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Crossover from Landau Fermi liquid to non-Fermi liquid behavior: Indications from Hall measurements on CeCoIn$_5$

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Abstract

We conducted Hall effect measurements on the heavy-fermion superconductor CeCoIn$_5$ for temperatures 0.05–5 K and for pressures up to 1.2 GPa. A scaling of the magnetic field $H$ is introduced for the differential Hall coefficient, $R_{H}^d = \partial \rho_{xy}(T,H)/\partial H$ resulting in a single generic curve for $R_{H}^d(H)$ curves obtained at different $T$. We argue that the peak feature apparent in this generic curve corresponds to the crossover from non-Fermi liquid to Landau Fermi liquid behavior.

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Keywords: Superconductivity; Heavy-fermion metal; Landau Fermi liquid

The compound CeCoIn$_5$ is particularly suited to investigate the interplay of quantum criticality and unconventional superconductivity (SC) in which the pairing might be mediated by magnetic fluctuations. It exhibits the highest superconducting critical temperature, $T_c$, among the Ce-based ambient pressure superconductors [1], a magnetic field tuned quantum critical point (QCP) may exist [2] close to the upper critical field of SC, $H_{c2}$, and SC may hide an antiferromagnetic (AFM) order.

Hall effect measurements are a well established tool to shed light on the electronic properties of materials close to a QCP. Accordingly, such measurements have early been conducted for $T \geq 1$ K [3], even for applied pressures $p$ [4]. In our case, we want to concentrate on the low-$T$ region 0.05 K $\leq T \leq$ 5 K and $p \leq$ 1.2 GPa. At these $T$ well below the coherence temperature $T^* \approx 40$ K no anomalous Hall contribution is found. However, interpretation of Hall effect in CeCoIn$_5$ is complicated since SC inhibits a determination of the initial Hall coefficient and multiple bands at the Fermi level contribute to the Hall signal with a field dependent cyclotron mass [5].

For Hall measurements, isothermal field sweeps were conducted on single crystalline CeCoIn$_5$ samples with $H \parallel c$. Measurements under pressure were carried out in a piston cylinder type pressure cell. The evolution of the Hall resistivity $\rho_{xy}$ (left) and its differential $R_{H}^d = \partial \rho_{xy}/\partial H$ (right) for increasing $p$ at $T = 120$ mK is shown in Fig. 1. A changing slope of $\rho_{xy}(H)$, as obvious from the $T = 120$ mK data, is observed for 0.1 $\leq T \leq$ 0.3 K at $p = 0$ and 0.3 GPa resulting in a minimum of $|R_{H}^d|$ (arrow). This feature is suppressed with increasing $p$ and can no longer be resolved at 1.2 GPa.

For further analysis, the $H$-values of the ambient pressure isothermal $R_{H}^d(T,H)$ vs. $H$ curves were scaled by $H_{min}^d$. Here, $H_{min}^d$ denotes the field value at which $|R_{H}^d|$ assumes its minimum for 70 $\leq T \leq$ 200 mK. As seen in

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Fig. 2, i.e. slightly below \( p^* \), approach the base line, with minor deviations at \( H/H_{\text{min}} \approx 0.7 \). For intermediate \( p = 0.8 \) GPa, the \( R_{\text{HH}} \) values appear to be reduced for lower fields only. Note that for \( H \) scaling at \( p > 0 \) the \( R_{\text{HH}}^d \) values obtained at \( p = 0 \) were used. 

(ii) \( R_{\text{HH}}^d \) values: At low \( H < 0.7H_{\text{min}}^d \) we obtain \(-R_{\text{HH}}^d \approx 6 \times 10^{-10} \text{ m}^3/\text{C} \) with a slight \( H \) dependence \((7 \times 10^{-10} \text{ m}^3/\text{C} \text{ at } 1.5H_{\text{min}}^d)\). This value agrees remarkably well with the one reported [4] for the non-magnetic analogue LaCoIn5 \((-5.5 \times 10^{-10} \text{ m}^3/\text{C})\). Generally, pressure drives Ce from a 4f1 towards a non-magnetic 4f0 configuration. Moreover, \( R_{\text{HH}}^d \) of the Ce- and the La-based compound agree well at \( \mu_0H = 7 \text{ T} \), i.e. in the LFL regime.

(iii) The \( T \) dependence of \( H_{\text{min}}^d \) as obtained from the scaling (Fig. 2) tracks the crossover [2] from non-Fermi liquid to LFL behavior (not shown).

The “peak feature” might be related to AFM SF or to the opening of an AFM gap at the FS if a spin density wave is formed. The latter may also cause a discontinuity in \( R_{\text{HH}}^d \) [8]. However, pressure suppresses the “peak feature” while changing the FS only little [5]. Note that Hall measurements (unlike thermodynamic ones) are sensitive to even weak fluctuations. Hence, the anisotropic AFM SF might be considered as a precursor of a gap opening.

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