

Quantum phase transitions in impurity models: What is needed to spoil the quantum-to-classical correspondence?

Prof. Dr. Matthias Vojta
Technology University of Dresden

Quantum phase transitions are often found to be equivalent to classical phase transitions in higher dimensions. The talk will discuss this quantum-to-classical correspondence for quantum impurity models which provide interesting realizations of boundary critical phenomena at $T=0$. For instance, the physics of both the standard Kondo model and the ohmic spin-boson model can be mapped onto an Ising chain with $1/r^2$ interaction.

I will focus on both fermionic and bosonic generalizations of these models. For the pseudogap Kondo model, with a power-law density of states of bath fermions, none of the critical theories is of Landau-Ginzburg-Wilson type, instead all are found to be of fermionic nature. In contrast, the sub-ohmic spin-boson model follows the quantum-to-classical correspondence. Most interestingly, an XY-symmetric two-bath generalization of the spin-boson model displays a rich variety of phases and phase transitions, beyond any classical model. This violation of the quantum-to-classical correspondence is shown to be connected to a "sign problem" of negative Boltzmann weights. Thus, symmetries are found to be decisive for the quantum-to-classical correspondence to hold.