



**SAPIENZA**  
UNIVERSITÀ DI ROMA



# DYNAMICS OF BUBBLE NUCLEATION

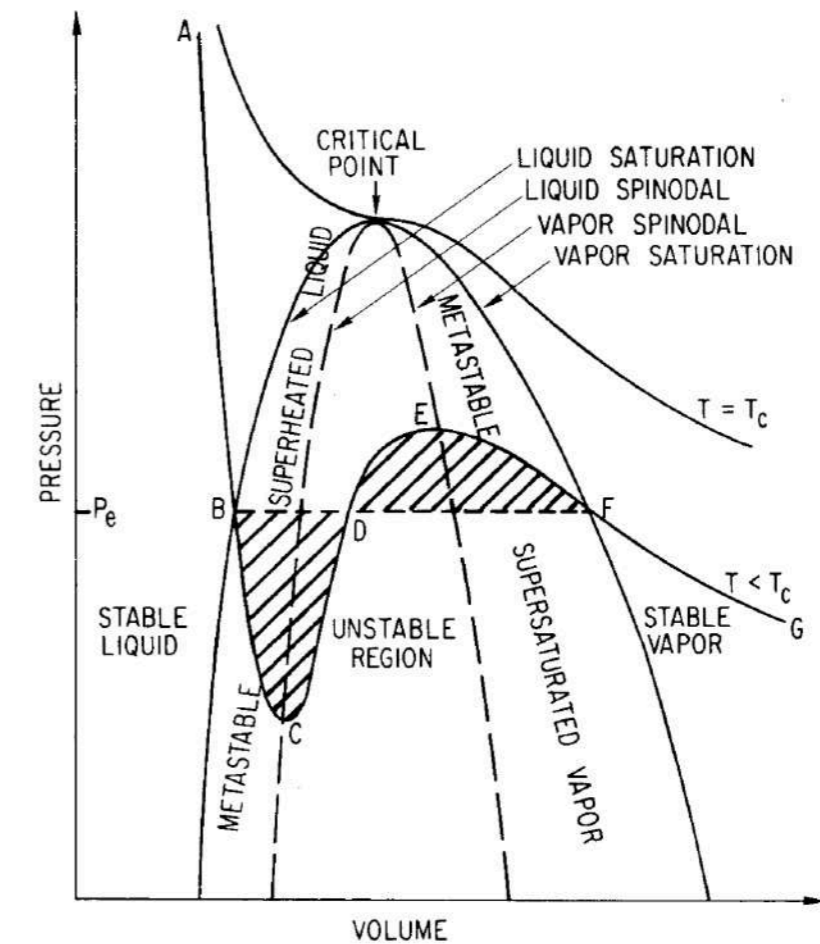
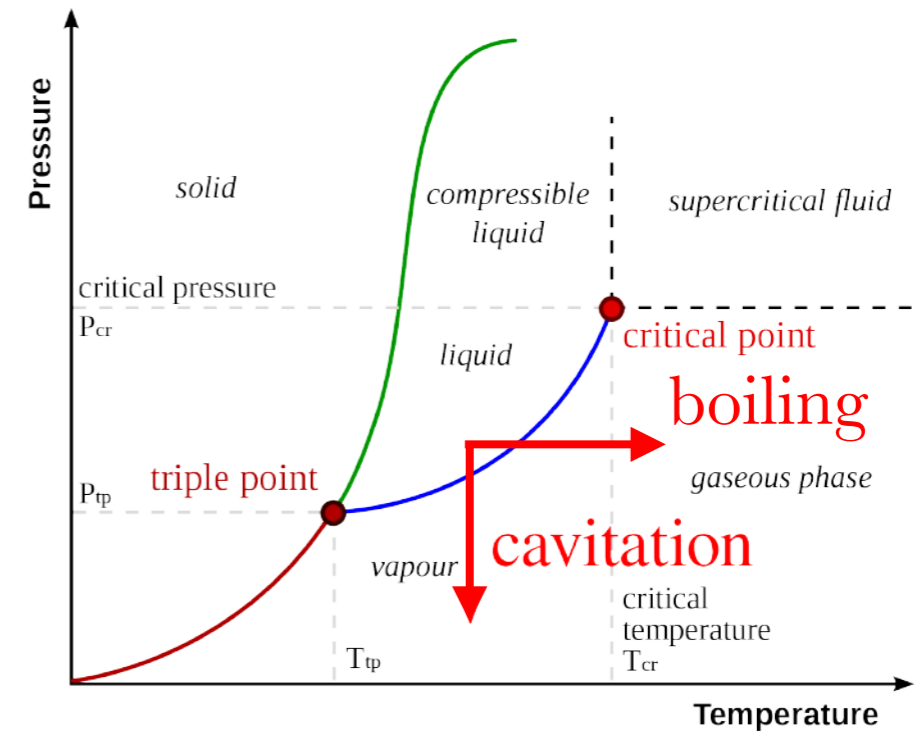
**C.M. CASCIOLA**

DEPT. OF MECHANICAL AND  
AEROSPACE ENGINEERING  
SAPIENZA UNIVERSITY

CaSToRC HPC National Competence Center Seminar Series  
Cyprus, January 18th 2022

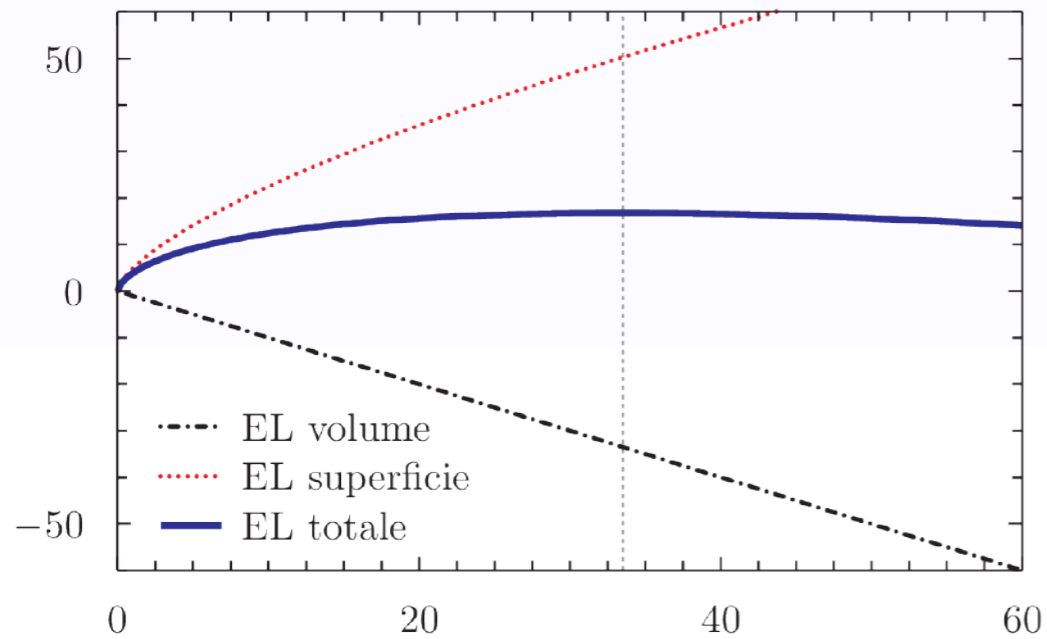
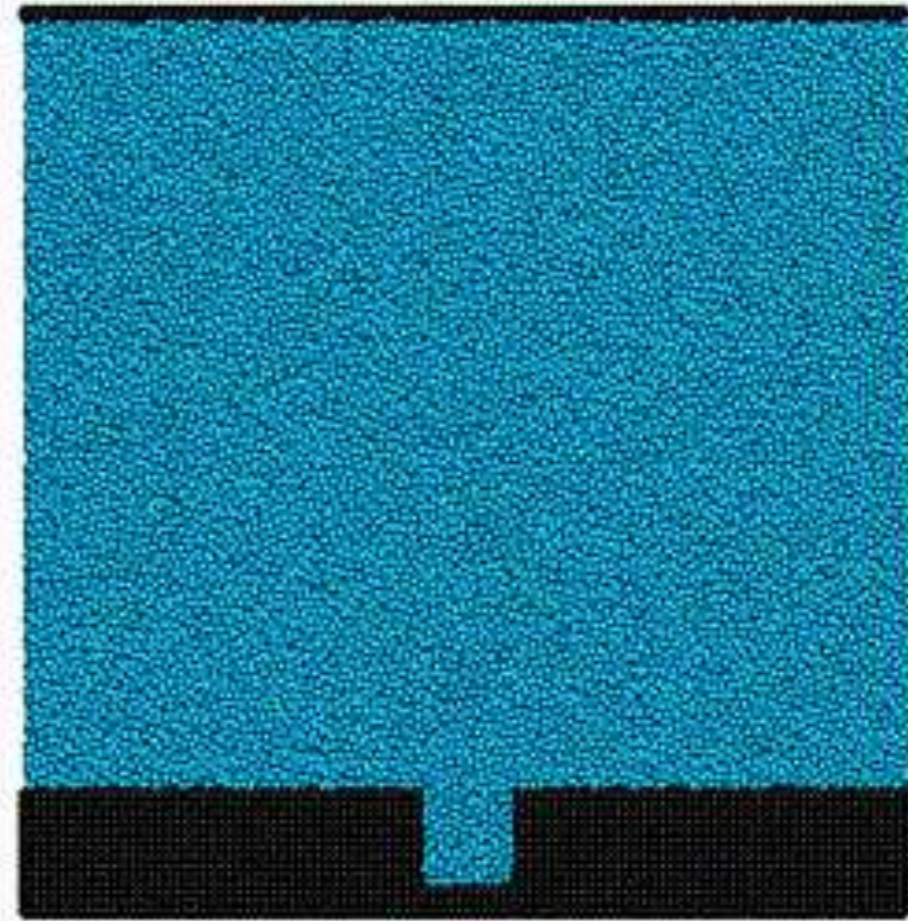
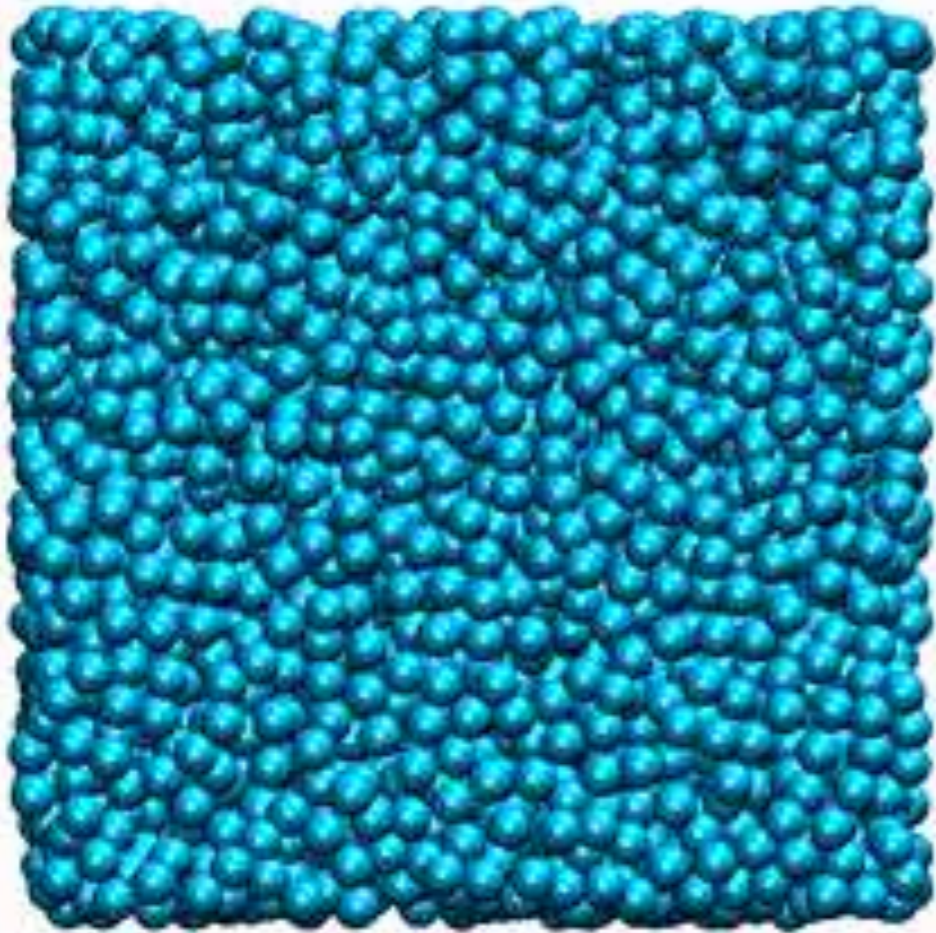


# Introduction





# Bubble Nucleation



$$t = t_0 \exp \left( \frac{\Delta\Omega^\ddagger}{k_B T} \right)$$

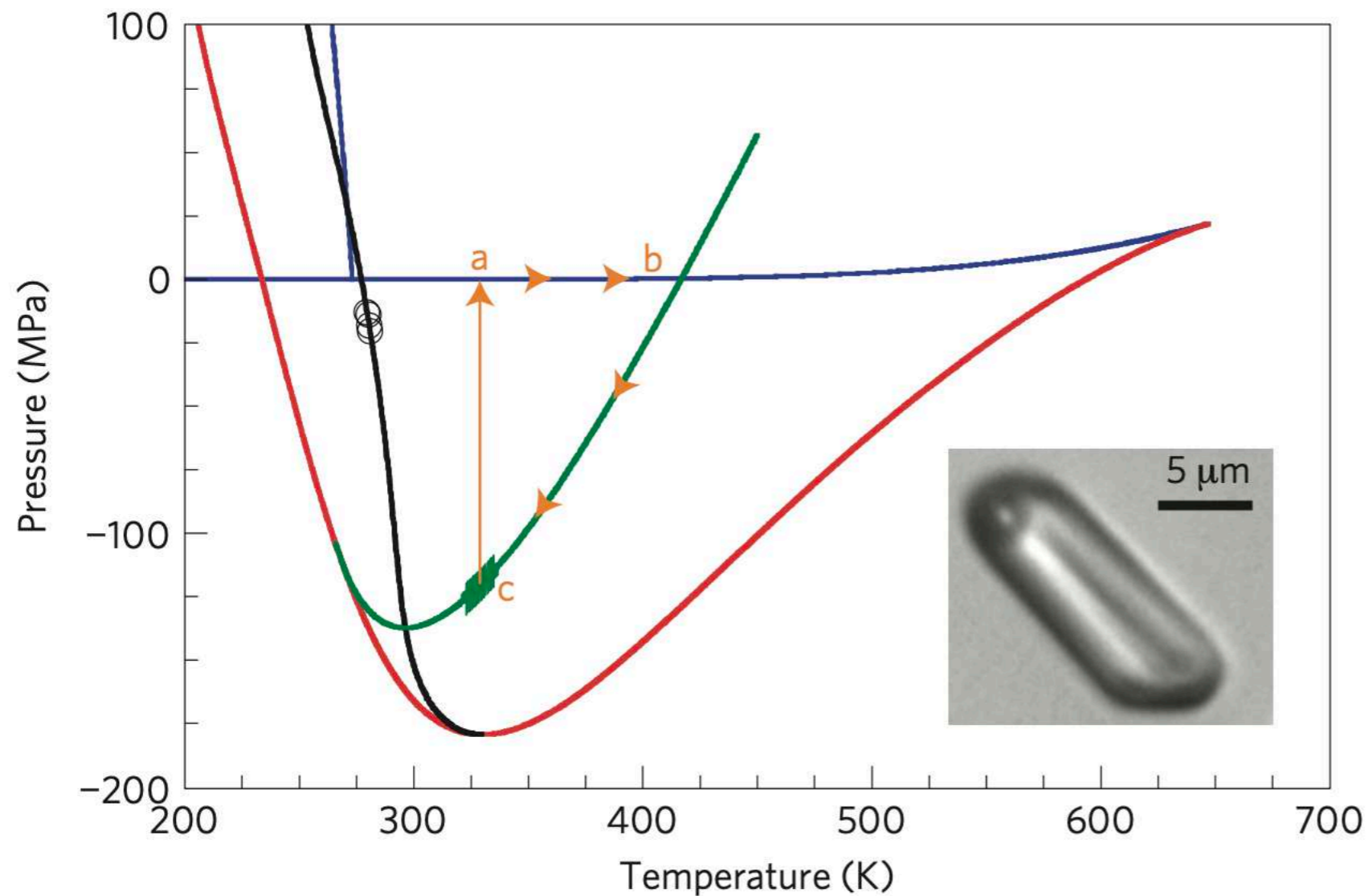
# The Question is:

---

Can we bridge the gap between the (metastable) liquid and the successive (nonlinear) bubble dynamics phase, encompassing nucleation in the model?

# EQUILIBRIUM

# Experiments: Quartz Inclusions



Spinodal

Isochore

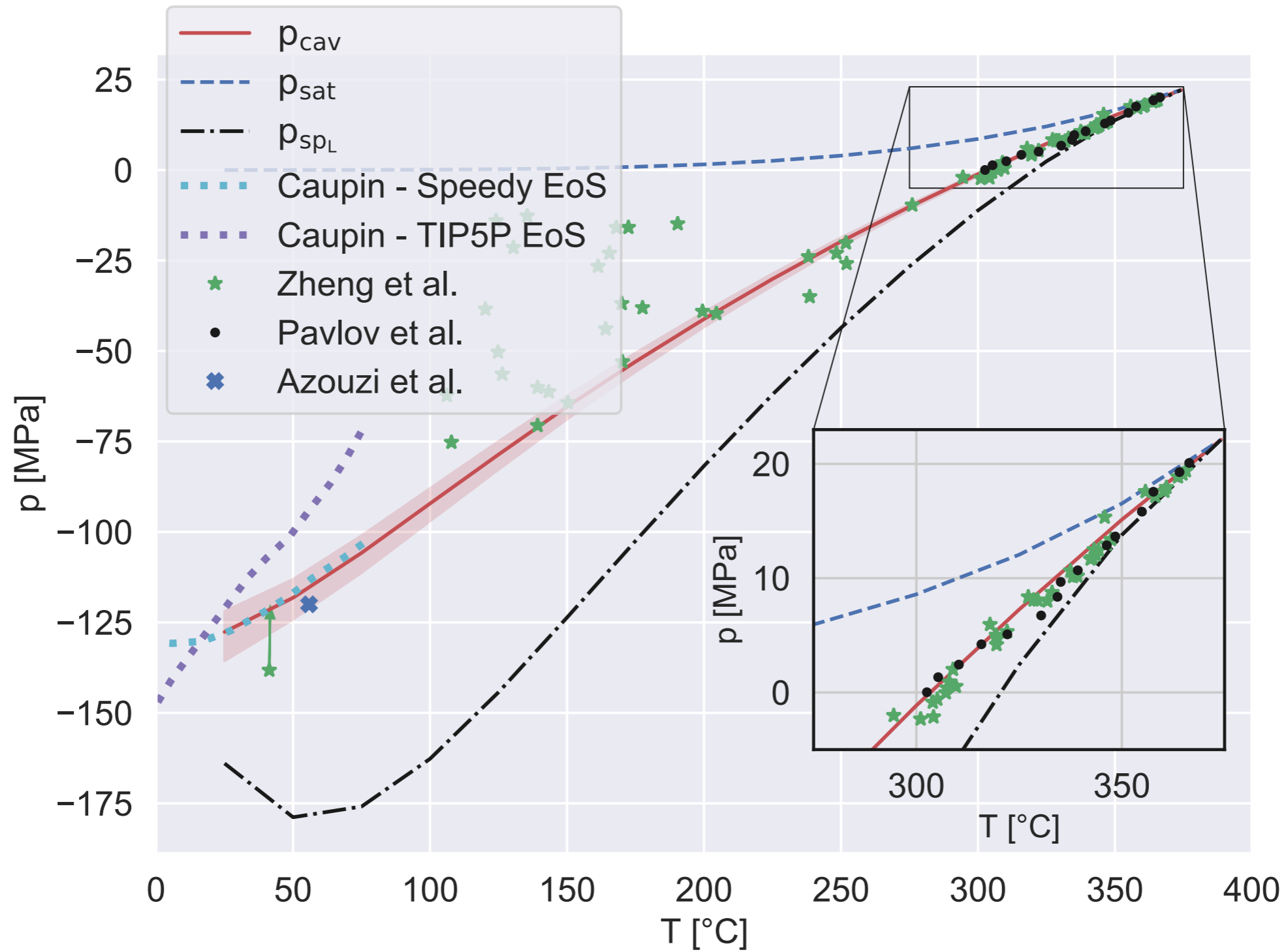
Line Density Maxima

Liquid-Vapor Equilibrium

\* Azouzi et al., Nat. Phy. 2012

# Comparison with Experimental Data

## Cavitation Pressure





# VdW's Square Gradient Approximation

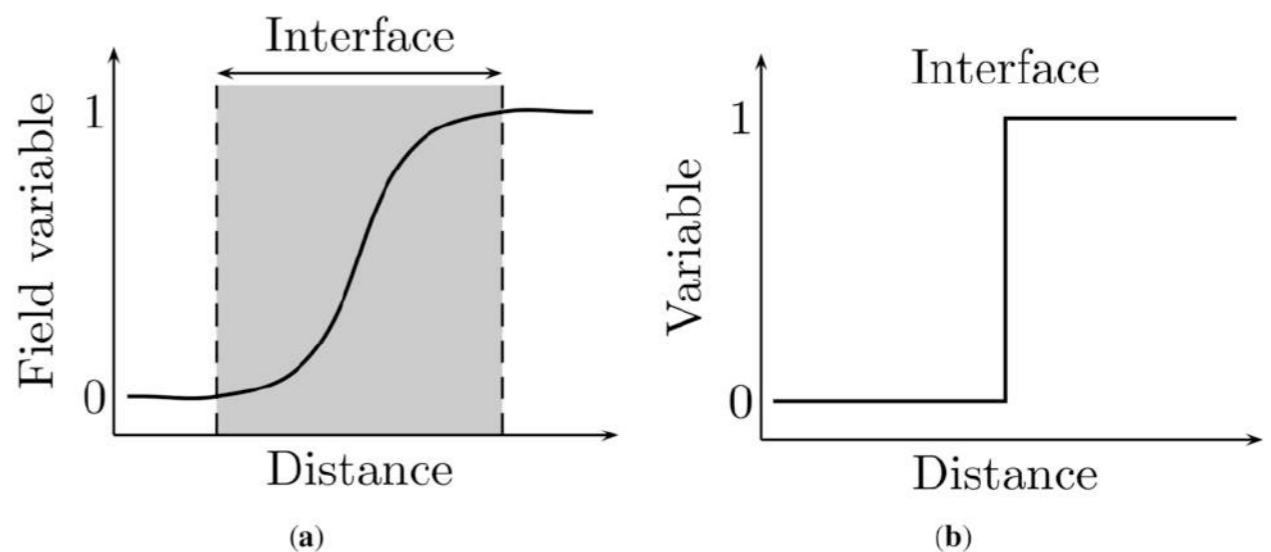
$$F[\rho, \theta] = \int_{\mathcal{D}} \hat{f} dV = \int_{\mathcal{D}} \left( \hat{f}_0(\rho, \theta) + \frac{\lambda}{2} |\nabla \rho|^2 \right) dv$$

Free-energy functional assumed to be given by two contributions

- bulk free-energy density of the homogeneous phases
- energy penalty associated with the interface

Minimization wrt density variations provides equilibrium conditions

$$\frac{\delta F}{\delta \rho} = \frac{\partial \hat{f}_0}{\partial \rho} - \nabla \cdot (\lambda \nabla \rho) = \mu_0$$





# Free Energy Profile

---

In the transition between two (meta)stable states,

$$\rho_a(\mathbf{x}), \rho_b(\mathbf{x})$$

the system goes through a sequence of intermediate states  
(a curve in the space of density fields)

$$\rho(\mathbf{x}, s), s \in [0, 1], \quad \rho(\mathbf{x}, 0) = \rho_a(\mathbf{x}), \quad \rho(\mathbf{x}, 1) = \rho_b(\mathbf{x})$$

identifying a free energy profile

$$F(s) = \int_{\mathcal{D}} \left( \hat{f}_0(\rho(\mathbf{x}, s), \theta) + \lambda |\nabla \rho(\mathbf{x}, s)|^2 \right) dv$$

# Minimum Free Energy Path

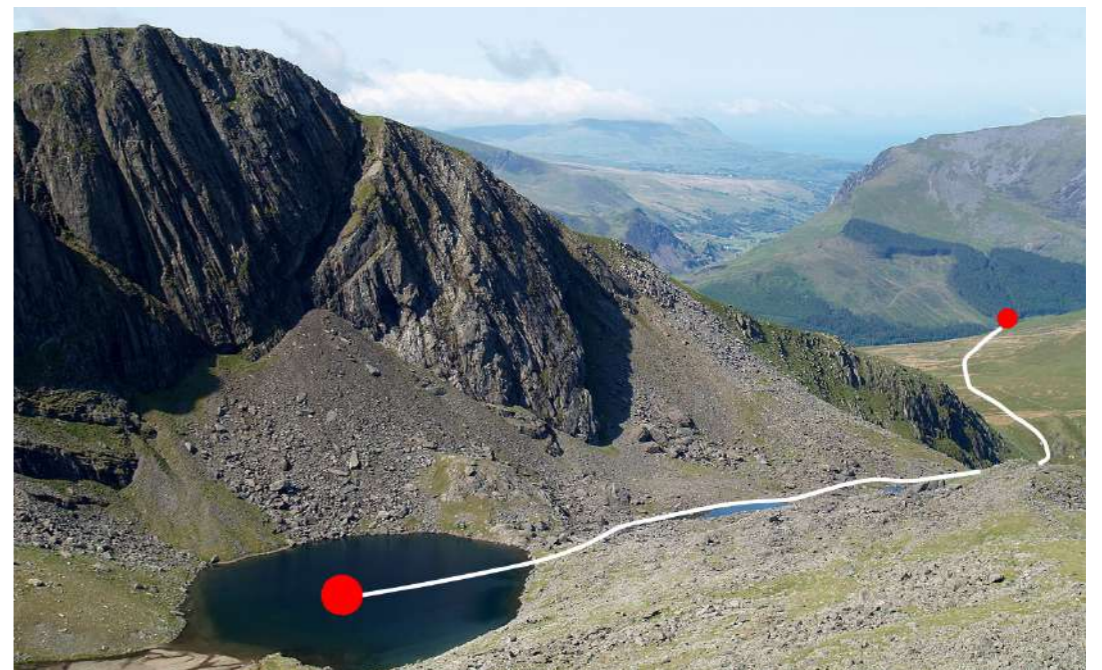
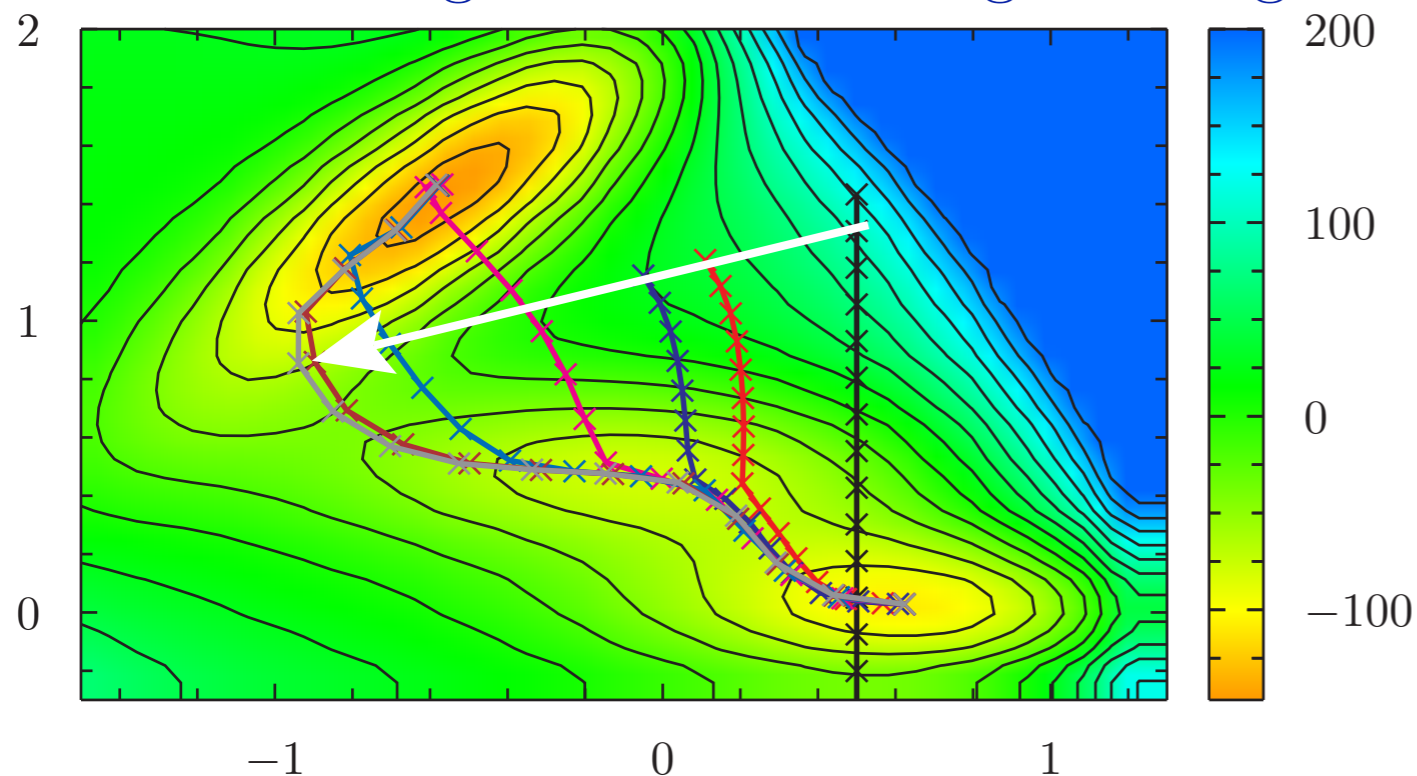
The Minimum Free Path is the curve

$$\rho(\mathbf{x}) = \rho_{MFEP}(\mathbf{x}, s)$$

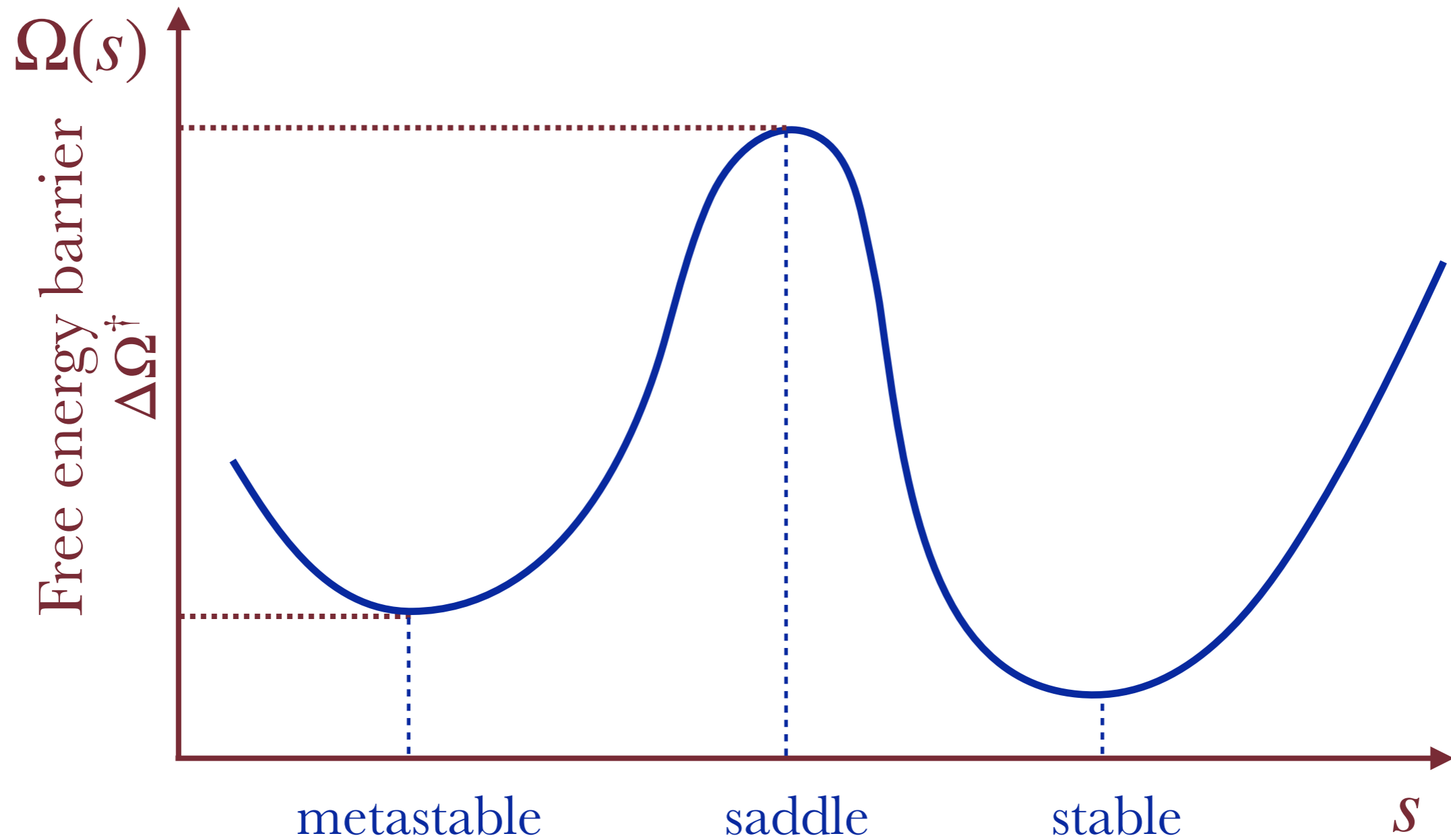
that is everywhere tangent to free energy gradient

$$\left( \frac{\delta F[\rho(\mathbf{x}, s)]}{\delta \rho(s)} \right)^\perp = 0$$

String Method: see, e.g., Maragliano et al., J. Chem. Phys. 2006



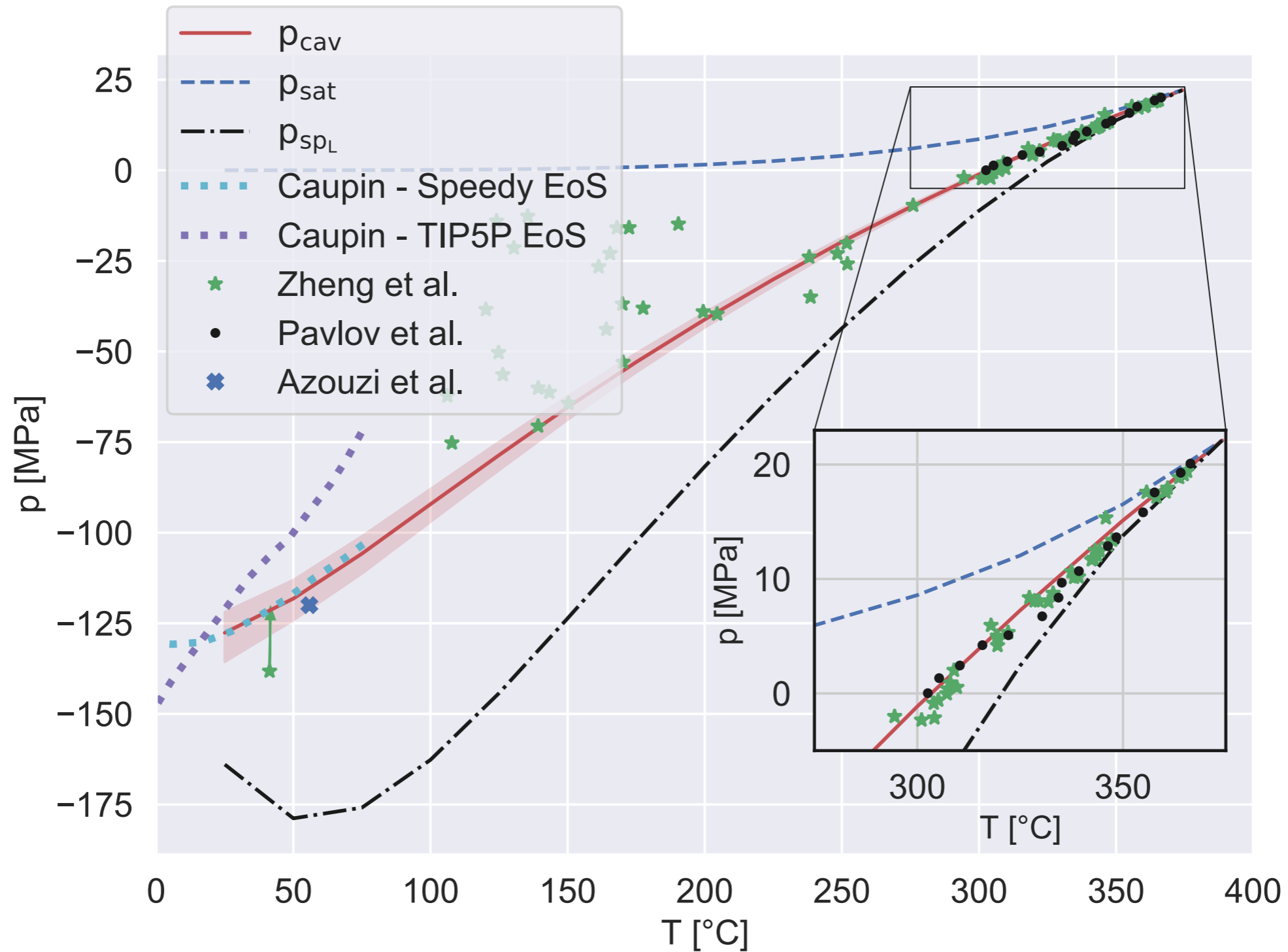
# Free Energy Barrier



Transition time  $\propto \exp(\Delta\Omega^\ddagger/k_b\theta)$



# Comparison with Experimental Data Cavitation Pressure



# DYNAMICS

# Governing Equations

---

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\rho \mathbf{u}) = 0 \quad (\text{mass})$$

$$\frac{\partial (\rho \mathbf{u})}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\rho \mathbf{u} \otimes \mathbf{u}) = \nabla \cdot \boldsymbol{\tau} \quad (\text{momentum})$$

$$\frac{\partial E}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\rho E) = \nabla \cdot (\mathbf{u} \cdot \boldsymbol{\tau} - \mathbf{q}_e) \quad (\text{energy})$$

$$\boldsymbol{\tau} = -p_0 \mathbf{I} + \boldsymbol{\Sigma} = -p_0 \mathbf{I} + \mu \left[ (\nabla \mathbf{u} + \nabla \mathbf{u}^T) - \frac{2}{3} \nabla \cdot \mathbf{u} \mathbf{I} \right] +$$

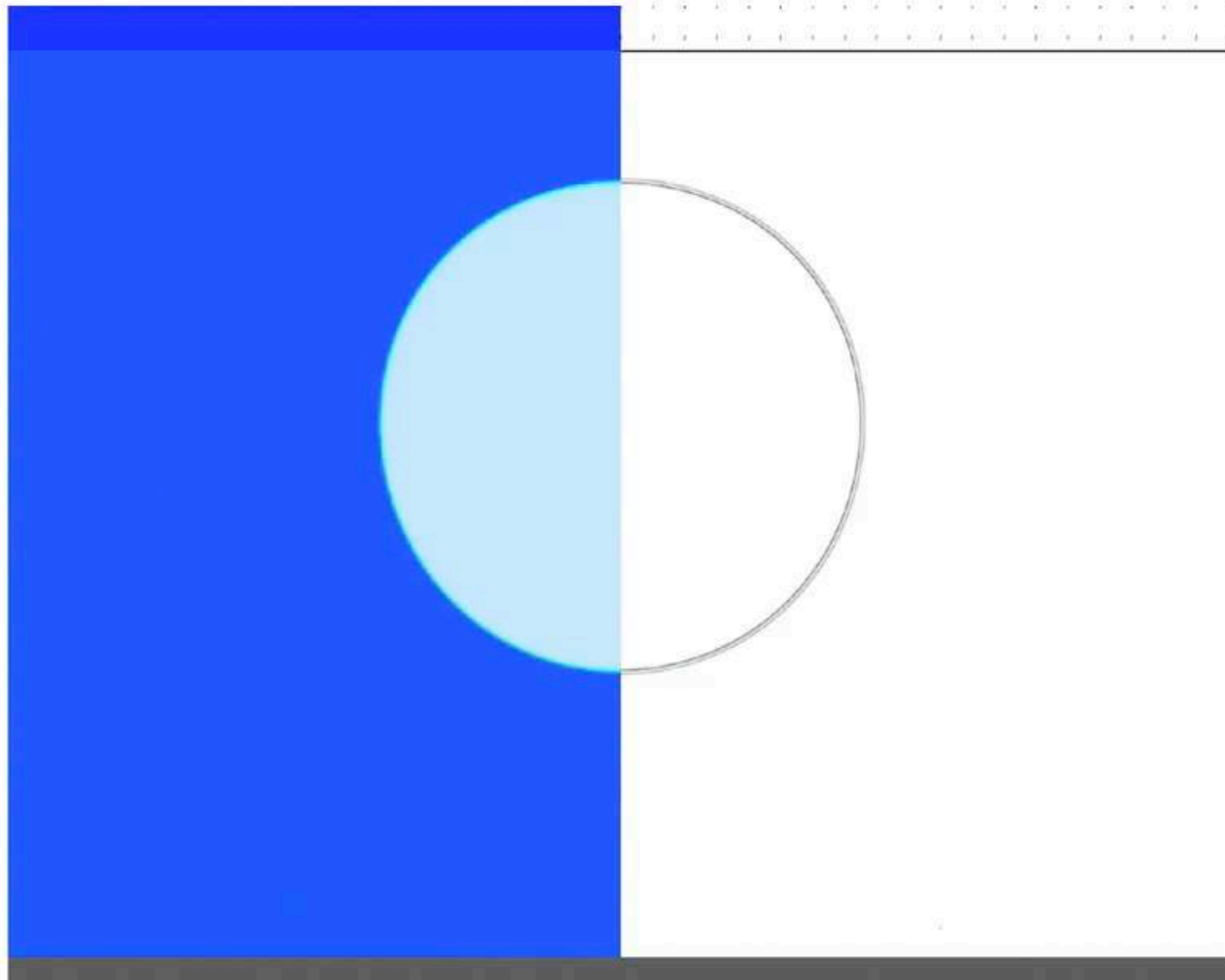
$$\left[ \frac{\lambda}{2} |\nabla \rho|^2 + \rho \nabla \cdot (\lambda \nabla \rho) \right] \mathbf{I} - \lambda \nabla \rho \otimes \nabla \rho$$

Distributed capillarity

$$\mathbf{q}_e = \lambda \rho \nabla \rho \nabla \cdot \mathbf{u} - k \nabla \theta$$



# Diffuse Interface (Phase Field) Model

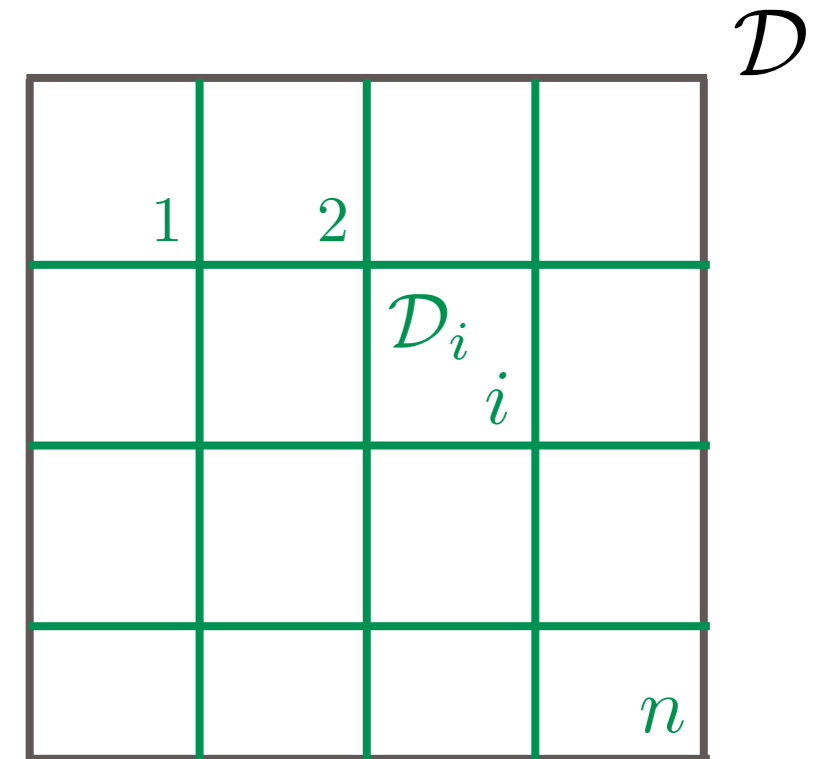


# THERMAL FLUCTUATIONS

# Coarse Graining & Collective Variables

Microcanonical system  
(constant Energy, Volume, #particles )

$$f(\Gamma) = \frac{\delta [H(\Gamma) - E_T]}{N_T! \hbar^{3N_T} Z} \quad \Gamma = (\mathbf{q}, \mathbf{p})$$



$$\Delta = (\delta\rho_1, \delta E_1, \dots, \delta\rho_n, \delta E_n) \quad p(\Delta) = \langle \Delta - \hat{\Delta}(\Gamma) \rangle$$

Fluctuation wrt most probable state

Pdf of fluctuation

\*

$$p(\Delta) = \int f(\Gamma) \delta(\Delta - \hat{\Delta}(\Gamma)) d\Gamma = \exp\left(-\frac{S_0}{k_b}\right) \underbrace{\int d\Gamma \delta(E_0 - H(\Gamma)) \prod_{s=1}^n \delta(\rho - \hat{\rho}_s(\Gamma)) \delta(E - \hat{E}_s(\Gamma))}_{\text{Fluctuation Entropy}}$$



# Fluctuation Probability

---

$$p(\Delta) = \exp\left(\frac{S[\rho, E] - S_0}{k_b}\right) \quad \text{Einstein-Boltzmann principle}$$

The pdf is a functional of the fluctuating field

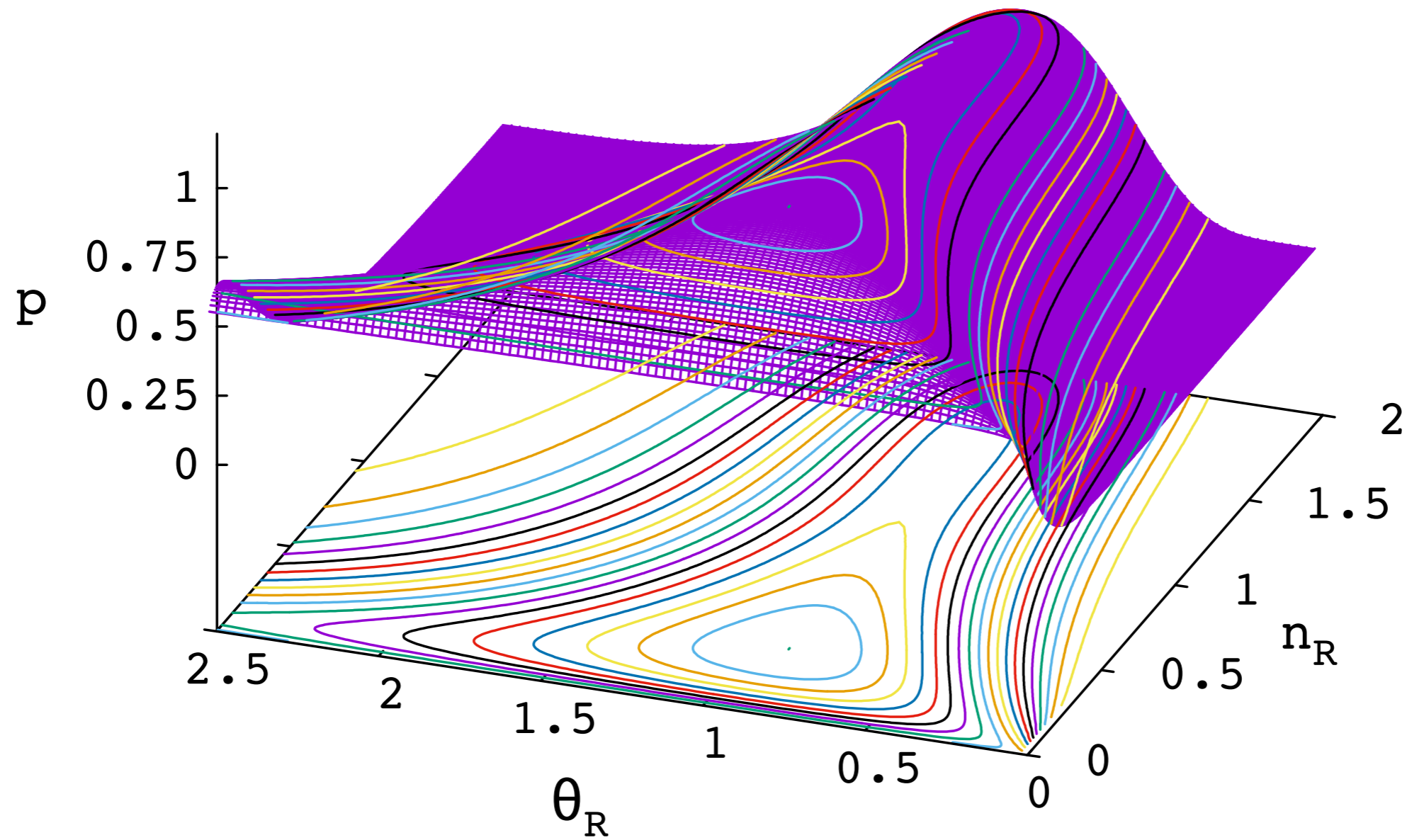
From the VdW diffuse interface model:

$$S[\rho, E] = -\frac{\delta F[\rho, \theta]}{\delta \theta} = \int_{\mathcal{D}} \hat{s}_0(\rho, \theta) dv$$

$$p(\Delta) = \exp\left(\frac{1}{k_b} \int_{\mathcal{D}} (\hat{s}_0(\rho, \theta) - s_{eq}) dv\right)$$

# Fluctuation probability

---



# Correlations

---

$$\Delta S \simeq \Delta S_0 = -\frac{1}{2} \int_V dV \left[ \frac{c_{T0}^2}{\theta_0 \rho_0} \delta \rho^2 - \frac{\lambda}{\theta_0} \delta \rho (\nabla^2 \delta \rho) + \frac{\rho_0}{\theta_0} \delta \mathbf{v} \cdot \delta \mathbf{v} + \frac{\rho_0 c_{v0}}{\theta_0^2} \delta \theta^2 \right]$$

$$C_{\Delta}(\mathbf{x}) = \langle \Delta \otimes \Delta^\dagger \rangle = \frac{1}{Z} \int D\delta \rho D\delta \mathbf{v} D\delta \theta \Delta \otimes \Delta^\dagger \exp \left( \frac{1}{k_B} \int_V \Delta s(\delta \rho, \delta \mathbf{v}, \delta \theta) dV \right)$$

\* The correlation tensor is expressed as a path integral

$$C_{\delta \rho \delta \rho} = \frac{k_B \theta_0}{4\pi \lambda |\hat{\mathbf{r}} - \tilde{\mathbf{r}}|} \exp \left( -|\hat{\mathbf{r}} - \tilde{\mathbf{r}}| \sqrt{\frac{c_T^2}{\rho_0 \lambda}} \right) \quad C_{\delta \theta \delta \theta} = \frac{k_B \theta_0^2}{\rho_0 c_v} \delta(\hat{\mathbf{r}} - \tilde{\mathbf{r}}) \quad \mathbf{C}_{\delta \mathbf{v} \delta \mathbf{v}} = \frac{k_B \theta_0}{\rho_0} \mathbf{I} \delta(\hat{\mathbf{r}} - \tilde{\mathbf{r}})$$

# Landau-Lifschitz-Navier-Stokes equations

---

Stochastic terms included to force thermal fluctuations: SPDEs

$$\frac{\partial \rho}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\rho \mathbf{u}) = 0$$

$$\frac{\partial \rho \mathbf{u}}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\rho \mathbf{u} \otimes \mathbf{u}) = -\nabla p + \nabla \cdot \Sigma + \boxed{\nabla \cdot \delta \Sigma}$$

$$\frac{\partial E}{\partial t} + \nabla \cdot (\mathbf{u} E) = \nabla \cdot (-p \mathbf{u} + \mathbf{u} \cdot \Sigma - \mathbf{q}) + \boxed{\nabla \cdot (\mathbf{u} \cdot \delta \Sigma + \delta \mathbf{q})}$$

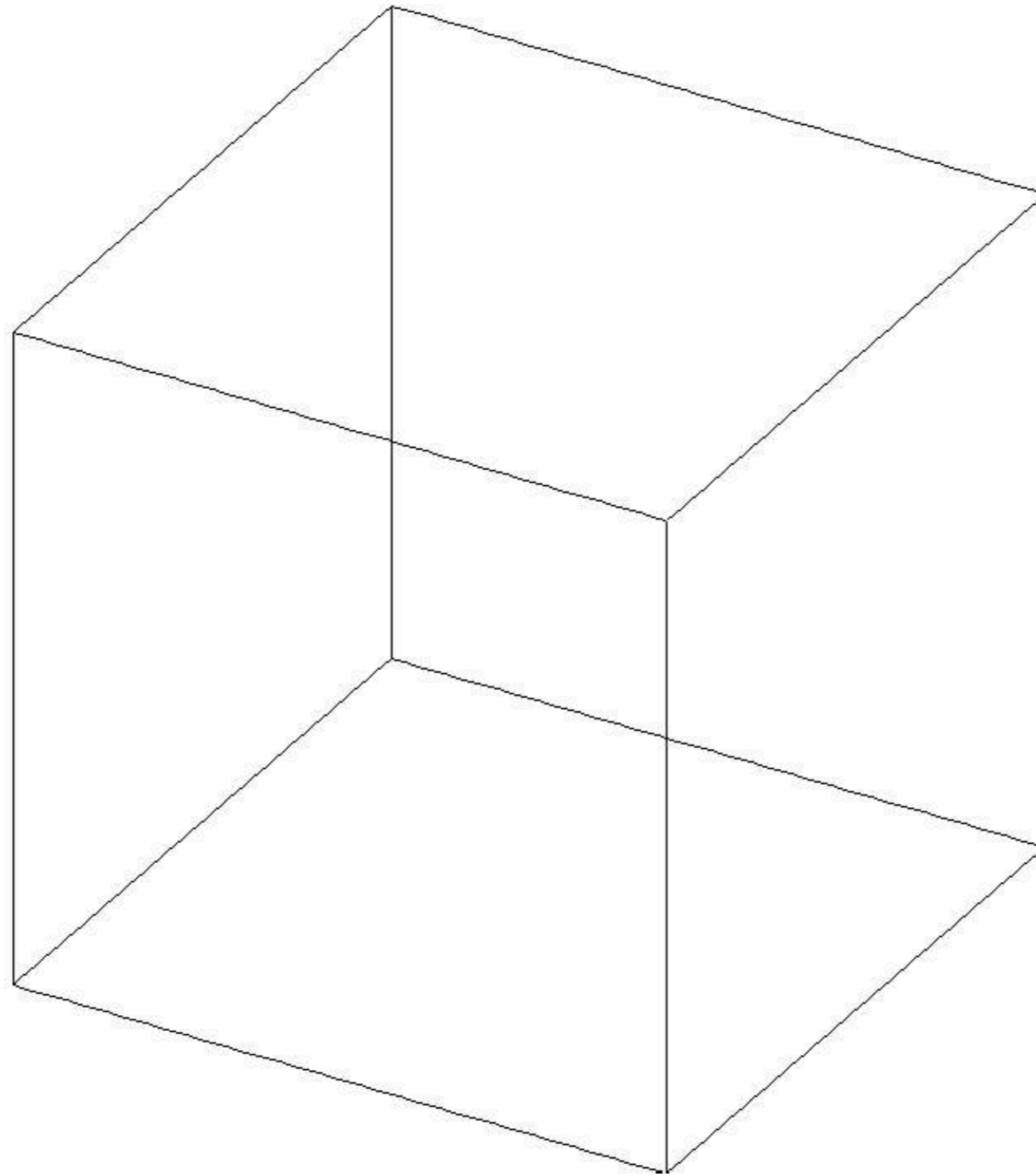
Solution should reproduce the equilibrium pdf (fluctuation-dissipation theorem):  
**enforcing equilibrium correlations determines noise amplitude**

$$\delta \Sigma = \sqrt{2\mu k_B \theta} \tilde{\mathbf{W}}^v - \frac{1}{3} \sqrt{2\mu k_B \theta} \text{Tr}(\tilde{\mathbf{W}}^v) \mathbf{I}$$

$$\delta \mathbf{q} = \sqrt{2k k_B \theta^2} \tilde{\mathbf{W}}^E$$

# Bubble formation

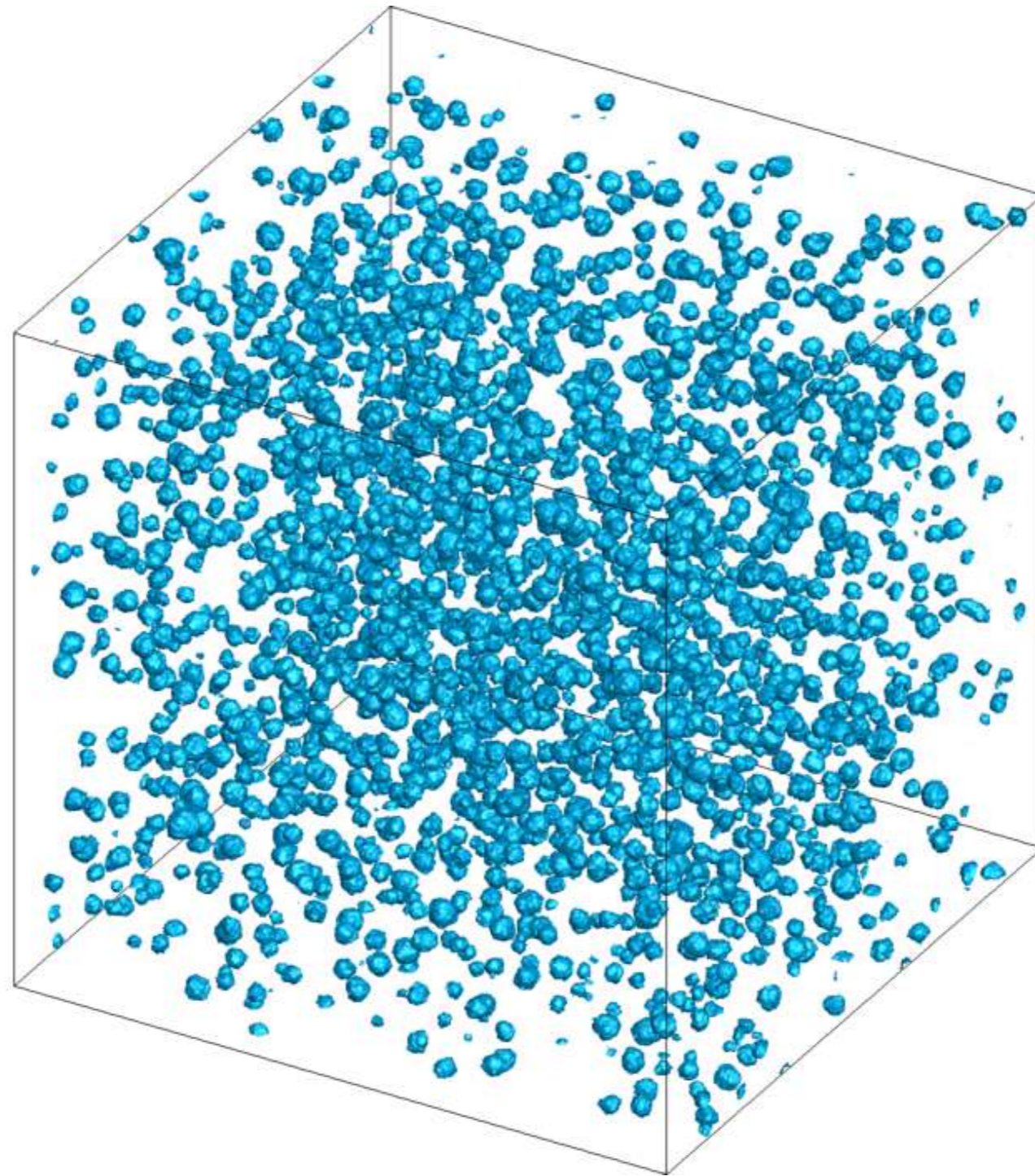
---





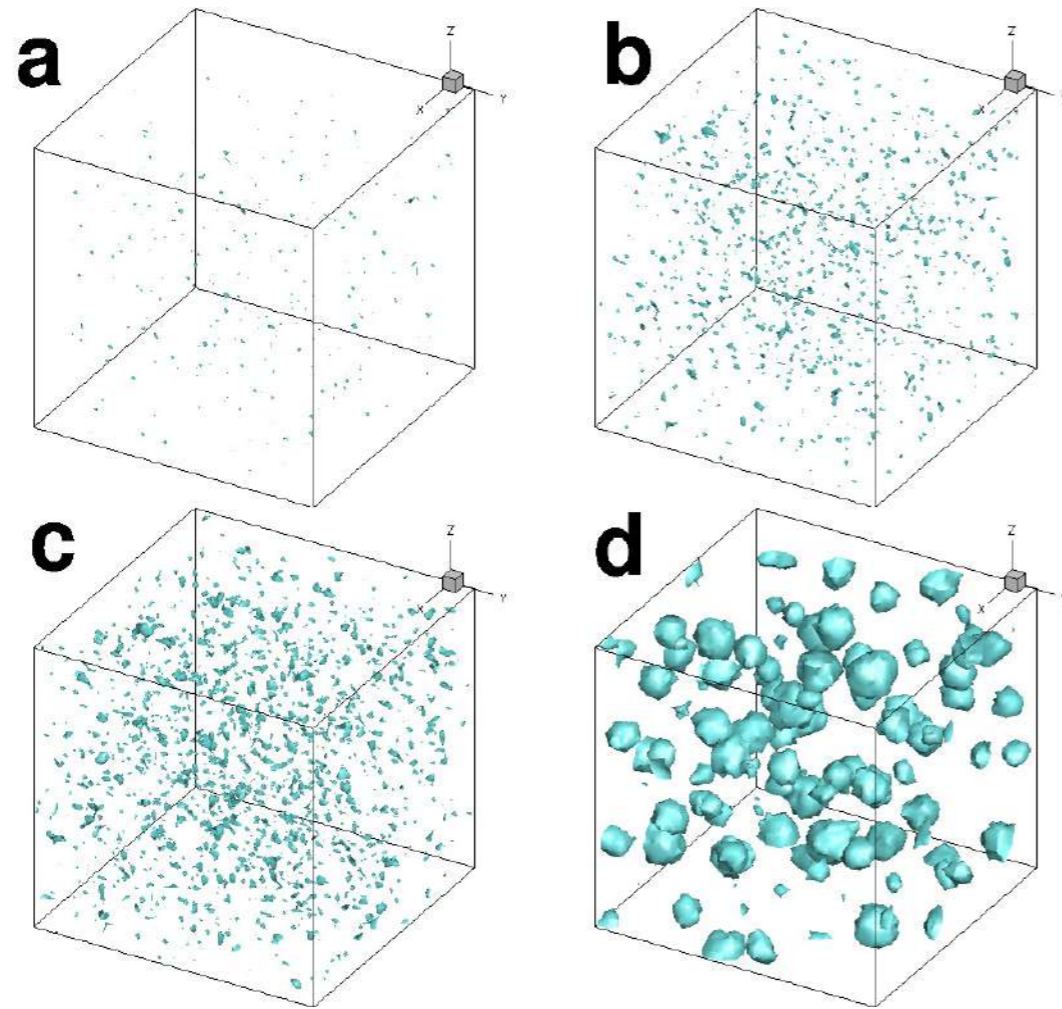
# Bubbles

---

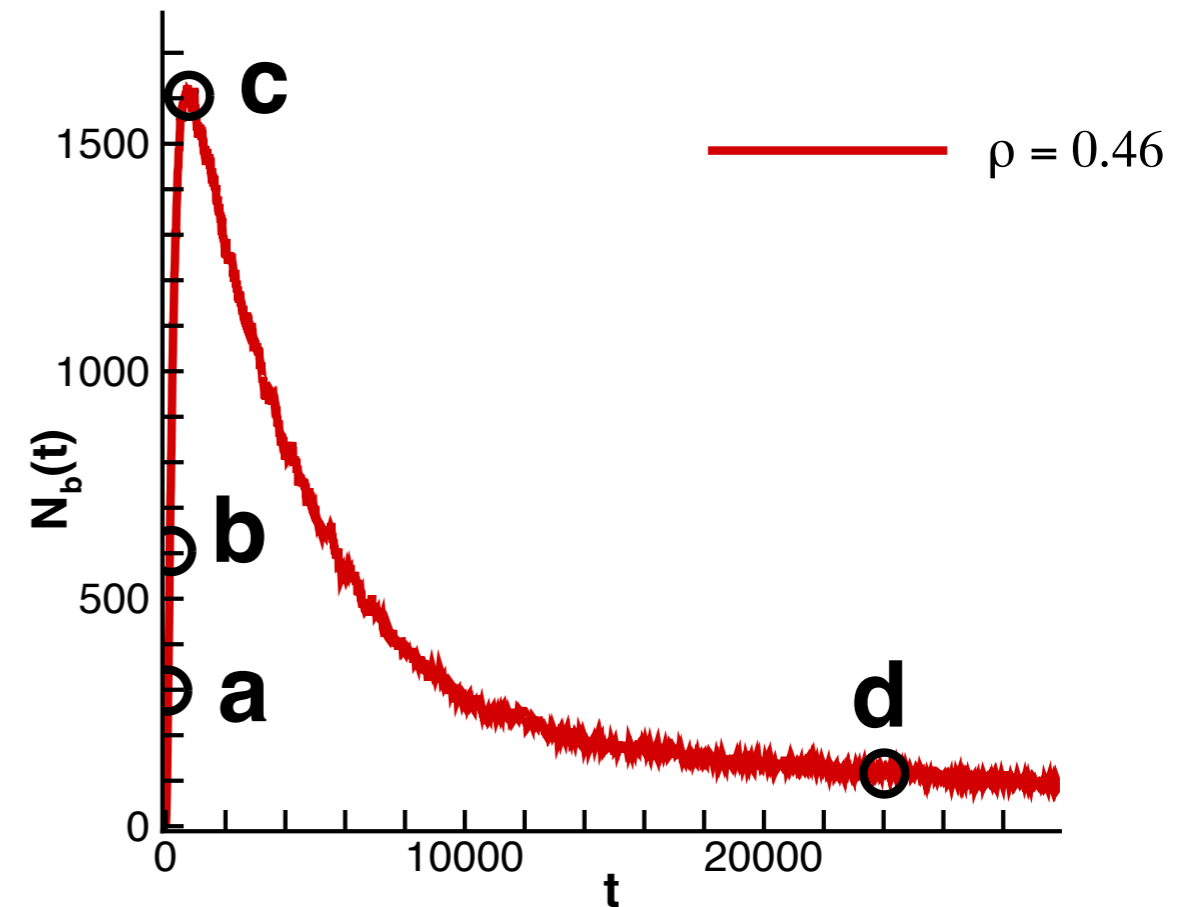


# Bubble Nucleation in a Lennard-Jones fluid

Snapshots during the nucleation process



Number of stable bubbles vs time



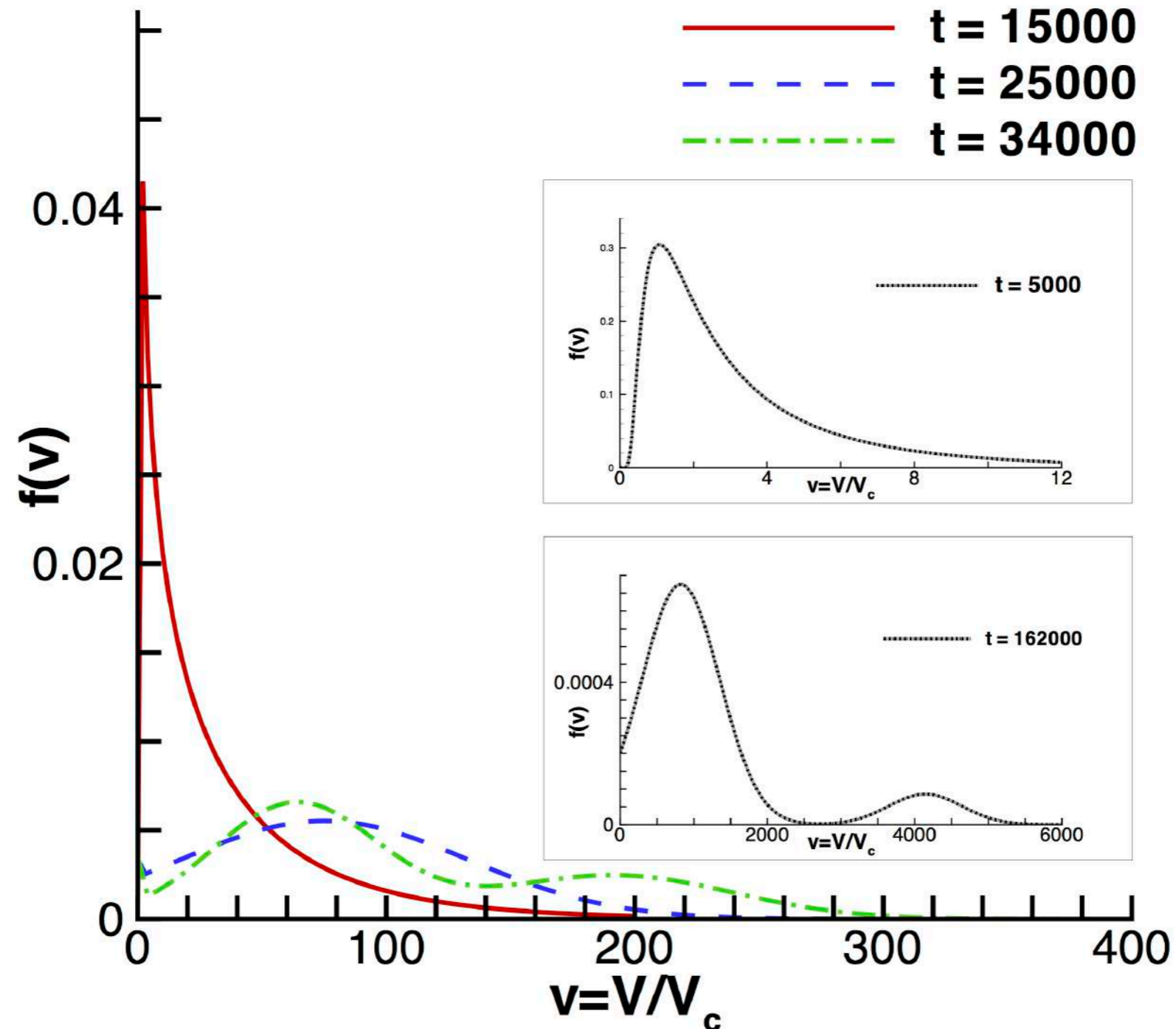
PHYSICAL REVIEW FLUIDS 00, 003600 (2018)

**Thermally activated vapor bubble nucleation: The Landau-Lifshitz–Van der Waals approach**

Mirko Gallo, Francesco Magaletti, and Carlo Massimo Casciola\*  
*Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, Sapienza Università di Roma, Rome, Italy*

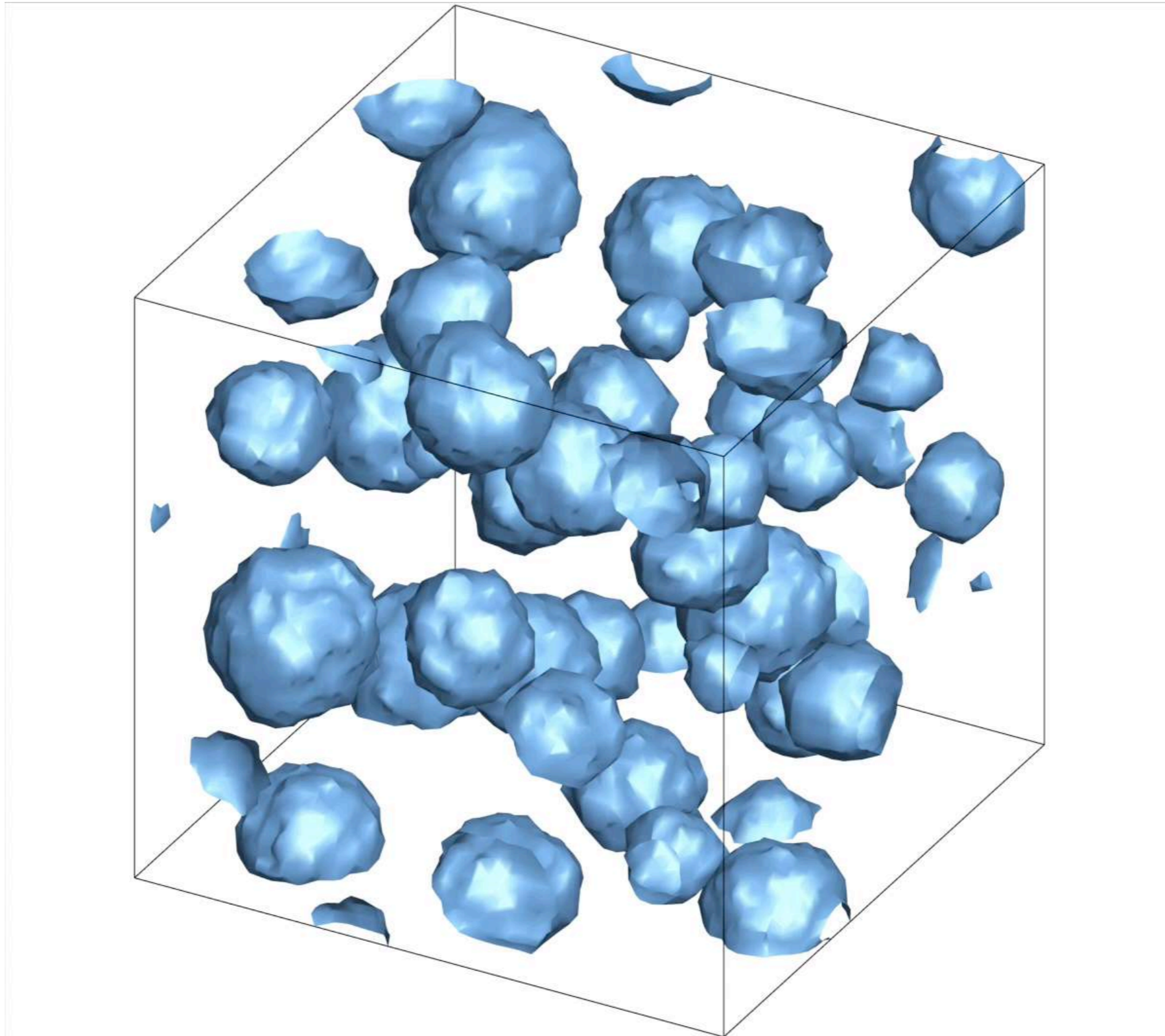


# Bubble Size Distribution

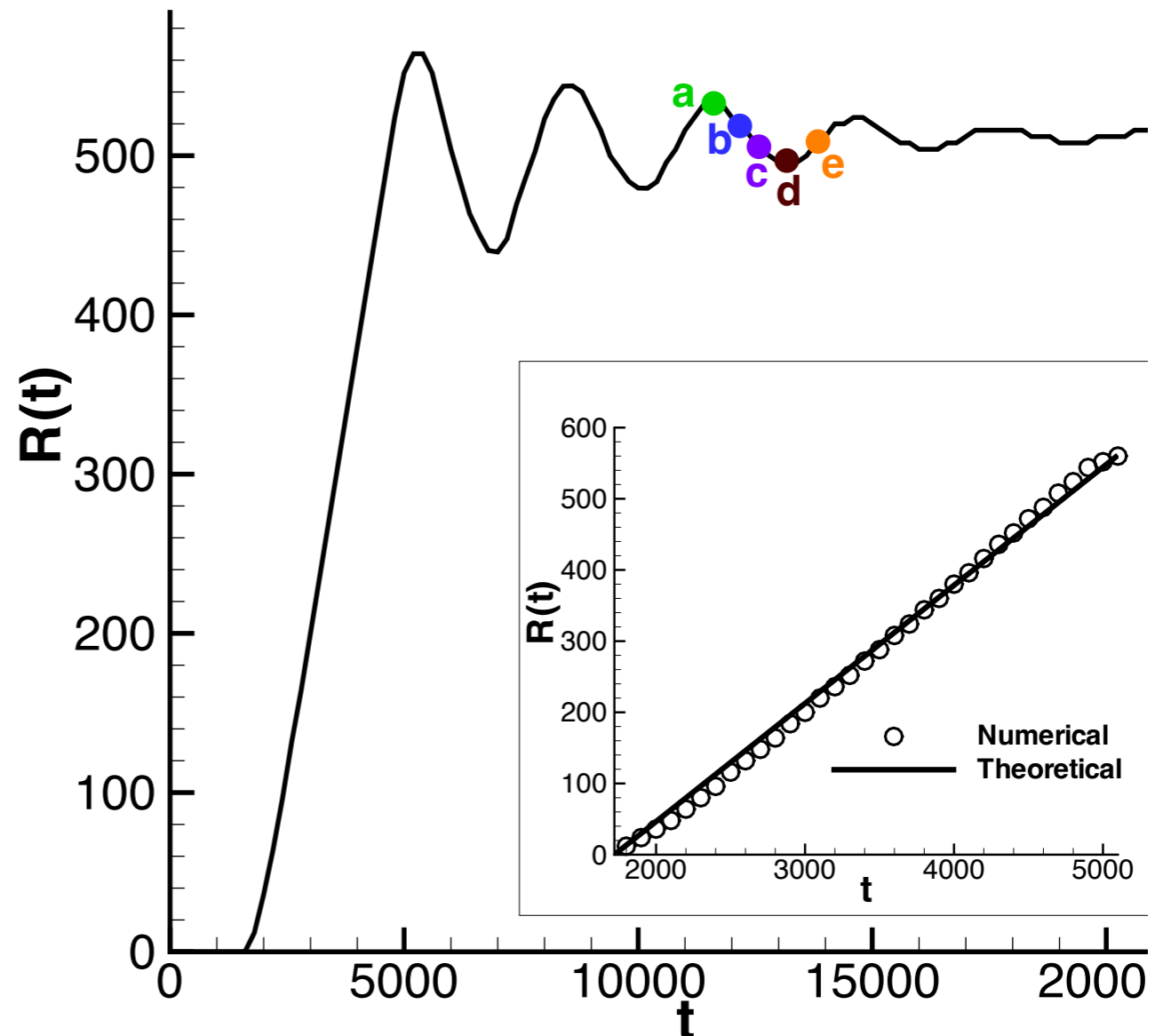
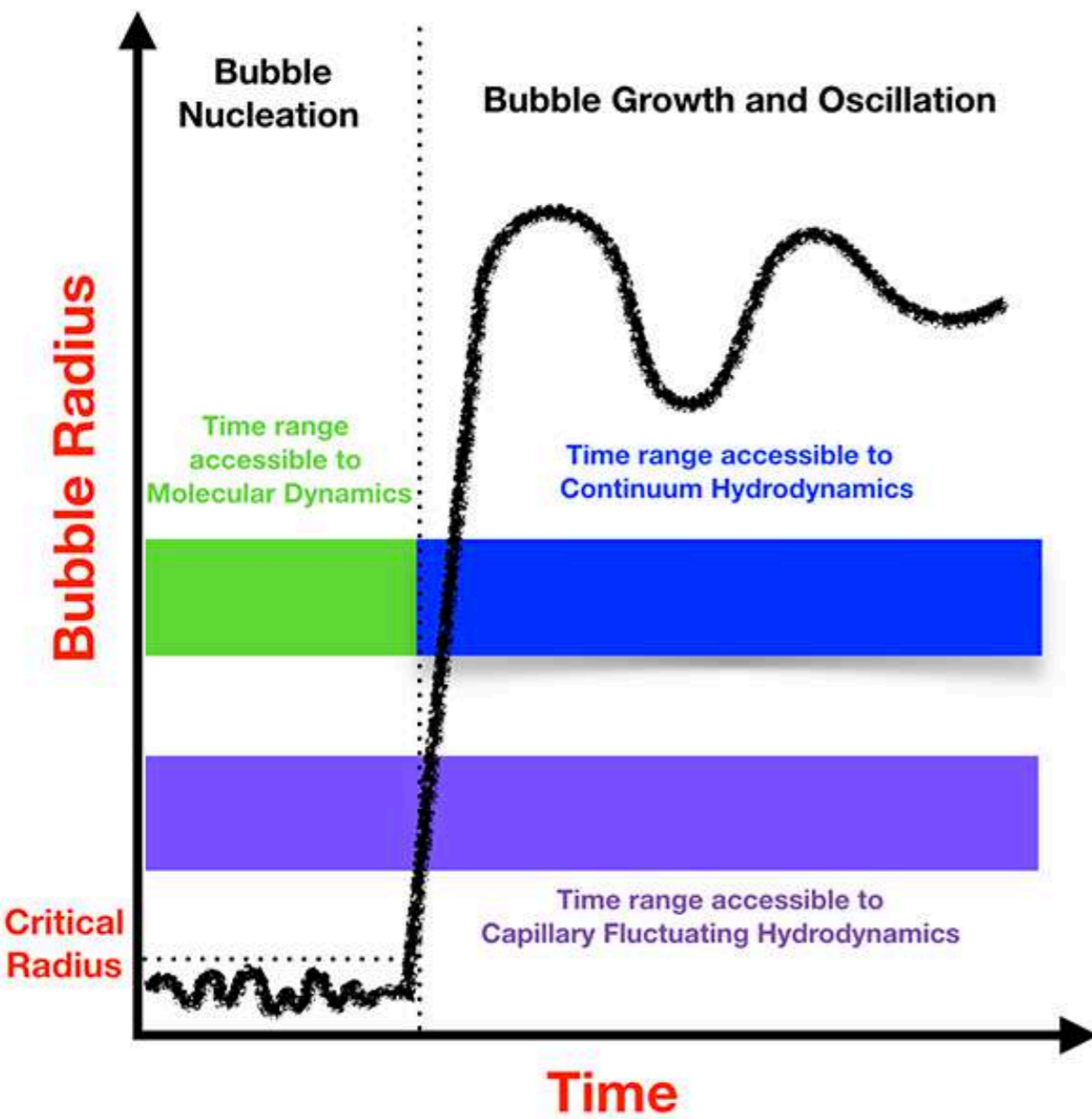


# Bubble Cohalescence

---



# From Nucleation to Nonlinear Bubble Dynamics



## Nucleation and growth dynamics of vapor bubbles

Mirko Gallo<sup>1</sup>, Francesco Magaletti<sup>1,2</sup>, Davide Cocco<sup>3</sup> and Carlo Massimo Casciola<sup>1†</sup>

JFM 2019



# WALL WETTABILITY

# Heterogeneous Nucleation

$$F[\rho, \theta] = \int_{\mathcal{D}} \left( \hat{f}_0(\rho, \theta) + \frac{\lambda}{2} |\nabla \rho|^2 \right) dv + \int_{\partial \mathcal{D}} \hat{f}_w(\rho, \theta) dS$$

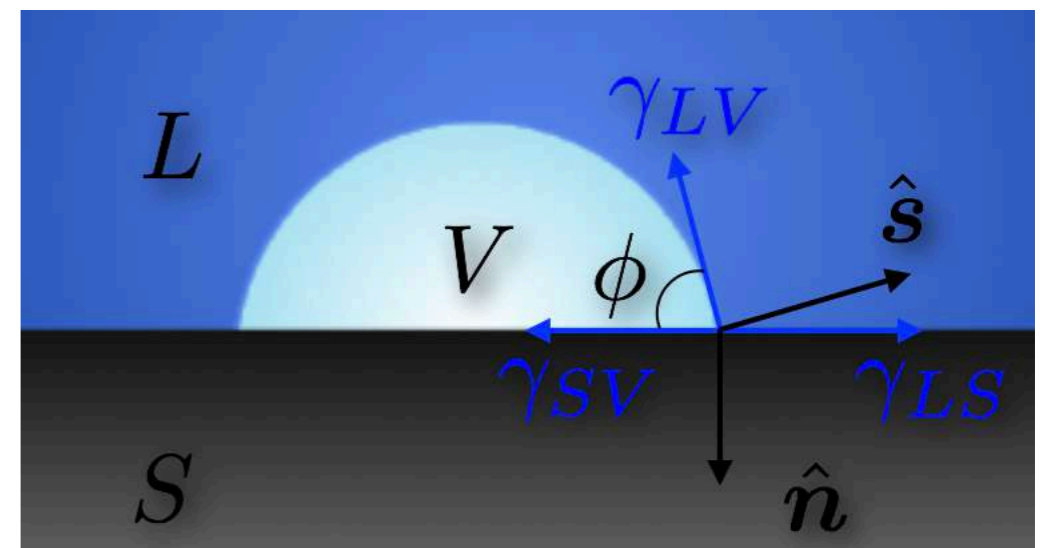
Free-energy functional assumed to be given by **three** contributions

- bulk free-energy density of the homogeneous phases
- energy penalty associated with the interface
- surface energy (fluid-wall interaction)

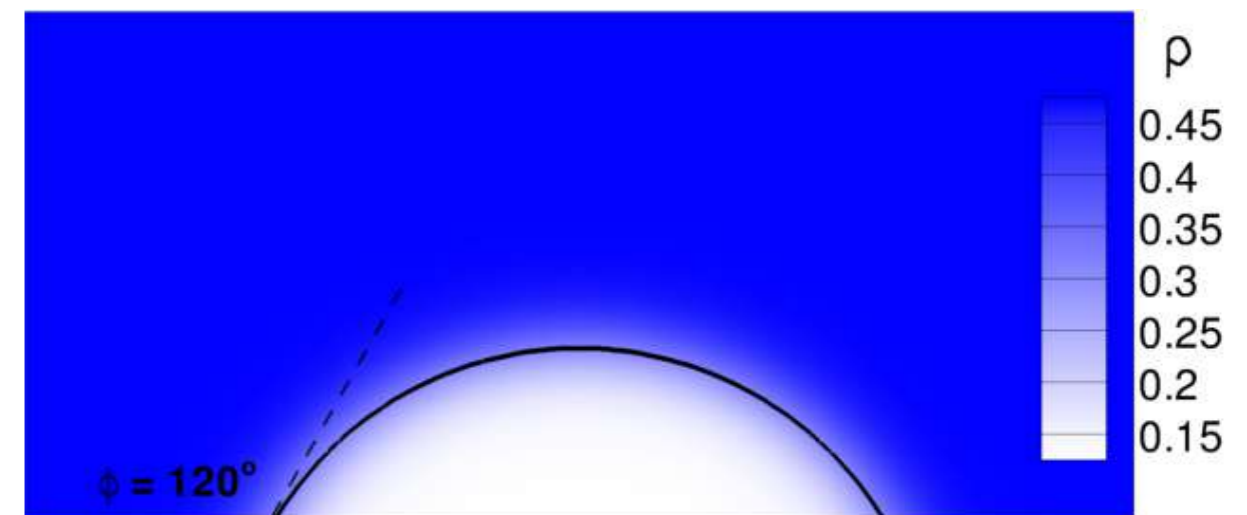
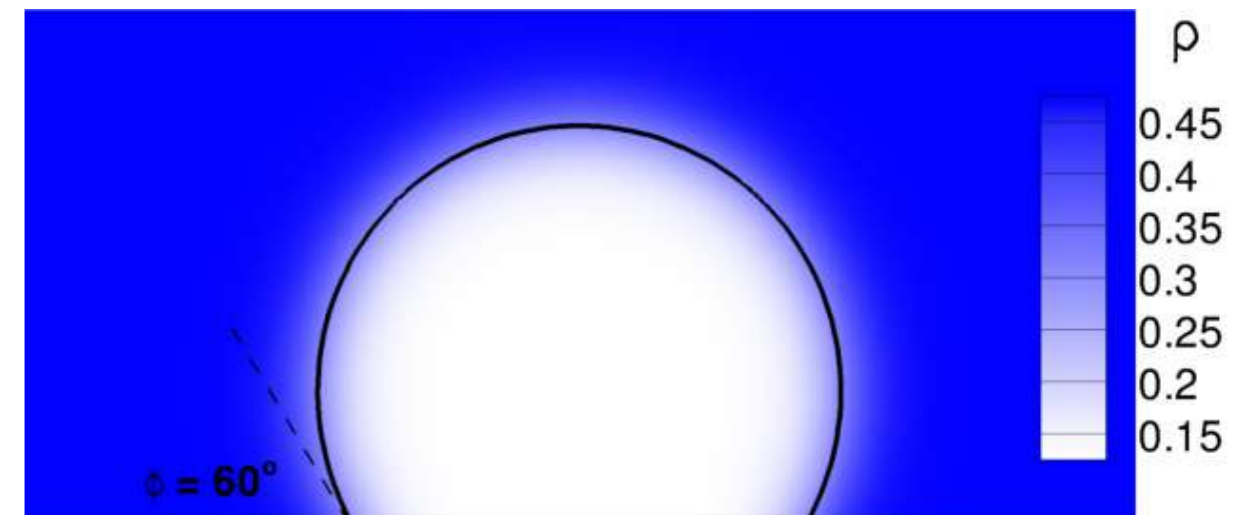
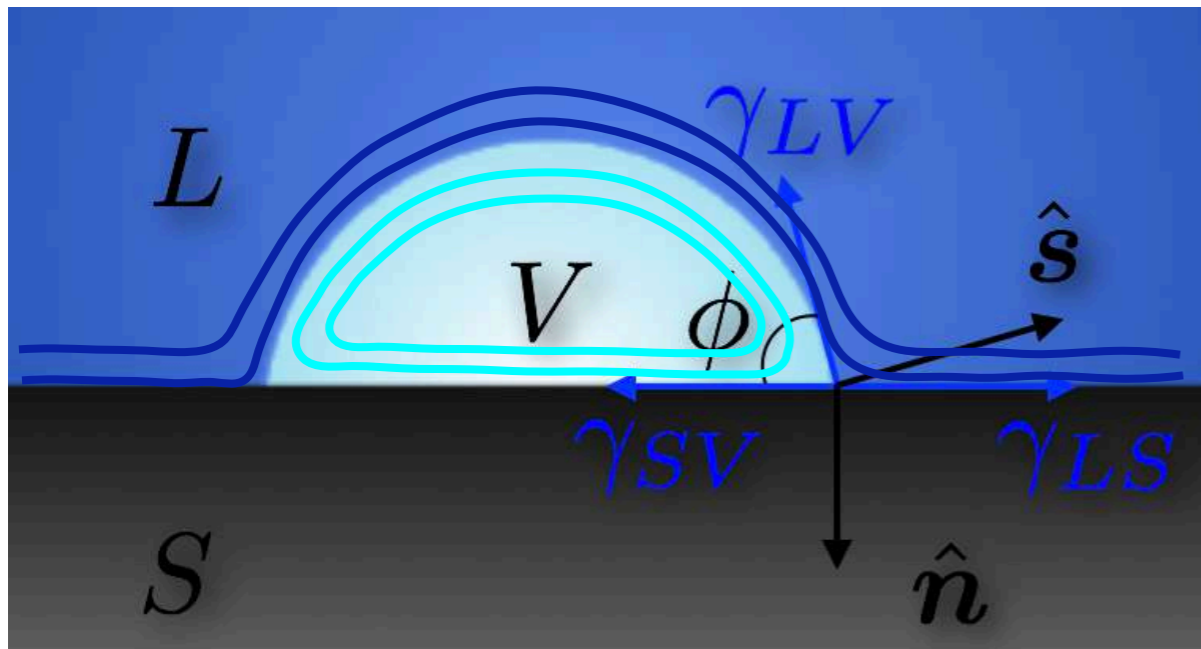
Equilibrium conditions

$$\frac{\partial \hat{f}_0}{\partial \rho} - \nabla \cdot (\lambda \nabla \rho) = 0 \quad \text{in the bulk fluid}$$

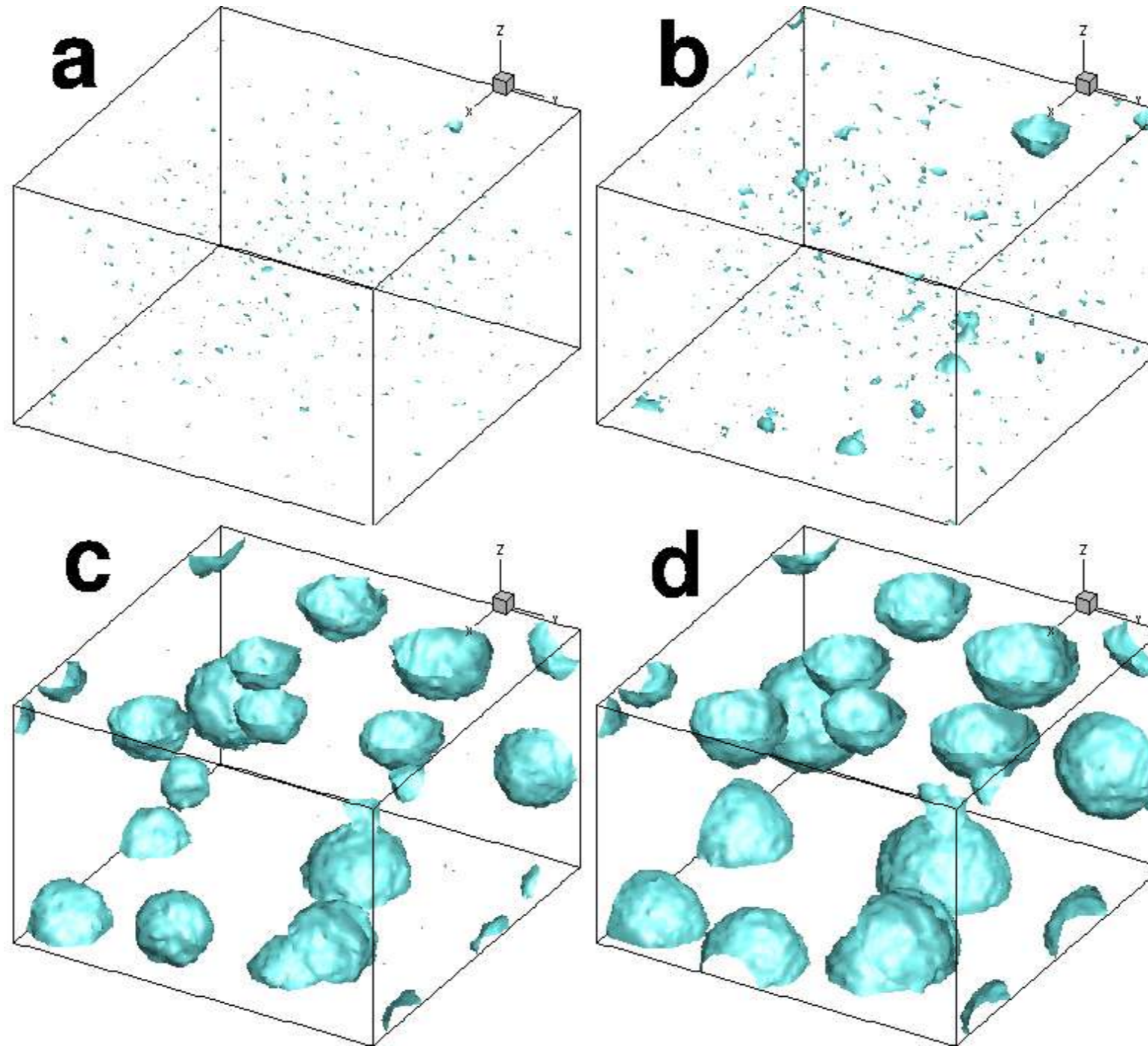
$$\lambda \frac{\partial \rho}{\partial n} + \frac{\partial \hat{f}_w}{\partial \rho} = 0 \quad \text{at the wall}$$



# Sketch of Density at the Triple Line

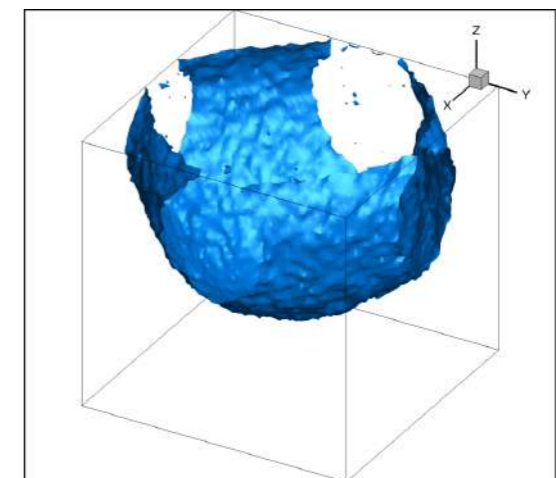
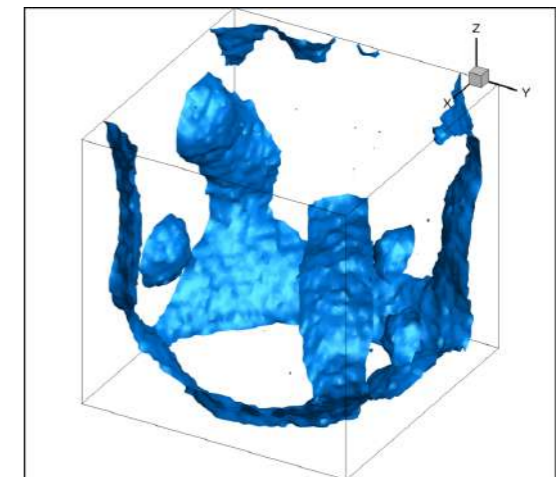
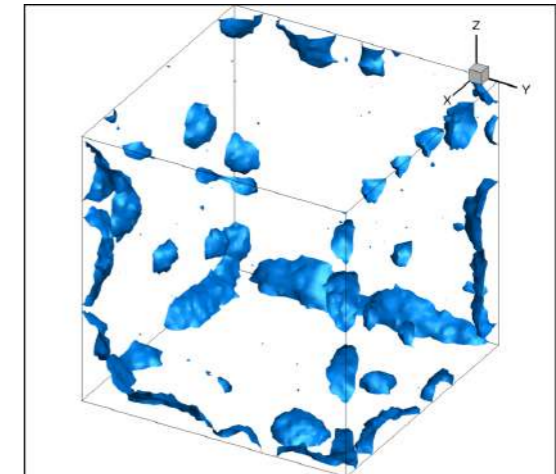
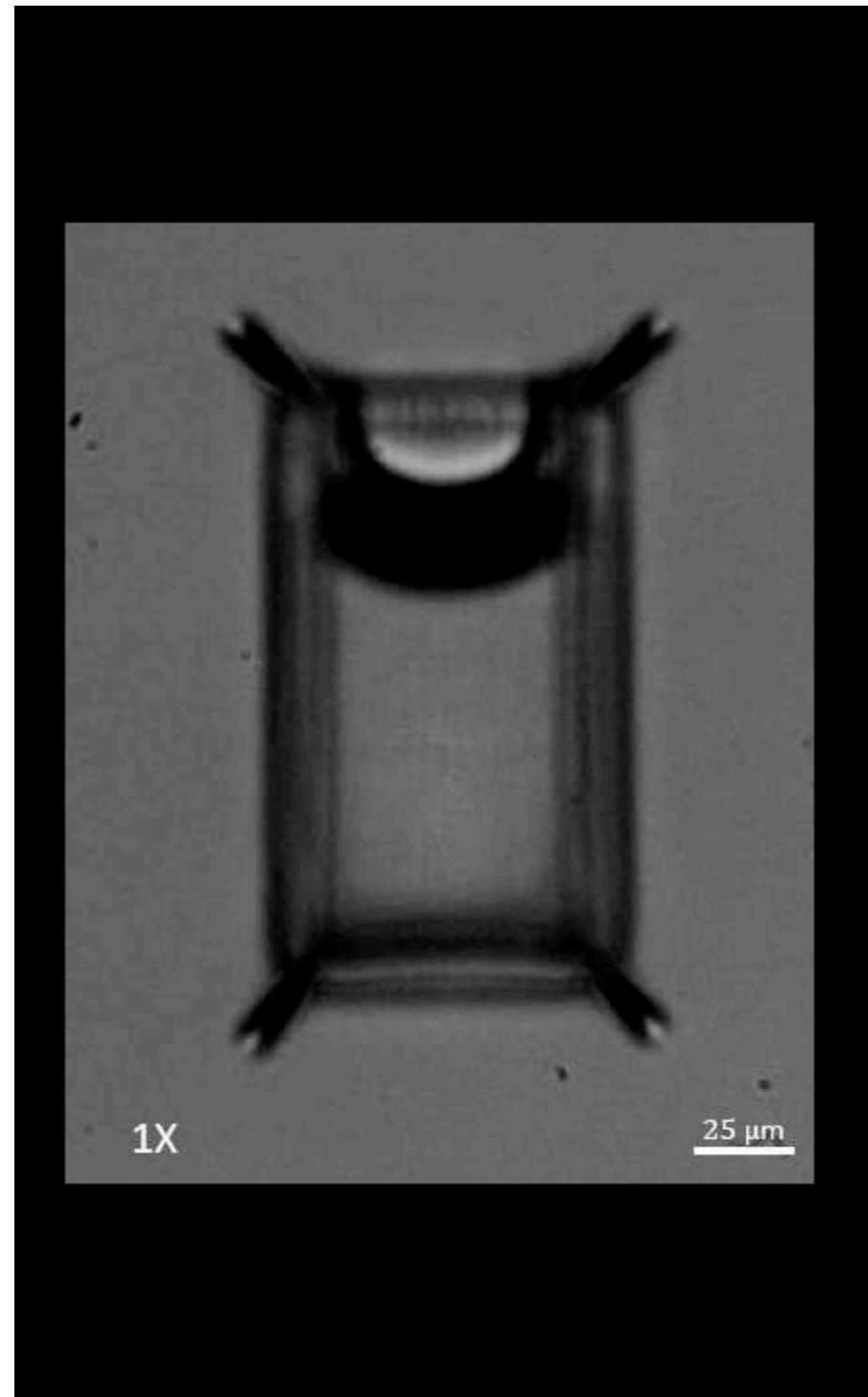
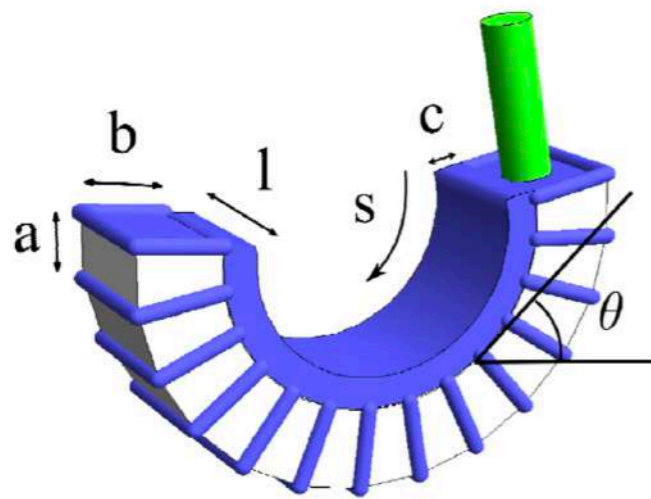
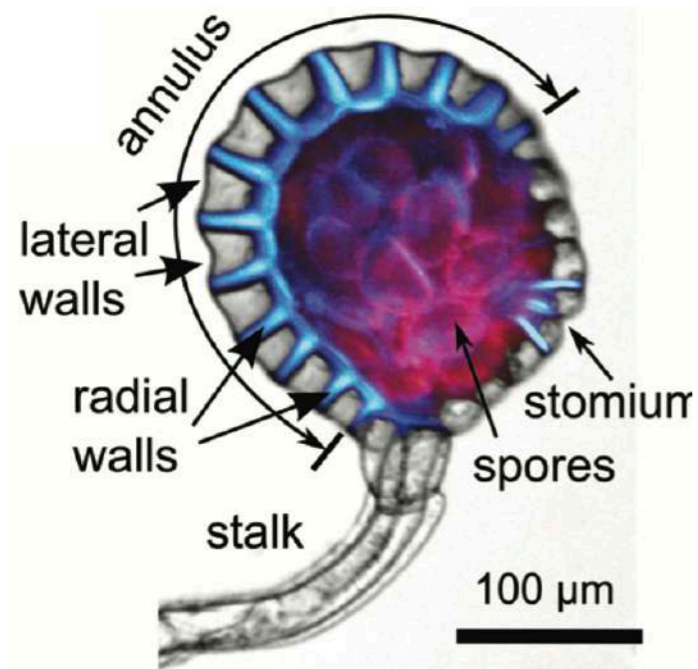


# Bubble Nucleation at a Solid Surface





# Confined Nucleation



Noblin et al. Science 2021

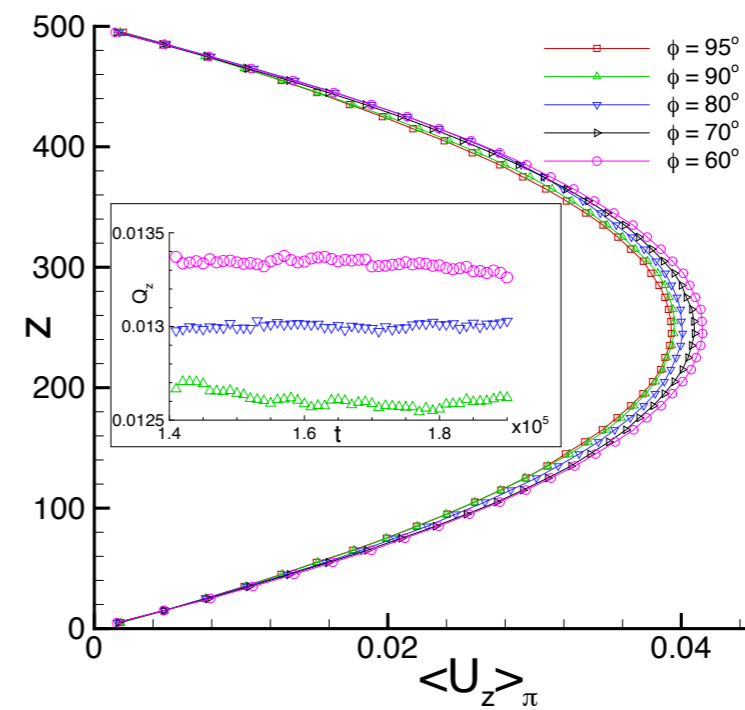
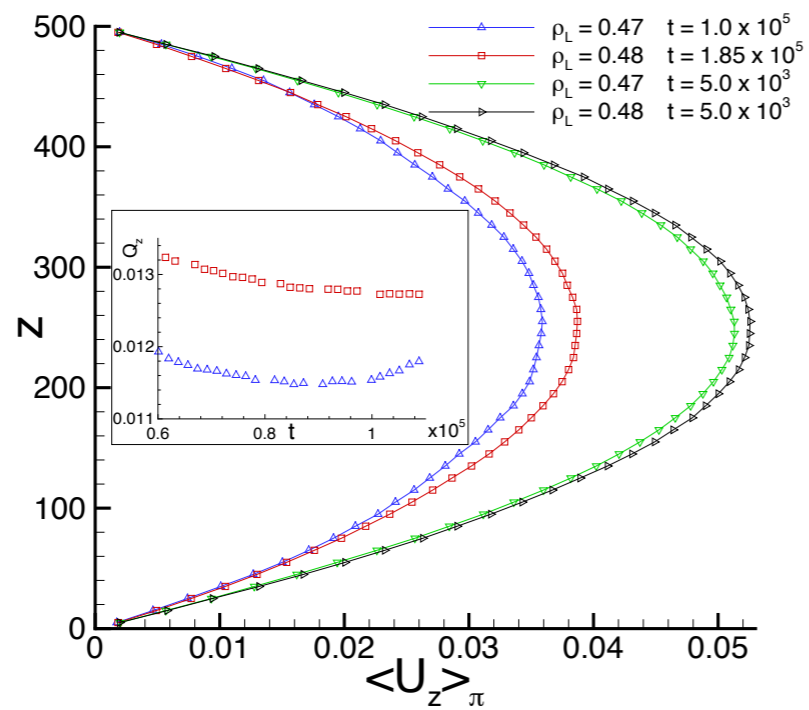
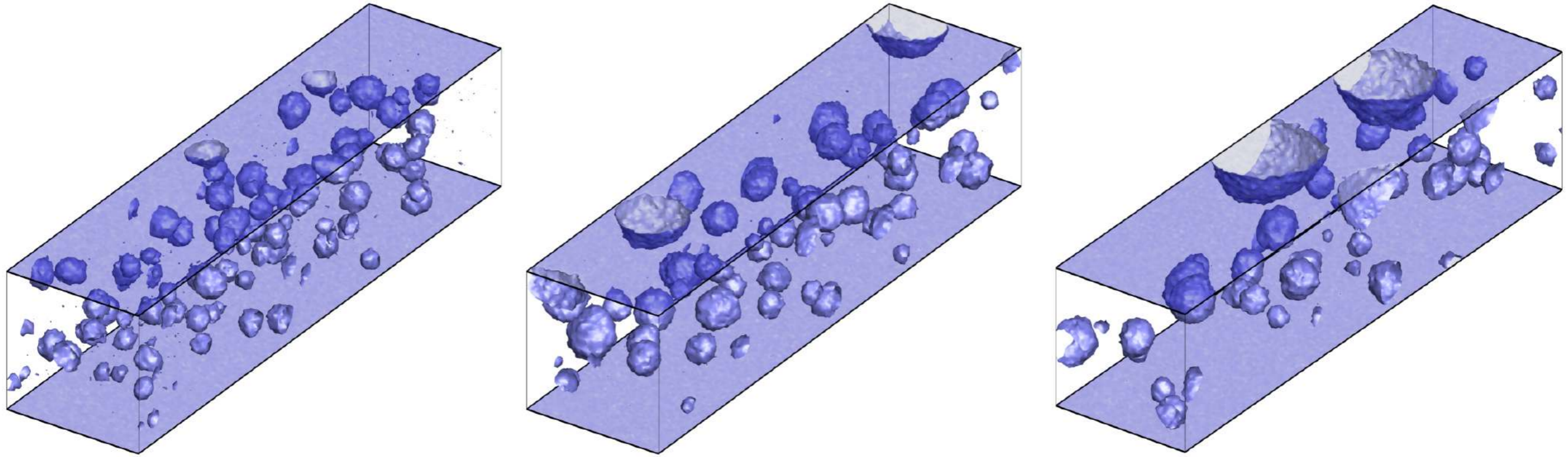
Courtesy of Barbara Mazzolai & Andrea Montagna (IIT)

FHD-Simulation



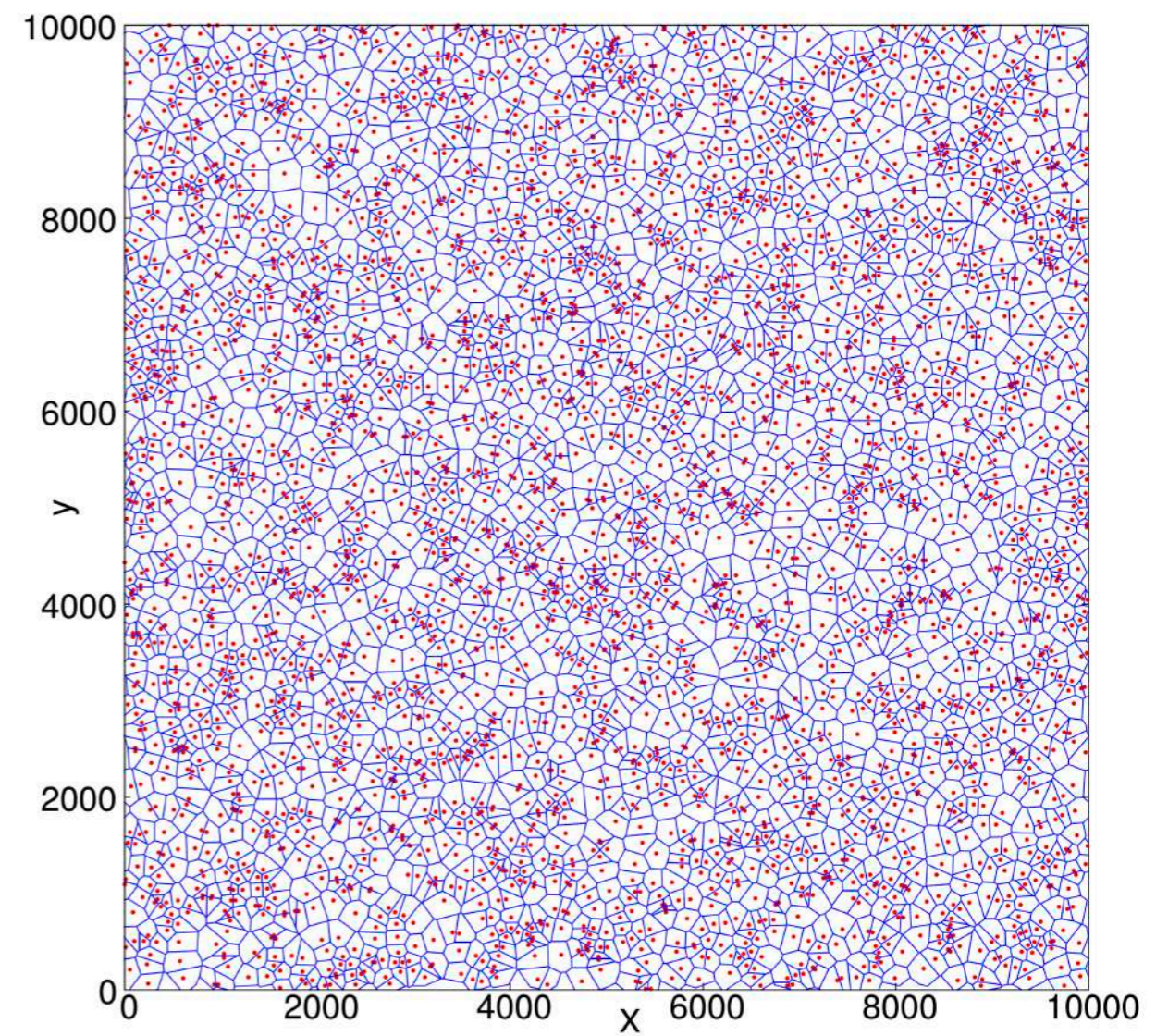
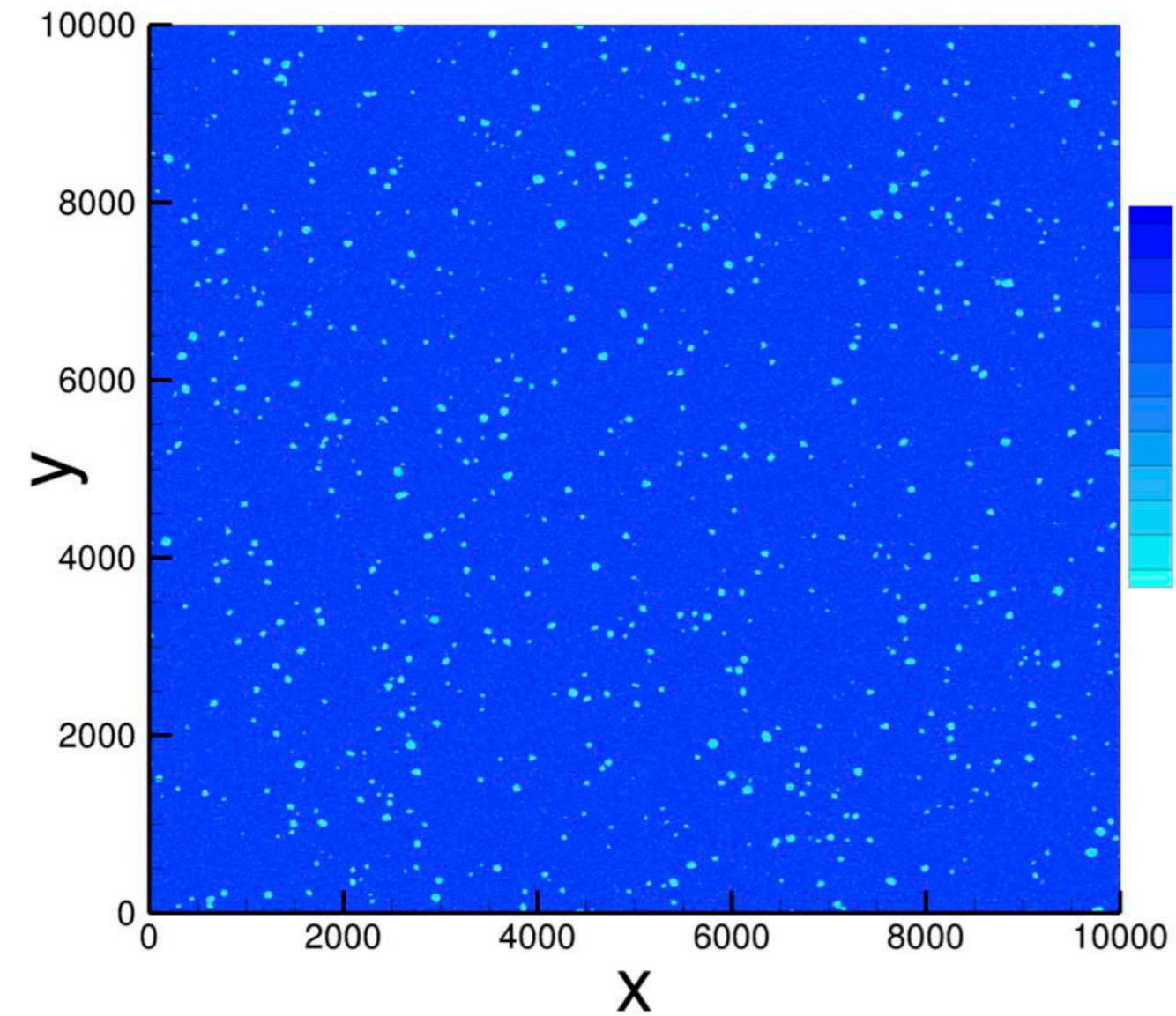
# NUCLEATION UNDER FLOW

# Bubble Nucleation Under Flow



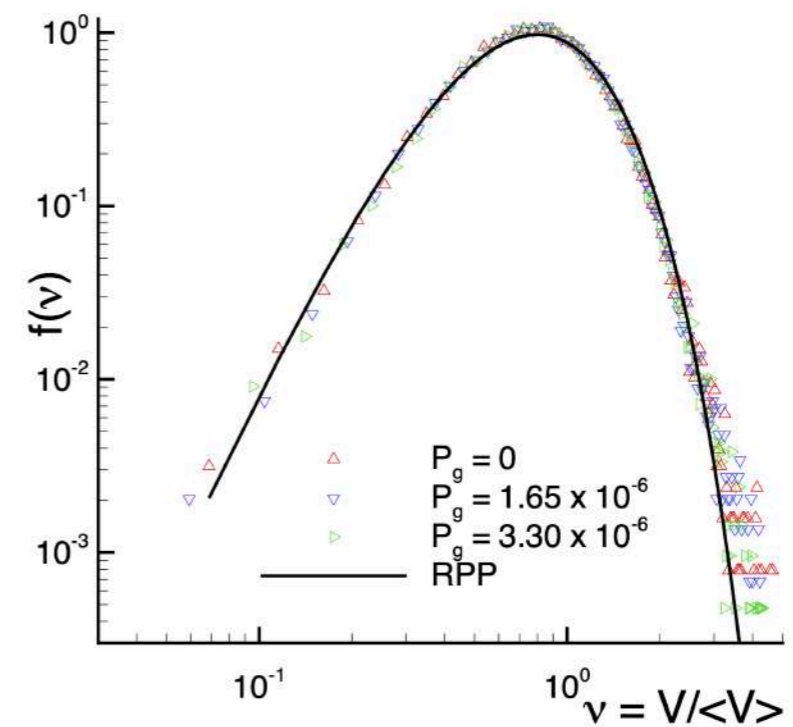
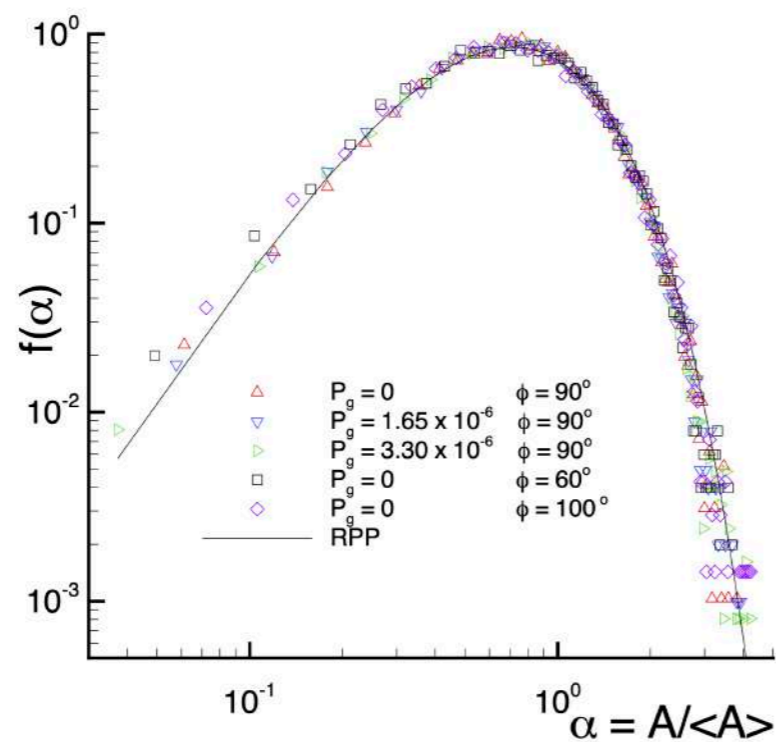
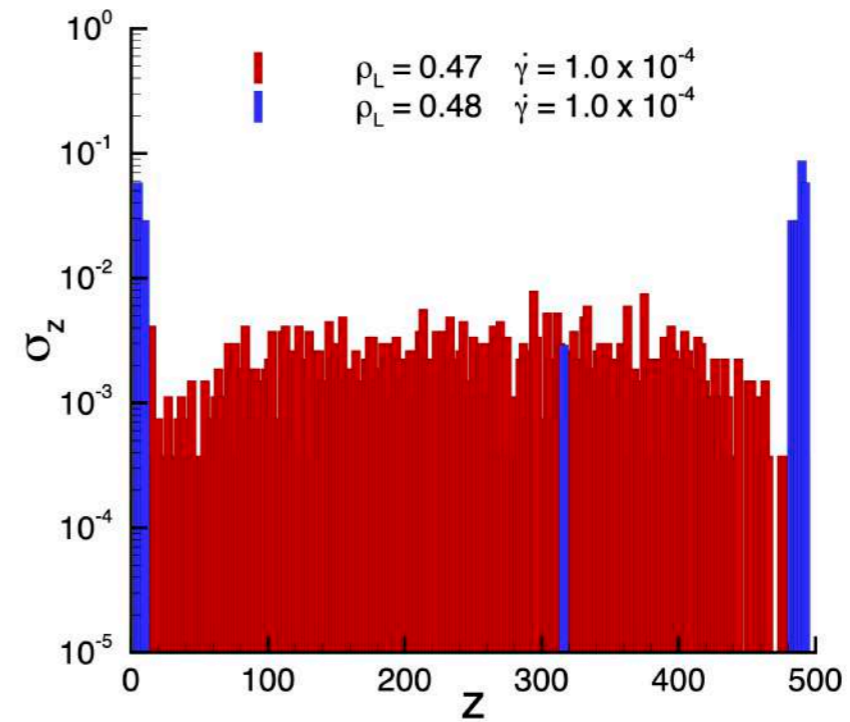
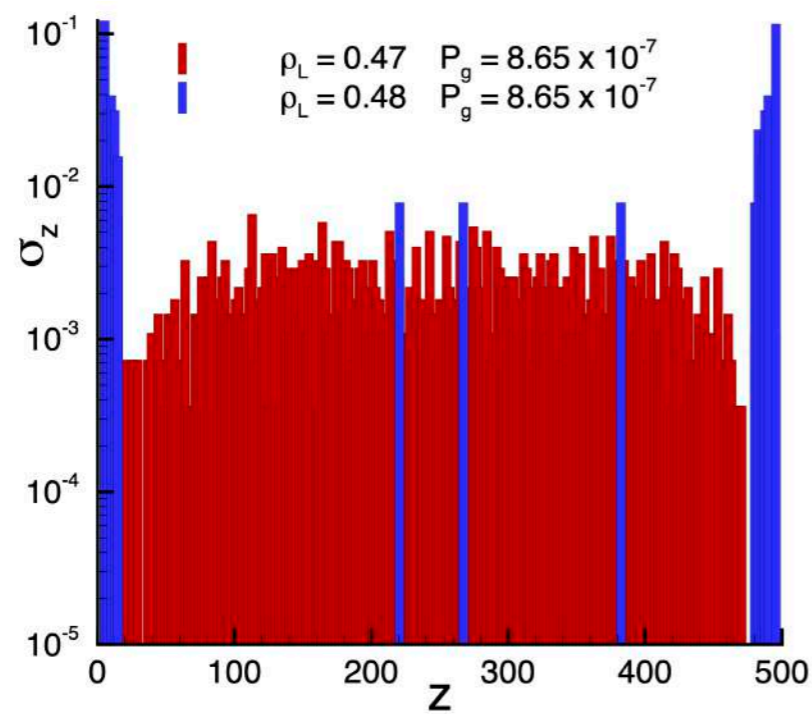


# Bubble Nucleation under Flow

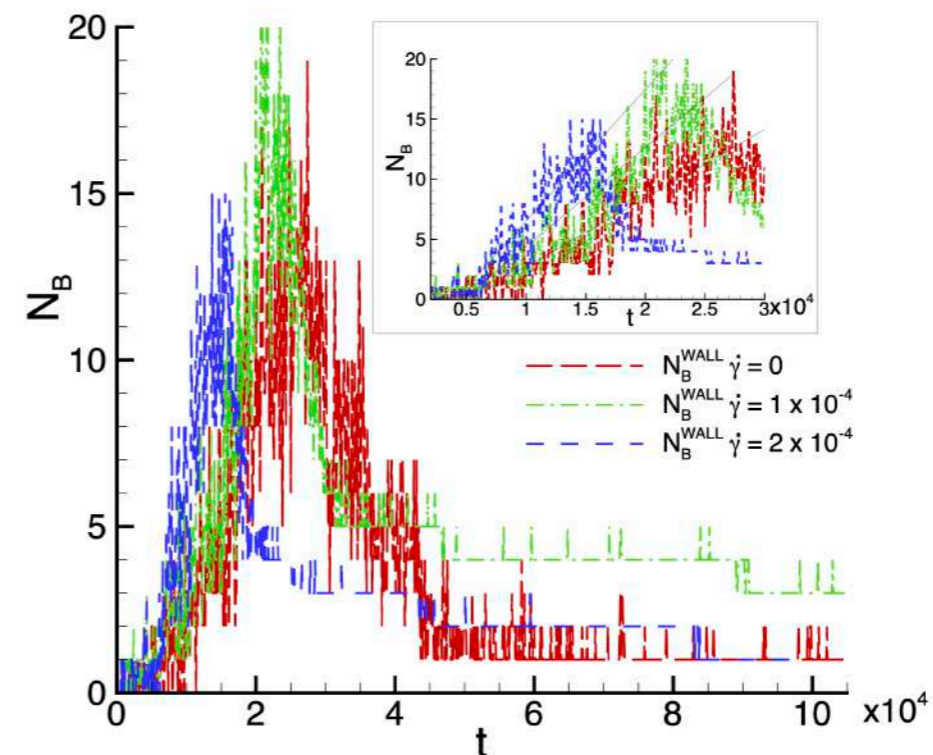
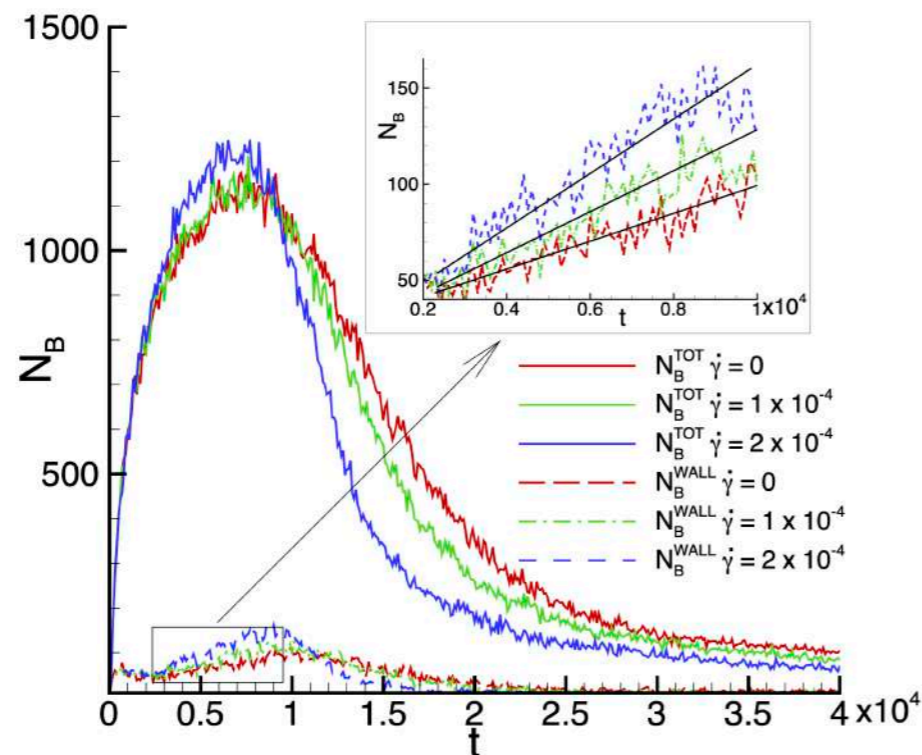
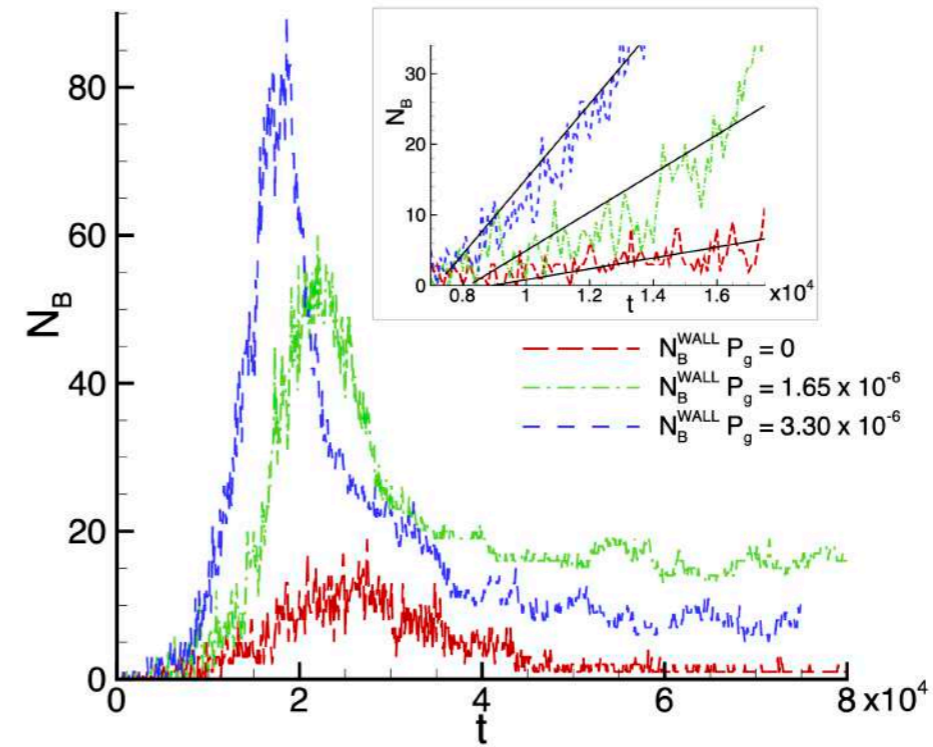
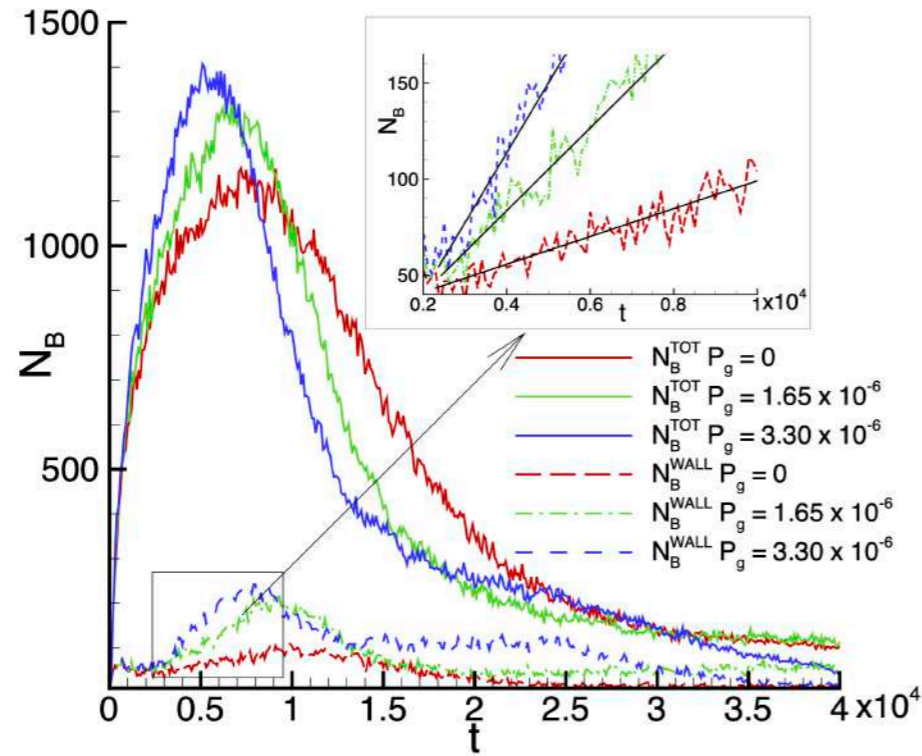




# Heterogeneous Nucleation under Flow



# Heterogeneous Nucleation under Flow





# Summary

Stochastic pdes used to model vapour bubble nucleation  
(Landau's FH + Van der Waals's capillarity + Navier-Stokes)

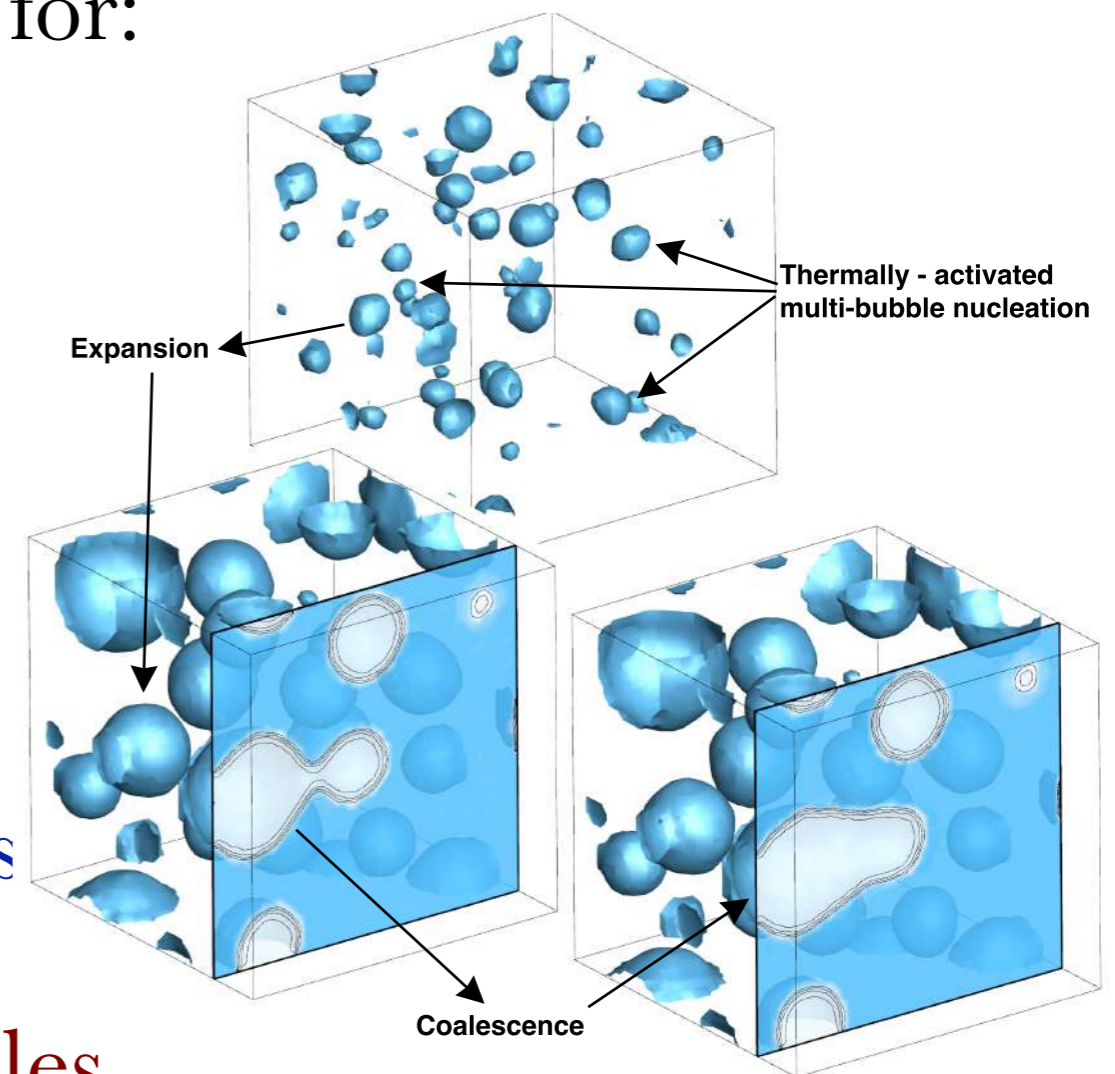
The deterministic component accounts for:

- phase change
- shock waves
- transition to/from supercritical state

The stochastic part features:

- bubble nucleation
- correct nucleation rate at changing thermodynamics conditions

- ▶ unprecedented time and length scales
- ▶ modelling of nucleation in dynamic conditions (flow induced cavitation)!





Mirko Gallo  
(DIMA)



Francesco Magaletti  
(University of Brighton)

[carlomassimo.casciola@uniroma1.it](mailto:carlomassimo.casciola@uniroma1.it)

Thank you for listening!