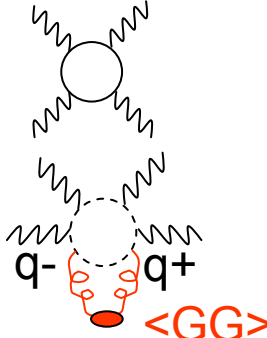



If U(1) → U(1) + condensed SU(3) due to self-interacting attractive force of gluons

$$\frac{\alpha}{\pi} F^2 \rightarrow \left\langle \frac{\alpha_s}{\pi} G^2 \right\rangle + \frac{\alpha}{\pi} q^2 F^2 \quad \langle 0 | \frac{\alpha_s}{\pi} G^2 | 0 \rangle \approx (2.3 \pm 0.3) 10^{-2} GeV^4 \quad (\text{K.Homma, 2007})$$

Focus on only light-light scattering amplitude after the substitution

$$L^{1-loop}_{LO+NLO}(A_\mu + G^a_{\mu\nu}) = -\frac{1}{90} \frac{\pi^2}{m^4} \left[ \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi} F^2\right)^2 + \frac{7}{4} \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi} F\tilde{F}\right)^2 \right] + \sum_{i=u,d} \frac{1}{315} \frac{q_i^2 \pi^4}{m_i^8} \left[ 12 \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi} F^2\right)^2 \left\langle \frac{\alpha_s}{\pi} G^2 \right\rangle + \frac{13}{2} \left(\frac{\alpha}{\pi} F\tilde{F}\right)^2 \left\langle \frac{\alpha_s}{\pi} G^2 \right\rangle \right]$$



QCD effect dominates pure QED 1-loop vacuum polarization to light-light scattering

$$\frac{\text{2nd-term}}{\text{1st-term}} = \sum_{i=u,d} \frac{24}{7} \frac{q_i^2 \pi^4}{m_i^8} m_i^4 e \left\langle \frac{\alpha}{\pi} G^2 \right\rangle \approx e^{9 \pm 2.5} \quad m_u \approx \frac{1}{2} m_d \approx 5 \pm 1.5 MeV, q_u^2 = 4q_d^2 = \frac{4}{9}$$

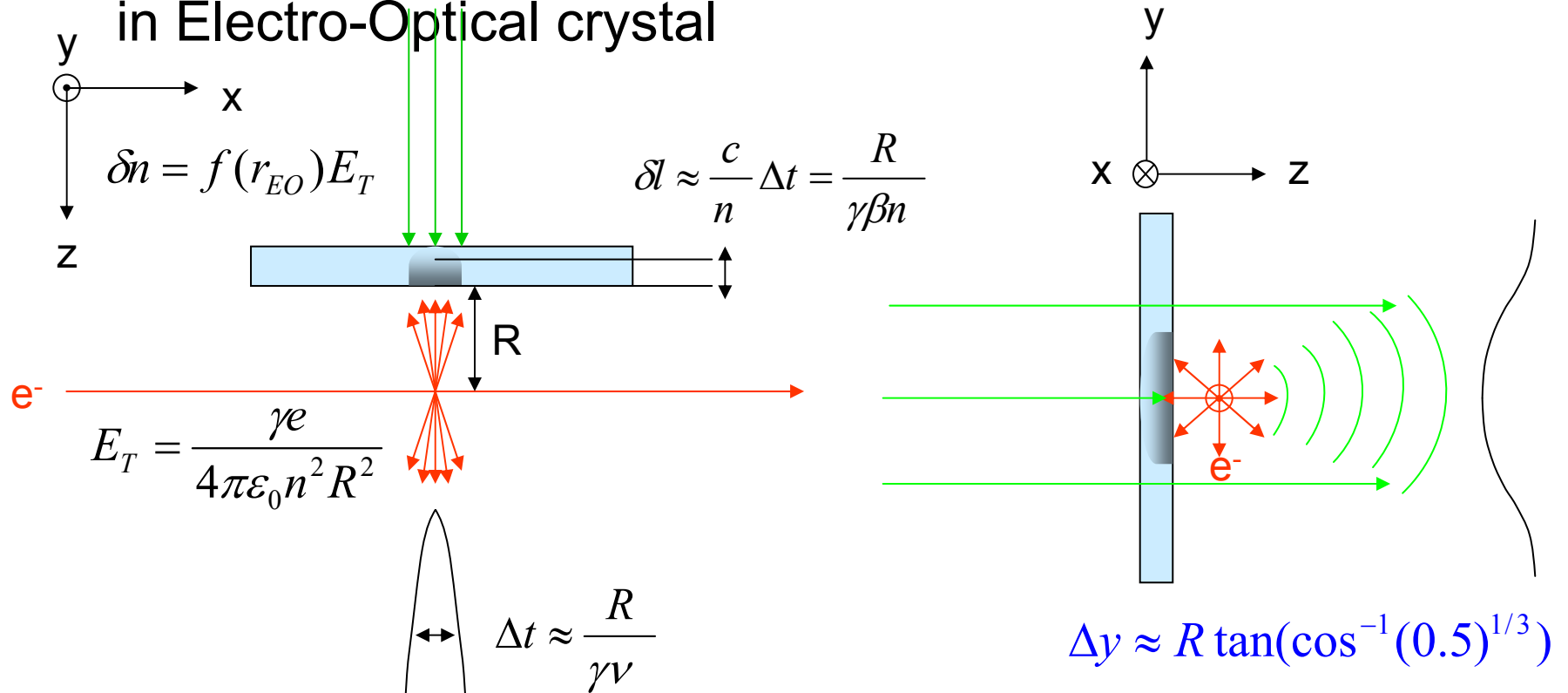
Check of Euler-Heisenberg yet to come. Any deviation from it?

30

→ axion field?; extended fields( such as dark energy, Tajima-Niu, 1997, etc.)?

# Homma proposes: experimental test

Measure instantaneous variation of *vacuum refractive index* by external electric fields in Electro-Optical crystal



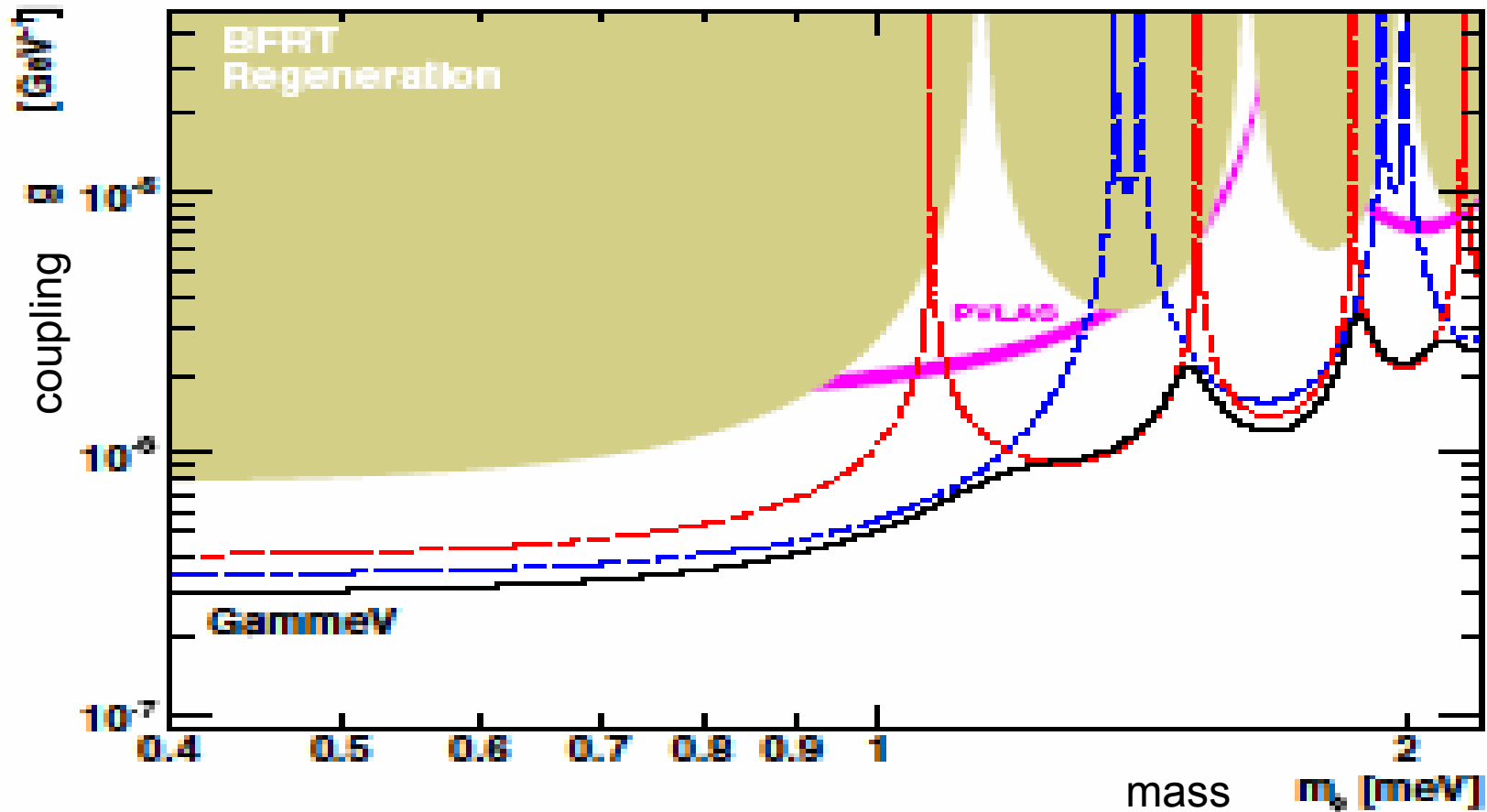
**Phase retardation**

$$\delta\Gamma = \frac{2\pi}{\lambda} \delta n \delta l = \frac{f(r_{EO})}{2\epsilon_0 n^3} \frac{e}{\lambda\beta R}$$

(Homma, 2007)

$$\Delta x \approx \frac{R}{\gamma}$$

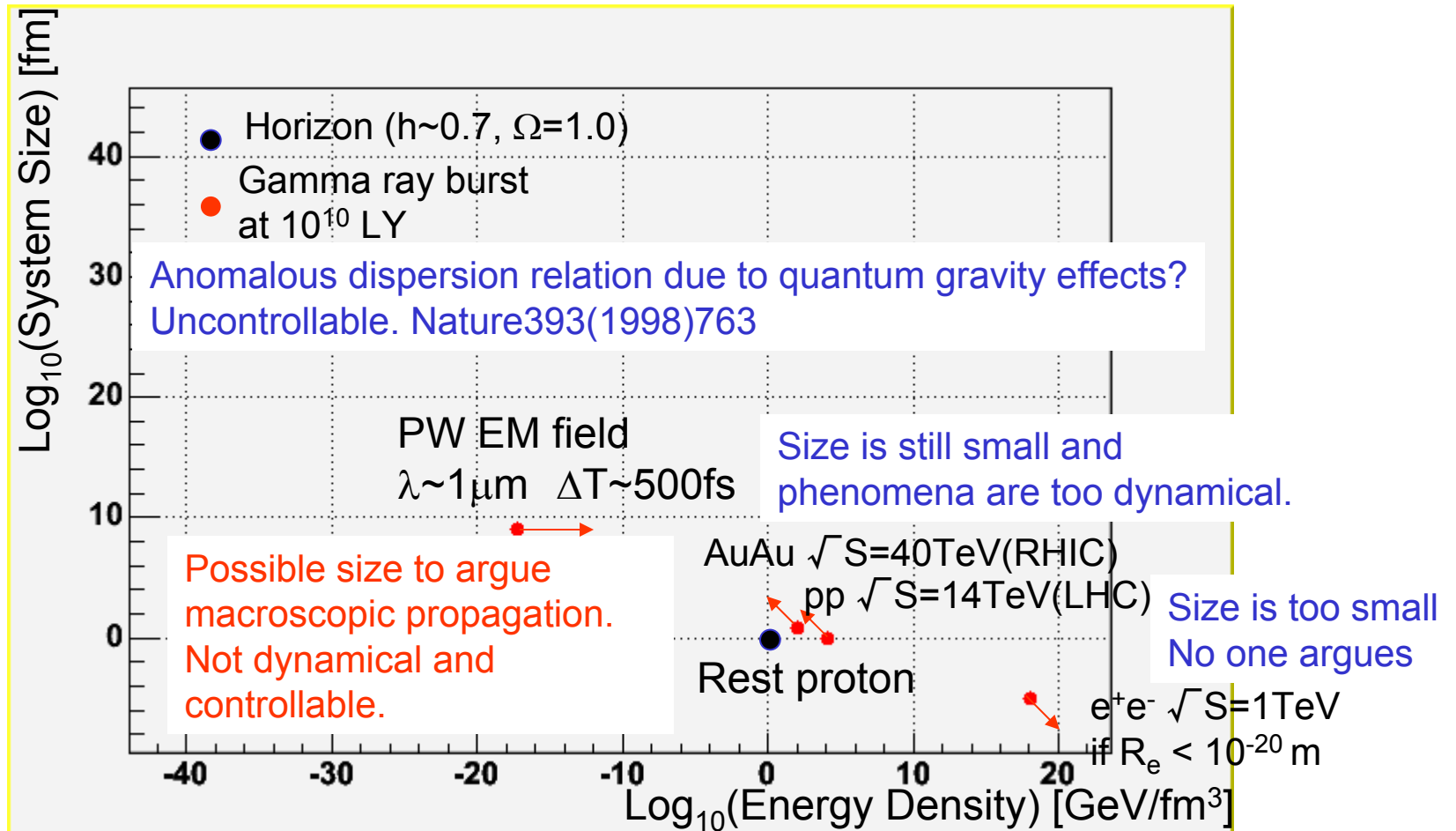
# Detection of (light) fields-particles missed by collider possible?: exploring new fields such as axion.....



A.Chou et al.,PRL (2008) observed no signal so far (Note:claim of axion by PVLAS was withdrawn)



# Experimentally available regimes of spacetime as a function of energy and size



(K.Homma)

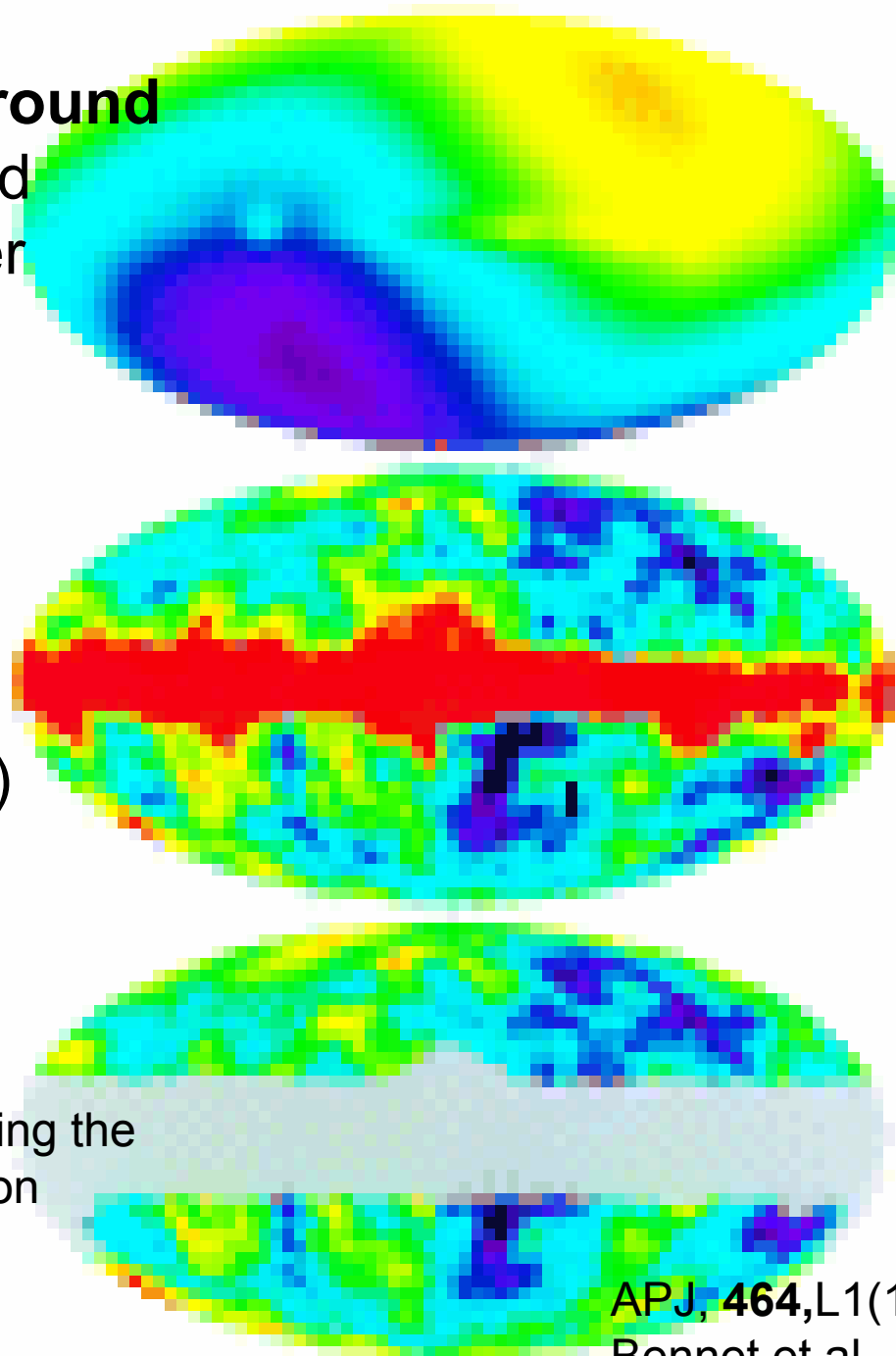
## Cosmic Microwave Background

Radiation (CMBR) red- and blue-shifted from our cluster (the dipole shift = drift):  
i.e. our Cluster is drifting relative to the CMBR



Unique frame (CMBR frame)  
in the cosmos?

Typical CMBR fluctuations showing the  
structure formation



APJ, 464,L1(1996)  
Bennet et al.

# Why is every frame 'relative'?

(special relativity's cornerstone)

Sato:

There may be a unique frame of reference due to the Big Bang. Theory of relativity may need to be modified



Einstein:

Relativity dictates no preferred frame

Prog. Theor. Phys. Vol. 47 (1972), No. 5

## Hot Universe, Cosmic Rays of Ultrahigh Energy and Absolute Reference System

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January 10, 1971

Shortly after the discovery of the cosmic thermal radiation with temperature of  $\sim 3^{\circ}\text{K}$ ,<sup>1)</sup> it was noted that such radiation would have a strong attenuation effect on cosmic rays with energies exceeding  $10^{20}$  eV.<sup>2)</sup> Although the average energy of these thermal photons is as small as  $10^{-8}$  eV, they interact with the cosmic rays to produce  $\pi$ -mesons, because the thermal photons look like  $\gamma$ -rays with energies of  $\sim 200$  MeV in the rest system of the cosmic rays. As the mesons resulting from the photoproduction carry off a significant fraction of the cosmic-ray energy, the attenuation mean-free-path of the cosmic rays with energies above  $10^{20}$  eV becomes as small as  $10^{8.0}\sim 10^{7.3}$  parsec.<sup>3)</sup> On the other hand, analysis of an extremely large air shower have revealed that the energy spectrum of cosmic rays extends smoothly beyond  $10^{20}$  eV, and moreover, cosmic rays with energies of  $4.10^{21}$  eV have been observed by Suga et al.<sup>4)</sup> Therefore, the non-existence of the expected cutoff in the vicinity of  $10^{20}$  eV offers a critical discrepancy between the theory and the observation.

There might be astronomical ways to get rid of this discrepancy: One is to assume a non-universal existence of the isotropic thermal radiation and another is to assume a local origin of the ultrahigh energy cosmic rays. However these ways are not so promising from the following arguments. About the first way, there is no reasonable

mechanism of generating such radiation in our Galaxy<sup>5)</sup> and, further, the hot universe model which predicts the universal existence has other powerful assertions such as an explanation of the helium abundance and a theory of galaxy formation.<sup>6)</sup> About the second way, some authors have proposed the Galactic origin such as the pulsar origin or the explosive origin in the Galactic nuclei.<sup>7)</sup> However these theories necessarily meet very great difficulties to explain the mechanism of acceleration in a compact region and the arrival directions. There might be other way to assume exotic primaries like neutrinos or dusts.<sup>8)</sup>

We now propose a different way to get rid of this discrepancy. Usually it is assumed that all inertial systems are totally equivalent for the performance of all physical experiments, i.e., the assumption of the relativity principle. However we have no experimental evidence to verify this principle for the reference systems moving with Lorentz factors of above  $\gamma\sim 10^5$  relative to our laboratory system on the earth. In the above discussion on the attenuation of cosmic rays, we have assumed that the conventional relativity principle is correct even for the reference systems of  $\gamma\geq 10^{11}$ . Therefore we must notice that the attenuation of cosmic rays is not a consequence of experiment.<sup>9)</sup> Inversely, if the attenuation were really found experimentally, it might be a remarkable evidence to expand the applicable realm of the relativity principle.

Now we put forward the following unconventional hypotheses:

- 1) All inertial systems are not equivalent and there exists a universal time-like unit vector  $N_{\mu}$ . Our laboratory system is not very different from the  $N$ -system in which  $N_{\mu}$  is  $(1, 0, 0, 0)$ .
- 2) The production of hadrons at high-energy collisions is suppressed when their momenta in the  $N$ -system become larger

# High energy cosmic gamma rays may experience the texture of vacuum at high energy (or distance)



## Possibility to change the Lorentz transformation, with the speed of light $c$ varying

### A puzzle: in superhigh energy cosmic rays

'Are there Super-GZK particles?'  
'If so, how?'

### Tests of quantum gravity from observations of $\gamma$ -ray bursts

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The recent confirmation that at least some  $\gamma$ -ray bursts originate at cosmological distances<sup>1-4</sup> suggests that the radiation from them could be used to probe some of the fundamental laws of physics. Here we show that  $\gamma$ -ray bursts will be sensitive to an energy dispersion predicted by some approaches to quantum gravity. Many of the bursts have structure on relatively rapid timescales<sup>5</sup>, which means that in principle it is possible to look for energy-dependent dispersion of the radiation, manifested in the arrival times of the photons, if several different energy bands are observed simultaneously. A simple estimate indicates that, because of their high energies and distant origin, observations of these bursts should be sensitive to a dispersion scale that is comparable to the Planck energy scale ( $\sim 10^{19}$  GeV), which is sufficient to test theories of quantum gravity. Such observations are already possible using existing  $\gamma$ -ray burst detectors.

Our interest is in the search for possible *in vacuo* dispersion,  $\delta v \approx E/E_{QG}$ , of electromagnetic radiation from  $\gamma$ -raybursts (GRBs), which could be sensitive to a type of candidate quantum-gravity effect that has been recently considered in the particle-physics literature. (Here  $E$  is the photon energy and  $E_{QG}$  is an effective quantum-gravity energy scale). This candidate quantum-gravity effect would be induced by a deformed dispersion relation for photons of the form  $c^2 p^2 = E^2 [1 + f(E/E_{QG})]$ , where  $f$  is a model-dependent function of the dimensionless ratio  $E/E_{QG}$ ,  $p$  is the photon momentum and  $c$  is the velocity of light. In quantum-gravity models in which the hamiltonian equation of motion  $\dot{x}_i = \partial H / \partial p_i$  is still valid at least approximately, as in the frameworks discussed later, such a deformed dispersion relation would lead to energy-dependent velocities  $c + \gamma v$  for massless particles, with implications for all the electromagnetic signals that we receive from astrophysical objects at large distances. At small energies  $E \ll E_{QG}$ , we expect that a series expansion of the dispersion relation should be applicable:  $c^2 p^2 = E^2 [1 + \xi E/E_{QG} + O(E^2/E_{QG}^2)]$ , where  $\xi = \pm 1$  is a sign ambiguity that would be fixed in a given dynamical framework. Such a series expansion would correspond to energy-dependent velocities:

$$v = \frac{\partial E}{\partial p} \approx c \left( 1 - \xi \frac{E}{E_{QG}} \right) \quad (1)$$

This type of velocity dispersion results from a picture of the vacuum as a quantum-gravitational 'medium', which responds differently to the propagation of particles of different energies and hence velocities. This is analogous to propagation through a conventional medium such as an electromagnetic plasma<sup>6</sup>. The gravitational 'medium' is generally believed to contain microscopic quantum fluctuations, which may occur on scale sizes of order the Planck length  $L_p \approx 10^{-33}$  cm on timescales of the order of  $t_p \approx 1/E_p$ , where  $E_p \approx 10^{19}$  GeV. These may<sup>7,8</sup> be analogous to the thermal fluctuations in a plasma, that occur on timescales of the order of  $t \approx 1/T$ , where  $T$  is the temperature. As it is a much 'harder' phenomenon associated with new physics at an energy scale far beyond typical

photon energies, any analogous quantum-gravity effect could be distinguished by its different energy dependence: the quantum-gravity effect would increase with energy, whereas conventional medium effects decrease with energy in the range of interest<sup>9</sup>.

Equation (1) encodes a minute modification for most practical purposes, as  $E_{QG}$  is believed to be a very high scale, presumably of the order of the Planck scale  $E_p \approx 10^{19}$  GeV. Even so, such a deformation could be rather significant for even moderate-energy signals, if they travel over very long distances. According to equation (1), a signal of energy  $E$  that travels a distance  $L$  acquires a 'time delay', measured with respect to the ordinary case of an energy-independent speed  $c$  for massless particles:

$$\Delta t \approx \xi \frac{E L}{E_{QG} c} \quad (2)$$

This is most likely to be observable when  $E$  and  $L$  are large while the interval  $\delta t$ , over which the signal exhibits time structure, is small. This is the case for GRBs, which is why they offer particularly good prospects for such measurements, as we discuss later.

We first review briefly how modified laws for the propagation of particles have emerged independently in different quantum-gravity approaches. The suggestion that quantum-gravitational fluctuations might modify particle propagation in an observable way can already be found in refs 7 and 9. A phenomenological parametrization of the way this could affect the neutral kaon system<sup>10-11</sup> has been already tested in laboratory experiments, which have set lower limits on parameters analogous to the  $E_{QG}$  introduced above at levels comparable to  $E_p$  (ref. 12). In the case of massless particles such as the photon, which interests us here, the first example of a quantum-gravitational medium effect with which we are familiar occurred in a string formulation of an expanding Robertson-Walker-Friedman cosmology<sup>13</sup>, in which photon propagation appears tachyonic. Deformed dispersion relations that are consistent with the specific formula in equation (1) arose in approaches based on quantum deformations of Poincaré symmetries<sup>14</sup> with a dimensional parameter. Within this general class of deformations, one finds<sup>14,15</sup> an effect consistent with equation (1) if the deformation is rotationally invariant: the dispersion relation for massless particles  $c^2 p^2 = E_{QG}^2 [1 - \exp(-E/E_{QG})]^2$ , and therefore  $\xi = 1$ . We noted that a deformed dispersion relation has also been found in studies of the quantization of point particles in a discrete space time<sup>16</sup>.

A specific and general dynamical framework for the emergence of the velocity law (equation (1)) has emerged<sup>17</sup> within the Liouville string approach<sup>7</sup> to quantum gravity, according to which the vacuum is viewed as a non-trivial medium containing 'foamy' quantum-gravity fluctuations. The nature of this foamy vacuum may be visualized by imagining processes that include the pair creation of virtual black holes. Within this approach, it is possible to verify that massless particles of different energies excite vacuum fluctuations differently as they propagate through the quantum-gravity medium, giving rise to a non-trivial dispersion relation of Lorentz 'non-covariant' form, just as in a thermal medium. The form of the dispersion relation is not known exactly, but its structure has been studied<sup>17</sup> via a perturbative expansion, and it was shown in ref. 17 that the leading  $1/E_{QG}$  correction is in agreement with equation (1).

It has been recently suggested<sup>18</sup> the vacuum might have analogous 'thermal' properties in a large class of quantum-gravity approaches, namely all approaches in which a minimum length  $l_{min}$ —such as the Planck length  $L_p \approx 10^{-33}$  cm—characterizes short-distance physics. These should in general lead to deformed photon dispersion relations with  $E_{QG} \approx 1/l_{min}$ , though the specific form of equation (1) may not hold in all models, and hence may be used to discriminate between them. In support of equation (1), though, we recall<sup>19,20</sup> that this type of non-trivial dispersion in the quantum-gravity vacuum has implications for the measurability of distances in quantum gravity that fit well with the intuition emerging from

Does photon's dispersion relation  
change from  $\omega = kc$  in high energies?

Does Lorentz transform change in high  
energies ?



24 July 1997

PHYSICS LETTERS B

Physics Letters B 405 (1997) 249–252

## Cosmic ray and neutrino tests of special relativity

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### Abstract

Searches for anisotropies due to Earth's motion relative to a preferred frame – modern versions of the Michelson–Morley experiment – provide precise verifications of special relativity. We describe other tests, independent of this motion, that are or can become even more sensitive. The existence of high-energy cosmic rays places strong constraints on Lorentz non-invariance. Furthermore, if the maximum attainable speed of a particle depends on its identity, then neutrinos, even if massless, may exhibit flavor oscillations. Velocity differences far smaller than any previously probed can produce characteristic effects at accelerators and solar neutrino experiments. © 1997 Elsevier Science B.V.

Is the special theory of relativity, for reasons unspecified and unknown, only an approximate symmetry of nature? To investigate possible violations of Lorentz symmetry, we follow earlier analyses [1] by assuming the laws of physics to be invariant under rotations and translations in a preferred reference frame  $\mathcal{F}$ . This frame is often taken to be the 'rest frame of the universe,' the frame in which the cosmic microwave background is isotropic. To parameterize departures from Lorentz invariance, standard practice has been to modify Maxwell's equations while leaving other physical laws intact.

Although we shall shortly consider more general Lorentz non-invariant perturbations, let us for the moment adhere to standard practice: we assume that the only Lorentz non-invariant term in  $\mathcal{L}$  is proportional to the square of the magnetic field strength. Thus, the in vacua speed of light  $c$  differs from the maximum attainable speed of a material body (here taken to be unity). The small parameter  $1 - c$  completely characterizes this departure from special relativity in  $\mathcal{F}$ . In a frame moving at velocity  $\mathbf{u}$  relative to  $\mathcal{F}$ , the ve-

locity of light  $c'$  depends on its angle  $\theta$  relative to  $\mathbf{u}$ . For  $u \ll 1$ , we find  $c'(\theta) \simeq c + 2(c - 1)u \cos \theta$ . The failure of rotational invariance in the laboratory frame leads to potentially observable effects that are proportional to  $u^2(1 - c^2)$ . Searches for these anisotropies yielding null results have provided precision tests of special relativity.

A laser-interferometric Michelson–Morley experiment [2] found  $|1 - c| < 10^{-9}$ . Atomic physicists obtained stronger constraints using techniques pioneered by Hughes and Drever [3]. Prestage et al. [4] found  $< 10^{-18}$  and Lamoreaux et al. [5] set the current limit on the velocity difference,

$$|1 - c| < 3 \times 10^{-22}. \quad (1)$$

These limits are obtained for  $\mathcal{F}$  at rest relative to the cosmic background radiation and  $u \simeq 10^{-3}$ . They would be two orders of magnitude weaker were  $\mathcal{F}$  at rest relative to the Sun.

We find additional limits on  $1 - c$  that do not require precision experiments, yet are comparable in

# Lorentz Invariance on Trial

Precision experiments and astrophysical observations provide complementary tests of Lorentz invariance and may soon open a window onto new physics. They have already constrained models of quantum gravity and cosmology.

Maxim Pospelov and Michael Romalis

The null result of the celebrated 1887 Michelson-Morley experiment was surprising and difficult to explain in terms of then prevalent physics concepts. It required a fundamental change in the notions of space and time and was finally explained, almost 20 years later, by Albert Einstein's special theory of relativity. (See the May 1987 special issue of *PHYSICS TODAY* devoted to the centennial of the experiment.) Special relativity postulates that all laws of physics are invariant under Lorentz transformations, which include ordinary rotations and changes in the velocity of a reference frame. Subsequently, quantum field theories all incorporated Lorentz invariance in their basic structure. General relativity includes the invariance through Einstein's equivalence principle, which implies that any experiment conducted in a small, freely falling laboratory is invariant under Lorentz transformations. That result is known as local Lorentz invariance.

Experimental techniques introduced throughout the 20th century led to continued improvements in tests of special relativity. For example, 25 years ago, Alain Brillet and John L. Hall used a helium-neon laser mounted on a rotary platform to improve the accuracy of the Michelson-Morley experiment by a factor of 4000. In addition to the Michelson-Morley experiments that look for an anisotropy in the speed of light, two other types of experiments have constrained deviations from special relativity. Kennedy-Thorndike experiments search for a dependence of the speed of light on the lab's velocity relative to a preferred frame, and Ives-Stilwell experiments test special relativistic time dilation.

In 1960, Vernon Hughes and coworkers and, independently, Ron Drever conducted a different kind of Lorentz invariance test.<sup>1</sup> They measured the nuclear spin precession frequency in lithium-7 and looked for changes in frequency or linewidth as the direction of the magnetic field rotated, together with Earth, relative to a galactic reference frame. Such measurements, known as Hughes-Drever experiments, have been interpreted, for example, in terms of a possible difference between the speed of light and the limiting velocity of massive particles.<sup>2</sup>

Maxim Pospelov is an associate professor of physics and astronomy at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. Michael Romalis is an assistant professor of physics at Princeton University in New Jersey.

## Why bother?

Theorists and experimentalists in disciplines ranging from atomic physics to cosmology have been increasingly interested in tests of Lorentz invariance. The high sensitivity of experimental tests combined with recent advances in their theoretical interpretation allows one to

probe ultrashort distance scales well beyond the reach of conventional particle-collider experiments. In fact, both the best experiments and astrophysical observations can indirectly probe distance scales as short as the Planck length  $L_p = (G\hbar/c^3)^{1/2} \sim 10^{-35}$  m. Experiments that probe such short scales can constrain quantum gravity scenarios.

The breaking of Lorentz symmetry enables the *CPT* symmetry, which combines charge conjugation (*C*), parity (*P*), and time-reversal (*T*) symmetries, to be violated. In conventional field theories, the Lorentz and *CPT* symmetries are automatically preserved. But in quantum gravity, certain restrictive conditions such as locality may no longer hold, and the symmetries may be broken. The breaking of *CPT*, combined with baryon-number violation, could be the source of the dynamically generated dominance of matter over antimatter in the universe. Unlike a more conventional scenario involving only *CP* violation, baryogenesis based on *CPT* violation would not require a departure from thermal equilibrium. (See the article by Helen Quinn, *PHYSICS TODAY*, February 2003, page 30.)

Cosmology provides an additional important impetus to look for violations of Lorentz symmetry. The recognition that the universe is dominated by dark energy suggests a new field—known as quintessence—that permeates all space. The interaction of that field with matter would manifest itself as an apparent breaking of Lorentz symmetry.

It could be argued on aesthetic grounds that the Lorentz and *CPT* symmetries should be preserved. Such arguments, however, do not find support in the history of physics. Nearly all known or proposed symmetries, such as parity and time reversal, electroweak symmetry, chiral symmetry, and supersymmetry, are spontaneously broken. Whatever the true origin of Lorentz or *CPT* breaking may be, the fact that it hasn't yet been observed means it must be small at the energy scales corresponding to known standard-model physics.

## Effective field theory

How can one break Lorentz invariance in a controllable way? The least radical approach would be to assume that low-energy physics can be described by the Lorentz-invariant dynamics of the standard model plus a number of possible background fields. Those fields, taken to be constant or slowly varying, are vectors or tensors under Lorentz transformations and are coupled to ordinary particles in such a way that the whole Lagrangian remains invariant. In that framework, called an effective field the-

Our ponderation on relativity continues....

Physics Today (2004)

# Conclusions

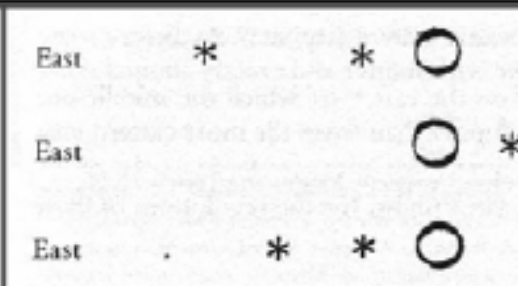
- Galilei's and Einstein's relativity: one of two pillars of modern physics
- Advance of rapid progress in ultrafast ultrastrong **lasers** (particularly) **ELI**, poses special opportunities to extend the horizon of Galileo and Einstein.
- **Laser** acceleration toward GeV, TeV, PeV: new opportunities
- Revolutionary (not evolutionary) technology apt for 21<sup>st</sup> Century challenges, just like Galilei's was in 17<sup>th</sup>
- Test Einstein's relativity in more extreme limits. Does 'relativity' hold (Lorentz transform, Equivalence Principle,...)?
- Can we see vacuum structure and property with intense laser? Does strong field warp space?
- Is 'relative' frame more relative than others?
- Does the '**Blue Sky**' appear also in vacuum with high energies?
- We learn a lot from Galilei 400 years later



# Telescope 1609



Observation of Jupiter and its Moons - Some of the most profound observations of Galileo were the motions of the moons of Jupiter. Galileo reasoned that if planets could orbit Jupiter, then the Earth could orbit the Sun.



2009: *International Year of Astronomy*

(400 year after Galilei's invention of the Galilei telescope and discovery of the moons of Jupiter)

# Grazie!



# Superluminality and UV Completion \*

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$$k^2 + \frac{\alpha}{360\pi} \frac{1}{m^2} \left[ -(b+2c) R_{\mu\nu} k^\mu k^\nu \pm 4c |C_{\mu\nu\lambda\rho} k^\mu m^\nu k^\lambda m^\rho| \right] = 0 \quad (5.8)$$

corresponding to a phase velocity

$$v_{\text{ph}}(0) = 1 - \frac{\alpha}{360\pi} \frac{1}{m^2} \left[ -(b+2c) R_{\mu\nu} \ell^\mu \ell^\nu \pm 4c |C_{\mu\nu\lambda\rho} \ell^\mu m^\nu \ell^\lambda m^\rho| \right] \quad (5.9)$$

Notice immediately that using the Einstein equation, the Ricci tensor can be re-expressed in terms of the energy-momentum tensor by  $R_{\mu\nu} = 8\pi T_{\mu\nu}$  (in  $G = 1$  units) and the first term can be written in familiar form involving the null energy projection  $T_{\mu\nu} k^\mu k^\nu$ . In the gravitational case, however, the phase velocity also has a new, polarisation-dependent contribution involving the Weyl curvature. The relation between superluminality and the null energy condition is therefore more subtle for QED in a gravitational background field.

For Weyl-flat spacetimes, the situation is similar to the electromagnetic case. Assuming the null-energy condition holds, the sign of  $R_{\mu\nu} k^\mu k^\nu$  is fixed and the question of whether