

Title	Chiral Ordered Phases in Frustrated Quantum Spin Chains(New Developments in Strongly Correlated Electron Systems)
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Citation	物性研究 (2001), 76(5): 700-700
Issue Date	2001-08-20
URL	http://hdl.handle.net/2433/97033
Right	
Type	Departmental Bulletin Paper
Textversion	publisher

Chiral Ordered Phases in Frustrated Quantum Spin Chains

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We study the ground-state properties of a one-dimensional anisotropic spin system with the antiferromagnetic nearest-neighbor coupling J_1 and the frustrating next-nearest-neighbor coupling J_2 . The model Hamiltonian has the form,

$$\mathcal{H} = \sum_{\rho=1}^2 \left\{ J_{\rho} \sum_l (S_l^x S_{l+\rho}^x + S_l^y S_{l+\rho}^y + \Delta S_l^z S_{l+\rho}^z) \right\}, \quad (1)$$

where \vec{S}_l is a spin- S spin operator at site l . We concentrate on the case of XY -like anisotropy $0 \leq \Delta < 1$. We are particularly interested in the possible gapless and gapped “chiral” phase, in which the z -component of the vector chirality $\kappa_l = S_l^x S_{l+1}^y - S_l^y S_{l+1}^x$ exhibits a finite long-range order while the spin correlation decays either algebraically or exponentially. In the chiral phases, only the parity symmetry is broken spontaneously whereas the time-reversal and translational symmetries are preserved. It has been suggested by the bosonization approach with a mean-field approximation^{1,2} that in the XY case ($\Delta = 0$) the system for general S exhibits the gapless chiral phase for large $j \equiv J_2/J_1$.

In the presentation, we report the results of our study^{3,4,5} in which the ground-state phase diagrams of model (1) are determined numerically for $S = 1/2, 1, 3/2, 2$ using the density-matrix renormalization group method. The main results are summarized as follows.

- The gapless chiral phase appears in a broad region of the phase diagram for general S . By contrast, the gapped chiral phase is found for integer S in a narrow region between the Haldane and gapless chiral phases, while it has not been identified for half-odd integer S within our numerical accuracy.
- As S increases toward the classical limit $S \rightarrow \infty$, the region of the gapless chiral phase converges smoothly toward that of the classical helical phase, $j > 1/4$ for $0 \leq \Delta < 1$.

We also present the ground-state phase diagram of the frustrated $S = 1$ Heisenberg chain with uniaxial single-ion-type anisotropy.

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