

**A non-Abelian Higgs model  
with instantons and Sphaleron**

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**Abstract :**

We present a  $SU(2) \times SU(2) \times U(1)$  model in (3+1) dimensions, which has instanton solutions in  $\mathbb{R}_4$ , and a sphaleron on  $\mathbb{R}_3$  in the static limit.

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Sometime ago, Manton<sup>1)</sup> found a very interesting property of the Dashen, Hasslacher and Neveu<sup>2)</sup> (DHN) solution to the  $SU(2)$  Yang-Mills-Higgs (complex doublet) system in 3 dimensions. He showed that the DHN solution occurred at the maximal energy position on a non-contractible-loop (NCL) in field space, and hence argued that it should be unstable. This instability, against a one-parameter family of fluctuations, was later demonstrated by Burzlaff<sup>3)</sup> explicitly.

This solution, which is unstable against decay into the vacuum, occurs at the maximum of a minimum energy path connecting topologically inequivalent vacua of the Euclidean Theory, and was named a sphaleron by Klinkhamer and Manton<sup>4)</sup>. The physical interest of the sphaleron derives from its relevance to the fermion-number violation in electroweak theory. In the electroweak theory however there are no instanton solutions, so that the topologically distinct vacua referred to above are characterised by the instantons of the Yang-Mills (YM) model, which does not feature a Higgs field. Furthermore, the DHN sphaleron has  $SU(2)$  gauge group, and not  $SU(2) \times U(1)$  as the electroweak theory. The latter point was largely settled in ref [4], where it was shown numerically that it could be justified to include the  $U(1)$  field. Also, more recently, Kleihaus, Kunz and Brihaye<sup>6)</sup> have included the  $U(1)$  field in their construction of the electroweak sphaleron, by departing from a 3 dimensional radial field configuration which would suppress the  $U(1)$  field, and working with an axial field configuration, which being radial in 2 dimensions, still features a non-trivial  $U(1)$  field.

While the latter question of employing the DHN solution as the sphaleron of the electroweak theory is to some extent justified<sup>4,6)</sup> the previous matter, namely that strictly speaking there is no instanton solution to the Weinberg-Salam model remains open. This leads us to the question whether we can have a model, which has instanton solutions, and, a sphaleron solution in its static limit? This is the main question we address ourselves to in the present work.

Before analysing it more closely, we note that this question has been answered positively in the case of lower dimensions, to different degrees of completeness. First, Forgacs and Horvath<sup>7)</sup> classified models in (1+1) and (2+1) dimensions which have this property, namely the Abelian Higgs model with vortex<sup>8)</sup> solutions as instantons, and the (adjoint-representation)  $SU(2)$  Higgs model with the 't Hooft-Polyakov monopole as instanton<sup>9)</sup>, respectively.

In the case of the Abelian Higgs model in (1+1) dimensions, Bochkarev and

Shaposhnikov<sup>10)</sup> and Grigoriev and Rubakov<sup>11)</sup> showed that the static limit of this system had a sphaleron solution on  $\mathbb{R}_1$ . In the static limit, this system reduces to the  $\phi^4$  model in  $\mathbb{R}_1$ . To construct unstable solutions to it is rather more subtle than to the SU(2) YM-Higgs (doublet) case in  $\mathbb{R}_3$ , and involves requiring the fields to be periodic, resulting in an instability<sup>10)</sup> against a parameter  $\tau$  ( $-\infty > \tau > \infty$ ), the sphaleron occurring for  $\tau = \frac{1}{2}$ , in contrast with the DHN case where the instability is parametrised by an angular parameter  $\mu$  ( $0 < \mu < \pi$ ). Manton and Samols<sup>12)</sup> showed that this was equivalent to putting the field on a circle of finite circumference  $L$ , where the sphaleron occurs for  $L \rightarrow \infty$ .

The case of the (adjoint) SU(2) Higgs model in (2+1) dimensions is simpler and more akin to the (3+1) case, and hence deserves further study, but we defer this because even as a toy model, it does not feature any explicit solutions. As it is, we have recently proposed<sup>13)</sup> a (non-gauge) toy model in (2+1) dimensions satisfying these criteria, and with an explicit sphaleron solution.

In addition to the above mentioned lower dimensional models<sup>7)13)</sup>, Mottola and Wipf<sup>14)</sup> have employed a (1+1) dimensional toy model based on the O(3) sigma-model, which has technical advantages over the corresponding Abelian Higgs model of Ref [7, 10, 11]. This model<sup>14)</sup> however, shares with the electroweak model<sup>1)</sup> the feature that the instantons and sphaleron are supported by different dynamics.

Finally we come to our above stated aim of constructing a model in (3+1) dimensions, which features both instantons on  $\mathbb{R}_4$ , and a sphaleron on  $\mathbb{R}_3$ , in the static limit. This task was previously addressed by Ratra and Yaffe<sup>15)</sup>, who considered the field configurations of the Weinberg-Salam model, that correspond to a non-zero Chern-Pontryagin (C-P) charge. These however are not solutions, since the (scaling) Virial theorem<sup>8)</sup> in this case contradicts the existence of finite action solutions with non-trivial Higgs field.

The model we propose is the SO(4) x U(1) Higgs model introduced in ref [16], which has topologically stable finite action solutions on  $\mathbb{R}_4$ . It differs from the standard electroweak theory in that the gauge group is  $SU_+(2) \times SU_-(2) \times U(1) \approx SO(4) \times U(1)$ , instead of  $SU(2) \times U(1)$ , and consequently the Higgs multiplet consists of two independent Higgs doublets (one for each  $SU_{\pm}(2)$ ), instead of a single doublet. We denote the SO(4) x U(1) connection  $\tilde{A}_{\mu}$  as

$$\tilde{A}_{\mu} = A_{\mu} + i \gamma_5 a_{\mu} \quad (1a)$$

$$A_\mu = \begin{bmatrix} A_\mu^{(+)} & \\ & A_\mu^{(-)} \end{bmatrix} \quad (1b)$$

where  $A_\mu^{(\pm)}$  are respectively the  $SU_\pm(2)$  (antihermitian) connections, and  $a_\mu$  the  $U(1)$  field. The Higgs multiplet is the (antiselfdual)  $4 \times 4$  matrix field

$$\Phi = \begin{bmatrix} & \Psi \\ -\Psi^+ & \end{bmatrix} \quad (2)$$

where the  $2 \times 2$  constituent matrix field  $\psi$  consists of the two independent doublets, and is therefore subject to no constraints.

The special property of the Higgs field(2),  $\Phi$ , is that it can be subjected to spherical symmetry constraints with respect to the gauge group  $SO(4)$ , without trivialising, in contrast with the complex Higgs doublet in electroweak theory<sup>1)</sup>. (It was remarked also by Manton<sup>1)</sup>, that the radial symmetry of the energy functional of the DHN sphaleron can be understood by considering these fields as an  $SO(4)$  gauge theory).

The most important consequence of this property is that we can set the  $U(1)$  field in (1a) equal to zero by imposing spherical symmetry in  $\mathbb{R}_4$ , or as the case may be, axial symmetry, corresponding to spherical symmetry in  $\mathbb{R}_3$  for the static case. This last configuration pertains to the sphaleron solution to be discussed below. Accordingly, we do not have to resort to a perturbation method<sup>4)</sup>, as in the case of the DHN sphaleron corresponding to  $\theta_W = 0$  electroweak theory. In our case, we can restrict our considerations to the  $SO(4)$  gauge field (2b),  $A_\mu$ , just by imposition of symmetry, and not by setting  $\theta_W = 0$  by hand.

Our  $SO(4) \times U(1)$  model, which was derived<sup>16)</sup> from the 8-dimensional generalised YM (GYM) system<sup>17)</sup> by dimensional reduction, is given by the Lagrangian.

$$L = \text{tr} [S_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma}^2 + 2^2 \lambda_1 S_{\mu\nu\rho}^2 + 3^2 \cdot 2 \lambda_2 S_{\mu\nu}^2 + 3^3 \cdot 2 \lambda_3 S_\mu^2 + 3^3 \cdot 2 \lambda_4 (S^2)^2], \quad (3)$$

where the dimensionless numbers  $\lambda_1, \dots, \lambda_4$  may take any real positive values except  $\lambda_1 = \lambda_2 = \lambda_3 = \lambda_4 = 1$  as explained in ref [16], and

$$S_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} = \tilde{F}_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} = \{\tilde{F}_{\mu\nu}, \tilde{F}_{\rho\sigma}\} + \text{cycl. } (\nu, \rho, \sigma) \quad (4a)$$

$$S_{\mu\nu\rho} = \{\tilde{F}_{\mu\nu}, \tilde{D}_\rho\Phi\} + \text{cycl. } (\mu, \nu, \rho) \quad (4b)$$

$$S_{\mu\nu} = i \{S, \tilde{F}_{\mu\nu}\} + [\tilde{D}_\mu\Phi, \tilde{D}_\nu\Phi] \quad (4c)$$

$$S_\mu = i \{S, \tilde{D}_\mu\Phi\}, \quad S = -(\Phi^2 + \eta^2). \quad (4d,e)$$

The dimensional constant  $\eta$  in (4e) is the inverse of the radius of  $S^4$ , the four-sphere, over which the dimensional reduction from  $\mathbb{R}_4 \times S^4$  was performed to derive (3). Naturally  $\tilde{F}_{\mu\nu}$  and  $\tilde{D}_\mu\Phi$  denote the curvature and the covariant derivative, respectively, of the connection (1a),  $\tilde{A}_\mu$ . For the actual instanton fields given in ref [16], we replace  $(\tilde{A}, \tilde{F}, \tilde{D}\Phi)$ , by  $(A, F, D\Phi)$  pertaining to (1b), as the former is a spherically symmetric system.

As the  $SO(4)$  instanton of the model (3) was discussed in quite some detail in ref [16], we suffice here by only recording the surface integral, which provides the lower bound on the volume integral of (3),

$$\int \Omega_\mu d\Sigma_\mu = \int (\Omega_\mu^{(2)} + \Omega_\mu^{(1)} + \Omega_\mu^{(0)}) d\Sigma_\mu \quad (5)$$

with

$$\Omega_\mu^{(2)} = -\frac{1}{2} \eta^4 \varepsilon_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \text{tr } \gamma_5 A_\nu (F_{\rho\sigma} - \frac{2}{3} A_\rho A_\sigma) \quad (6a)$$

$$\Omega_\mu^{(1)} = \frac{1}{4} \eta^2 \varepsilon_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \text{tr } \gamma_5 \Phi \{F_{\rho\sigma}, D_\nu\Phi\} \quad (6b)$$

$$\Omega_\mu^{(0)} = \frac{i}{12} \varepsilon_{\mu\nu\rho\sigma} \text{tr } \gamma_5 \Phi (\{S, F_{\rho\sigma}\} + [D_\rho\Phi, D_\sigma\Phi]) D_\nu\Phi. \quad (6c)$$

We have parametrised (6) in terms of  $(F, D\Phi)$ , even though more generally, this surface integral is given by (6) in terms of  $(\tilde{F}, \tilde{D}\Phi)$ . This is done in anticipation of the fact that the instantons under consideration are spherically symmetric<sup>16)</sup> or, as the case may be, axially symmetric.

Together with the lower bound (5), the existence of instantons can be assured by requiring suitable boundary conditions, most important amongst which is

$$\text{tr } \Phi^2 \xrightarrow{|x_\mu| \rightarrow \infty} -\eta^2. \quad (7)$$

We now address ourselves to the question, whether in the static limit, the model (3) has a sphaleron solution. To discuss this static limit, we first recast the important quantities (3) and (6) in axially symmetric configuration. Following the procedures used in refs [15,18,19], we express the SO(4) axially symmetric field  $A_\mu = (A_i, A_4)$ ,  $i = 1,2,3$  and  $\Phi$ , as function of  $r = \sqrt{x_i x_i}$  and  $t = x_4$ ,

$$A_i = \left( \frac{\chi_2 + 1}{r} \right) \gamma_{ij} n_j + \left[ \frac{\chi_1}{r} \delta_{ij} - \left( \frac{\chi_1}{r} - a_2 \right) n_i n_j \right] \gamma_{j4} \quad (8a)$$

$$A_4 = a_1 \gamma_{j4} n_j \quad (8b)$$

$$\Phi = \phi_1 \gamma_5 \gamma_4 + \phi_2 \gamma_5 \gamma_j n_j, \quad (8c)$$

where  $a_\alpha = (a_1, a_2)$ ,  $\chi_\alpha = (\chi_1, \chi_2)$  and  $\phi_\alpha = (\phi_1, \phi_2)$  are all real functions of the two variables  $x_\alpha = (r, t)$ , with the unit vector  $\vec{n}$  defined by  $x_i = r n_i$ . Introducing further the notation  $\chi = \chi_1 + i\chi_2$ ,  $\varphi = \phi_1 + i\phi_2$ ,  $u = (|\chi|^2 - 1)$ ,  $v = (|\varphi|^2 - \eta^2)$  and  $w = (\chi\varphi^* + \chi^*\varphi)$ , (3) and (6) are expressed as,

$$\begin{aligned} L = & \frac{3}{r^4} [u f_{\alpha\beta} - i D_{[\alpha} \chi D_{\beta]} \chi^*]^2 + \frac{3 \cdot 2^3}{r^2} [w f_{\alpha\beta} + i (D_{[\alpha} \chi^* D_{\beta]} \varphi + D_{[\alpha} \varphi^* D_{\beta]} \chi)]^2 \\ & + 3^2 \cdot 2^3 [v f_{\alpha\beta} - i D_{[\alpha} \varphi D_{\beta]} \varphi^*]^2 + 2^5 \cdot 3^5 v^2 |D_i \varphi|^2 \\ & + \frac{3 \cdot 2^5}{r^2} (v D_\alpha \chi + w D_\alpha \varphi) (v D_\alpha \chi^* + w D_\alpha \varphi^*) \\ & + \frac{3 \cdot 2^5}{r^2} (u D_\alpha \varphi + w D_\alpha \chi) (u D_\alpha \varphi^* + w D_\alpha \chi^*) \\ & + 2^3 \cdot 3^3 v^4 + \frac{2^4 3^3}{r^2} v^2 w^2 + \frac{2^2 3^2}{r^4} (w^2 + 2uv)^2, \end{aligned} \quad (9)$$

and

$$\Omega_\alpha^{(2)} = \frac{3^5}{r^2} \eta^4 \epsilon_{\alpha\beta} [2a_\beta + i (\chi^* D_\beta \chi - \chi D_\beta \chi^*)] \quad (10a)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \Omega_\alpha^{(1)} = & \frac{3^5 i}{r^2} \eta^2 \epsilon_{\alpha\beta} [2|\varphi|^2 (\chi^* D_\beta \chi - \chi D_\beta \chi^*) + 2(|\chi|^2 - 1) (\varphi^* D_\beta \varphi - \varphi D_\beta \varphi^*) \\ & + \chi^* \varphi (\chi^* D_\beta \varphi - \varphi D_\beta \chi^*) + \chi \varphi^* (\varphi^* D_\beta \chi - \chi D_\beta \varphi^*)] \end{aligned} \quad (10b)$$

$$\begin{aligned} \Omega_{\alpha}^{(0)} = \frac{35i}{r^2} \varepsilon_{\alpha\beta} [ & |\varphi|^4 (\chi^* D_{\beta} \chi - \chi D_{\beta} \chi^*) + |\varphi|^2 (2|\chi|^2 - 1) (\varphi^* D_{\beta} \varphi - \varphi D_{\beta} \varphi^*) \\ & + 2|\varphi|^2 (\varphi \chi^{*2} D_{\beta} \varphi - \varphi^* \chi^2 D_{\beta} \chi^*)] \end{aligned} \quad (10c)$$

where  $f_{\alpha\beta}$  is the (Abelian) curvature of the connection  $a_{\alpha}$ , and  $D_{\alpha} = (\partial_{\alpha} + i a_{\alpha})$  its covariant derivative.

The form (9) of the Lagrangian is very useful in analysing the Ansatz for the NCL in the field space of the static system, which following Manton's prescription<sup>1)</sup>, is found by identifying the asymptotic Higgs field with  $\Phi^{\infty} = \gamma_5 \gamma_{\mu} p_{\mu}$ , in terms of the unit four-vector

$$\begin{aligned} p = (\sin \mu \sin \theta \cos \phi, \sin \mu \sin \theta \sin \phi, \sin^2 \mu \cos \theta + \cos^2 \mu, \\ \sin \mu \cos \mu (\cos \theta - 1)) \end{aligned} \quad (11)$$

Here, we shall defer this detailed analysis, and concentrate instead on a preliminary search for the sphaleron, following rather Burzlaff's prescription<sup>3)</sup>, generally.

We take the static limit<sup>15)</sup> by requiring that  $f_{\alpha\beta}$  vanish and  $\varphi$  and  $\chi$  be time independent up to a U(1) gauge transformation with parameter  $\Lambda = \Lambda(r, t)$ ,

$$a_{\alpha} = \partial_{\alpha} \Lambda, \quad \chi = e^{-i\Lambda} \widehat{\chi}(r), \quad \varphi = e^{-i\Lambda} \widehat{\varphi}(r), \quad (12)$$

and by further restricting  $\widehat{\varphi} = ih(r)$  and  $\widehat{\chi}(r) = (f(r)+1)$ , where  $h$  and  $f$  are real functions of  $r$ .

The resulting energy density descending from (9), is the SO(3) spherically symmetric field configuration on  $\mathbb{R}_3$ , of the following Lagrangian,

$$L_3 = \text{tr} [ 2^2 \lambda_1 S_{ijk}^2 + 3^2 \lambda_2 S_{ij}^2 + 3^3 2\lambda_3 S_i^2 + 3^2 \lambda_4 (S^2)^2 ], \quad (13)$$

where we have employed the notation given by (4b-e) with the spherically symmetric fields on  $\mathbb{R}_3$

$$A_i = \frac{f(r)}{r} \gamma_{ij} n_j, \quad \Phi = h(r) \gamma_5 \gamma_j n_j \quad (14a,b)$$

We have not yet expressed (13) explicitly in terms of  $f(r)$  and  $h(r)$ , because we shall arrive at that

expression presently in a more instructive way.

That a spherically symmetric solution to the Euler-Lagrange equations of the energy functional of (13) exists, is not in question. That is evident from a consideration of the corresponding (scaling) Virial theorem<sup>8)</sup>, and the definite sign of (13),  $L_3$ . It is even easy to find a surface integral<sup>20)</sup> in this case, giving the energy integral topological stability. But for this solution to be a sphaleron, we must demonstrate that it is unstable against, for example<sup>3)</sup>, perturbations in some parameter, and that the energy functional, namely the 3-dimensional volume integral of (13) for the field configuration (14), be the maximal point of this one parameter family.

In analogy with the one parameter Ansatz of Burzlaff<sup>3)</sup> for the DHN Sphaleron, we make here the following Ansatz

$$\Phi = h(r) \Phi^\infty, A_i = -\frac{1}{4} f(r) [\Phi^\infty, \partial_i \Phi^\infty] \quad (15a,b)$$

with

$$\Phi^\infty = \gamma_5 \gamma_\mu q_\mu \quad (16a)$$

$$q_\mu = (\sin \mu \sin \theta \cos \phi, \sin \mu \sin \theta \sin \phi, \sin \mu \cos \theta, \cos \mu) \quad (16b)$$

Notice that  $(\Phi, A_i)$  given by (14), coincide with the fields (15-16) for  $\mu = \frac{\pi}{2}$ .

It is left to calculate (13) for the fields (15)-(16), and inquire as to whether the maximal value of the former occurs at  $\frac{\pi}{2}$ . If so, and if the energy functional vanishes for  $\mu = 0, \pi$ , then (14) is unstable against the fluctuations of  $\mu$ , and is a sphaleron solution at  $\mu = \frac{\pi}{2}$ .

We give the result, term by term,

$$\text{tr } S_{ijk}^2 = -\frac{24}{r^4} [f(f+2) h' + h(f+1) f']^2 \sin^4 \mu \quad (17a)$$

$$\text{tr } S_{ij}^2 = -\frac{2}{r^2} [2([h^2 - \eta^2](f+1))'^2 + \frac{1}{r^2} (f(f+2)(h^2 - \eta^2) + 2h^2(f+1)^2)^2 \sin^2 \mu] \sin^2 \mu \quad (17b)$$

$$\text{tr } S_i^2 = -16 (h^2 - \eta^2)^2 [h'^2 + \frac{2h^2}{r^2} (f+1)^2 \sin^2 \mu] \quad (17c)$$

$$\text{tr } (S^2)^2 = - (h^2 - \eta^2)^4 \quad (17d)$$



For  $\mu = \frac{\pi}{2}$ , substitution of (17) into (13) coincides with the static limit of (9). It is clear from (17) that  $L_3$  for the fields (14)-(15) is (negative) definite, as it is expected to be. So we would expect that the nonzero topological lower bound, (c.f. ref [20] ) not explicitly constructed here, would ensure a nontrivial solution. It is not however easy to give a strict proof of existence, for example by adapting the Tyupkin, Fat e'ev, Schwarz (TFS)<sup>21)</sup> existence proof of the monopole, as was done in ref[3]. This is because of the unusual kinetic terms in (17), which are not simply the velocity terms  $f^2$  or  $h^2$ , but some functions of  $f$  and/or  $h$  times these velocity terms. ( This is in principle feasible, and for a simpler example of this kind, namely for the seven dimensional selfdual GYM-Higgs 'monopole', the TFS proof was successfully adapted<sup>22)23)</sup>).

There remains finally the question as to whether this solution, is indeed a sphaleron, by testing to find out if the energy functional

$$E = 4\pi \int (r^2 L_3 [f, f'; h, h']) dr$$

is maximal for  $\mu = \frac{\pi}{2}$ . This is manifestly so, because each term in (17) has definite sign, and depends on the parameter  $\mu$  only through the function  $\sin^2\mu$ . This is exactly analogous to the situation for the DHN sphaleron<sup>3)</sup>.

We have presented a (3+1) dimensional  $SO(4) \times U(1)$  Higgs model which has instantons in  $\mathbb{R}_4$ , and in the static limit a finite energy solution in  $\mathbb{R}_3$ . We have explicitly demonstrated that this finite energy solution lies at the maximal energy point of a one parameter family and is therefore a sphaleron in  $\mathbb{R}_3$ . This sphaleron field configuration is not obtained by putting the  $U(1)$  field of the model equal to zero by hand, but rather by the imposition of spherical symmetry (in  $\mathbb{R}_3$ ).

The explicit construction of the NCL in field space, and the analysis of its properties on the lines of ref [1], which is a straightforward task, is deferred elsewhere. We also defer the less straightforward task of attempting to analyse the  $t$ -dependence<sup>24)</sup> of the instability parameter  $\mu$ . Both these questions are at present under active consideration.

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