Vortex definitions and bifurcations of vortical structures
Part 2 — Vorticity and the Q-criterion

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Vorticity, Vortical Flows and Vortex-Induced Vibrations
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Overview

1. Vorticity
   - Point vortices
   - Vortex definition # 2
   - The onset of vortex dynamics in the cylinder wake
2. Vortex definition # 3: The Q-criterion
   - Q-vortices in boundary layer eruption
3. Summary

Vorticity in two dimensions

$$\omega = \frac{\partial v}{\partial x} - \frac{\partial u}{\partial y}.$$

Navier-Stokes equation

$$\frac{D\mathbf{v}}{Dt} = -\frac{1}{\rho}\nabla p + \nu\Delta\mathbf{v}, \qquad \frac{D}{Dt} = \frac{\partial}{\partial t} + \mathbf{v}\cdot\nabla.$$

Take the curl — vorticity transport equation

$$\frac{D\omega}{Dt} = \nu\Delta\omega$$

Ideal fluids $(\nu = 0)$
Vorticity is frozen in the fluid.
A *Point vortex* of circulation Γ centered at $\mathbf{x}_0$, $\omega = \Gamma/(2\pi)\delta(\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_0)$ induces a velocity field

$$\mathbf{v} = \frac{\Gamma}{2\pi}\frac{\widehat{\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_0}}{|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_0|^2}$$

Ideal fluids cont.

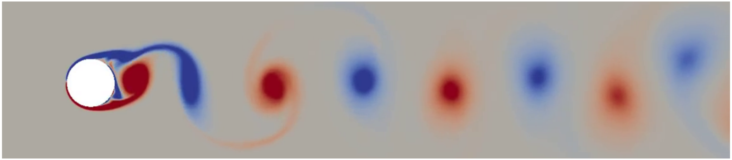
N point vortices placed at $\mathbf{x}_\alpha, \alpha = 1, \ldots, N$ induce a velocity field

$$\mathbf{v} = \sum_{\alpha=1}^{N} \frac{\Gamma_\alpha}{2\pi} \frac{\widehat{\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_\alpha}}{|\mathbf{x} - \mathbf{x}_\alpha|^2}$$

Each vortex is a material point and moves in the velocity field from the other vortices

$$\frac{d\mathbf{x}_\beta}{dt} = \sum_{\substack{\alpha=1 \\ \alpha \neq \beta}}^{N} \frac{\Gamma_\alpha}{2\pi} \frac{\widehat{\mathbf{x}_\beta - \mathbf{x}_\alpha}}{|\mathbf{x}_\beta - \mathbf{x}_\alpha|^2}, \quad \beta = 1, \ldots, N.$$

Point vortices successfully used to model cylinder wakes (von Kármán, 1912)



How to generalize to real viscous flows where vorticity diffuses, $\frac{D\omega}{Dt} = \nu \Delta \omega$

Vortex definition #2

A vortex is a region of concentrated vorticity.

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Vorticity is Galilean invariant.

Generalizing point vortices

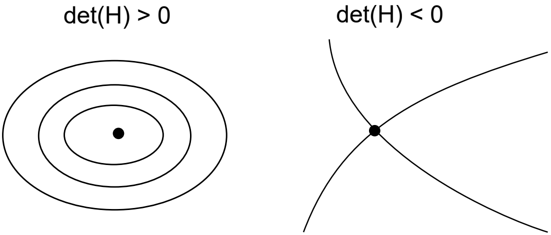
A *feature point* of a vortex is a local extremum of vorticity,

$$\partial_x \omega = \partial_y \omega = 0,$$

$$\det(H) > 0, \quad H = \begin{pmatrix} \partial_{xx}\omega & \partial_{xy}\omega \\ \partial_{xy}\omega & \partial_{yy}\omega \end{pmatrix}.$$

If $\det(H) < 0$, the critical point of ω is a saddle.

Iso-curves of ω near a critical point



Motion of critical points of vorticity (extrema and saddles)

A critical point $(x(t),y(t))$ of vorticity fulfills

$$\partial_x\omega(x(t),y(t),t) = 0, \;\; \partial_y\omega(x(t),y(t),t) = 0$$

Implicit differentiation yields equations of motion

$$\begin{pmatrix}\dot{x}\\ \dot{y}\end{pmatrix} = -H^{-1}\begin{pmatrix}\partial_{xt}\omega\\ \partial_{yt}\omega\end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix}\dfrac{\partial_{xy}\omega\partial_{yt}\omega - \partial_{yy}\omega\partial_{xt}\omega}{\det(H)}\\ \dfrac{\partial_{xy}\omega\partial_{xt}\omega - \partial_{xx}\omega\partial_{yt}\omega}{\det(H)}\end{pmatrix}$$

Vortices are created or destroyed when $\det(H) = 0$

Cusp or saddle-center bifurcation of vortices

Theorem Assume the Hessian H has zero as a simple eigenvalue at a critical point at $(x,y,t) = (0,0,0)$, and choose the coordinate system such that

$$H(0,0,0) = H_0 = \begin{pmatrix} 0 & 0 \\ 0 & \partial_{yy}\omega_0 \end{pmatrix}$$

Assume the non-degeneracy conditions

$$A = \partial_{yy}\omega_0 \neq 0, \quad B = \partial_{xt}\omega_0 \neq 0, \quad C = \partial_{xxx}\omega_0 \neq 0.$$

Then there are critical points of vorticity given by

$$x(t) = \pm\sqrt{-\frac{2B}{C}t} + \mathcal{O}(t), \quad y(t) = \left(-\frac{1}{A}\partial_{yt}\omega_0 + \frac{B}{AC}\partial_{xxy}\omega_0\right) t + \mathcal{O}(t^{3/2})$$

If $B/C > 0$ the two critical points exist for $t < 0$ and merge and disappear at the origin at $t = 0$. If $B/C < 0$ the points are created at $t = 0$ and exist for $t > 0$. In both cases, one of the critical points is a saddle, the other is an extremum.

Cusp bifurcation example

$$\omega = t(y - x) + y^2 - \frac{1}{3}x^3, \qquad \partial_x \omega = -t - x^2, \quad \partial_y \omega = t + 2y.$$

Critical points

$$x = \pm\sqrt{-t}, \quad y = -\frac{1}{2}t.$$

Easy to check that the assumptions of the theorem are fulfilled at $(x,y,t) = (0,0,0)$.

Wake of cylinder close to wall

Rasmus Ellebæk Christiansen, Master's Thesis, 2013.

The role of the vorticity transport equation

$$\partial_t \omega + (\mathbf{v} \cdot \nabla)\omega = \nu \Delta \omega$$

In the regular case, the equations of motion for the critical points of vorticity become

$$\dot{x} = u - \nu \frac{\partial_{yy}\omega \Delta \partial_x \omega - \partial_{xy}\omega \Delta \partial_y \omega}{\det(H)}$$

$$\dot{y} = v - \nu \frac{\partial_{xx}\omega \Delta \partial_y \omega - \partial_{xy}\omega \Delta \partial_x \omega}{\det(H)}$$

For the cusp bifurcation we get

$$B = \partial_{xt}\omega_0 = \nu \Delta \partial_x \omega_0, \qquad \frac{x(t)^2}{\nu t} = -2\left(1 + \frac{\partial_{xyy}\omega_0}{C}\right) + \mathcal{O}(t)$$

$$y(t) = \left(v + \nu \frac{\partial_{xxy}\omega_0 \partial_{xyy}\omega_0 - \partial_{xxx}\omega_0 \partial_{yyy}\omega_0}{A}\right) t + \mathcal{O}(t^2)$$

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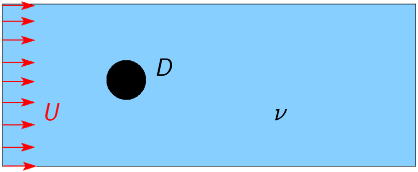
The onset of vortex dynamics in the cylinder wake



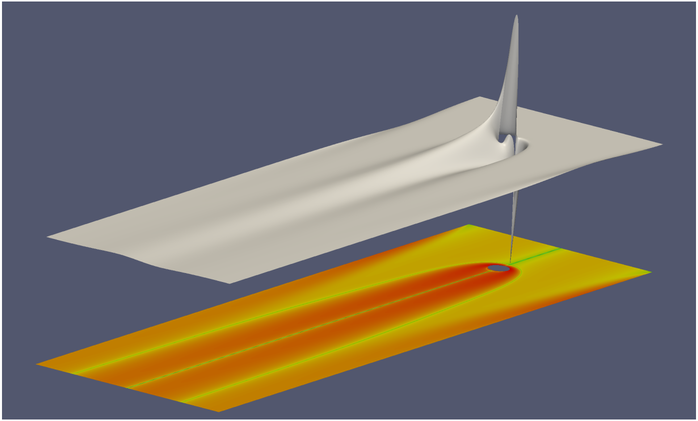
- Flow is steady and symmetric at modest Reynolds numbers.
- Steady flow becomes unstable at

$$Re_{\mathrm{crit}} = \frac{U_{\mathrm{crit}} D}{\nu} \approx 46$$

  via a symmetry-breaking, super-critical Hopf-bifurcation.
- Instability leads to formation of "Karman vortex street" via periodic shedding of vortices with a characteristic frequency.

Vorticity field pre- and post-Hopf bifurcation

- **Before Hopf bifurcation:** Vorticity is generated on no-slip boundaries and then advected downstream; diffusion spreads out the profile as $x \to \infty$. Flow is symmetric about $y = 0$.



"Carpet plot" of vorticity, $z = \omega(x,y)$, above logarithmic colour contours of $|\omega(x,y)|$.

Vorticity field pre- and post-Hopf bifurcation

- **After Hopf bifurcation:** Time-periodic, asymmetric flow. Vorticity field is advected downstream [Karman vortex street].

"Carpet plot" of vorticity, $z = \omega(x,y,t)$, above logarithmic colour contours of $|\omega(x,y,t)|$.

Fluid dynamics near the Hopf bifurcation

Difficult to simulate close to bifurcation due to long transients

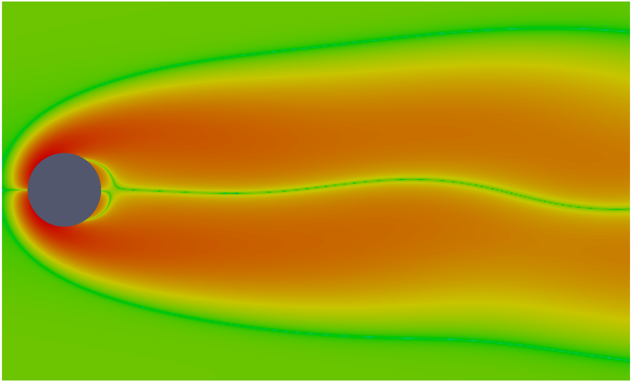
Theory: Flow close to the Hopf bifurcation is well approximated by

$$\mathbf{v}(x,y,t;Re) \approx \mathbf{v}(x,y;Re_{\mathrm{crit}}) + \varepsilon\ \widehat{\mathbf{v}}(x,y)\ e^{\mathrm{i}\Omega t}$$

where

- $\mathbf{v}(x,y;Re_{\mathrm{crit}})$ is the steady flow at the Hopf bifurcation
- $\widehat{\mathbf{v}}(x,y)$ is a critical eigenfunction of the linearized problem at the Hopf bifurcation
- $\mathrm{i}\Omega$ is the corresponding critical eigenvalue
- $\varepsilon \sim (Re - Re_{\mathrm{crit}})^{1/2}$ is a proxy for the excess Reynolds number (above the critical value).

How (and where) are the extrema in the vorticity generated?



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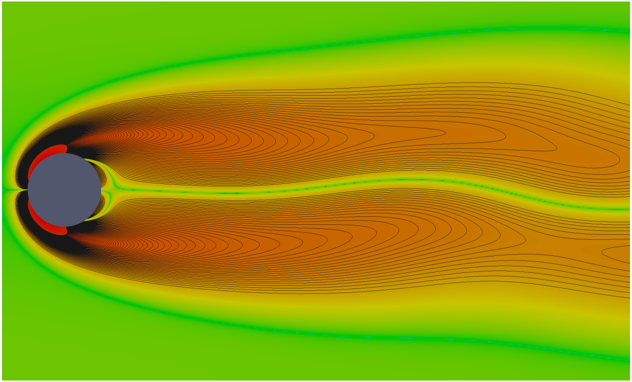

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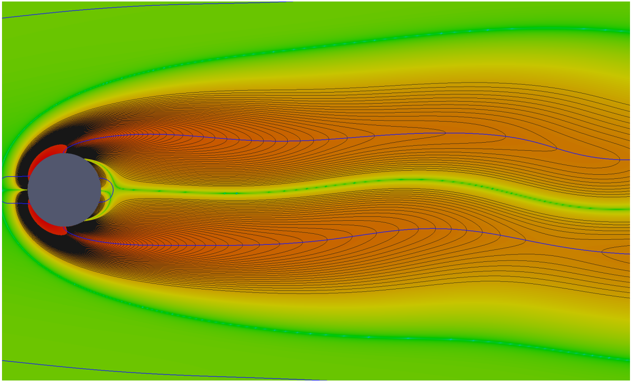

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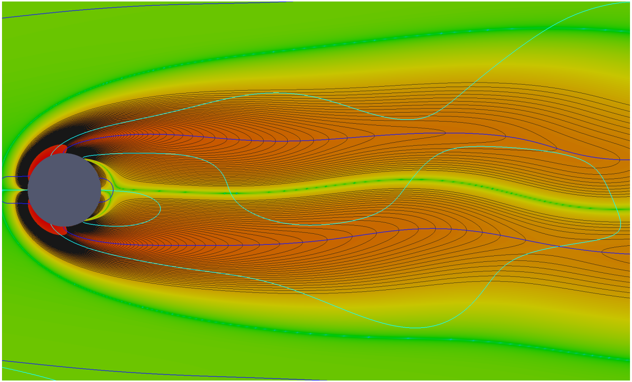

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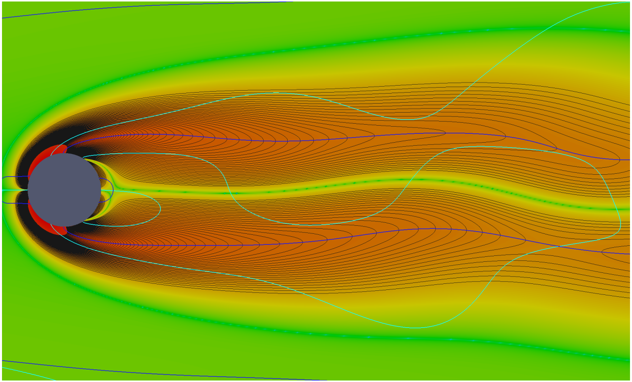

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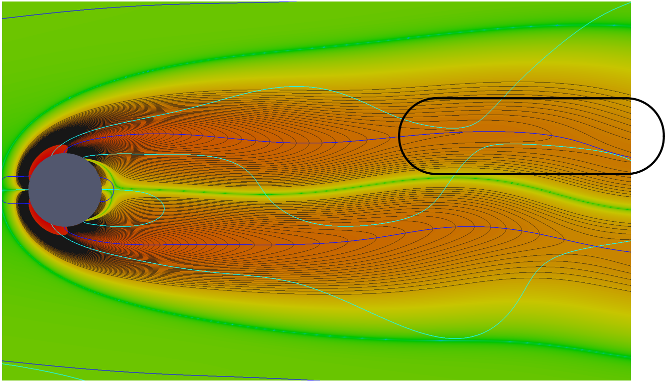

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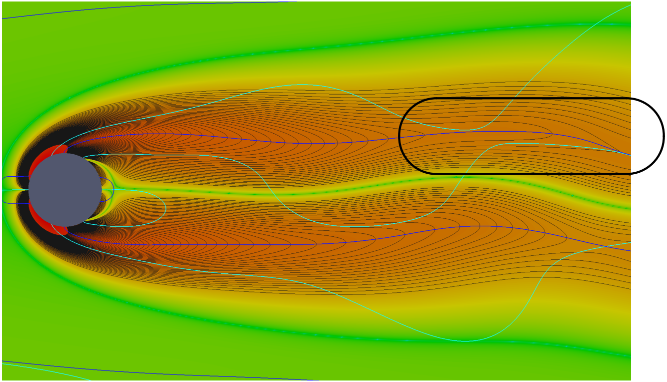

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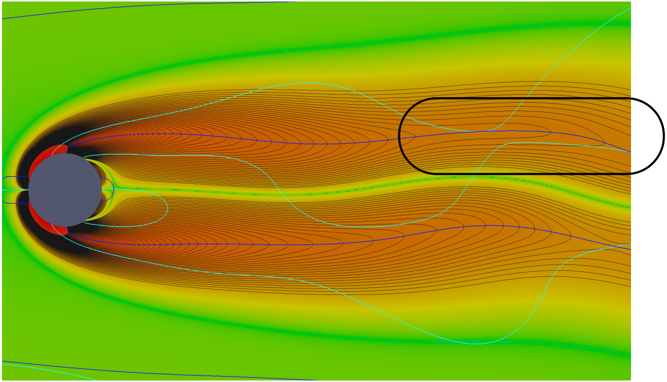

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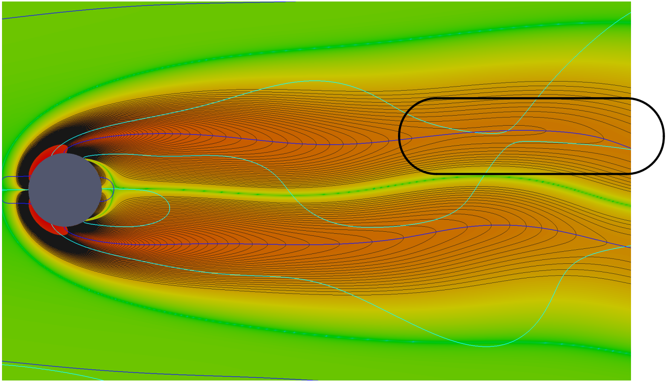

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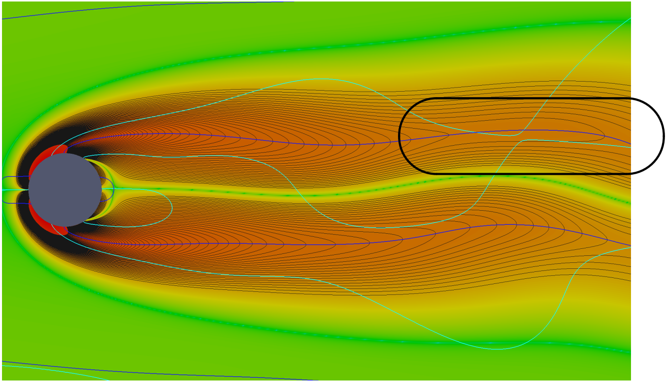

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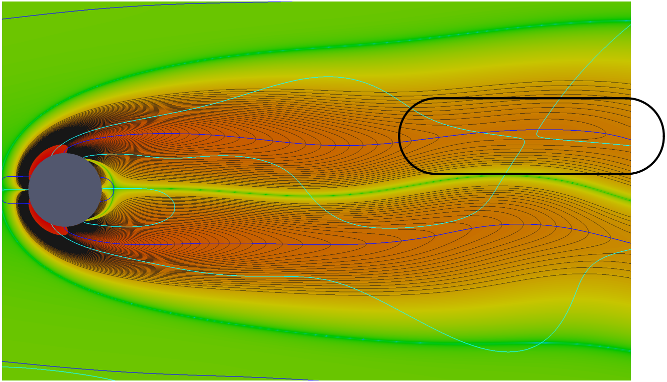

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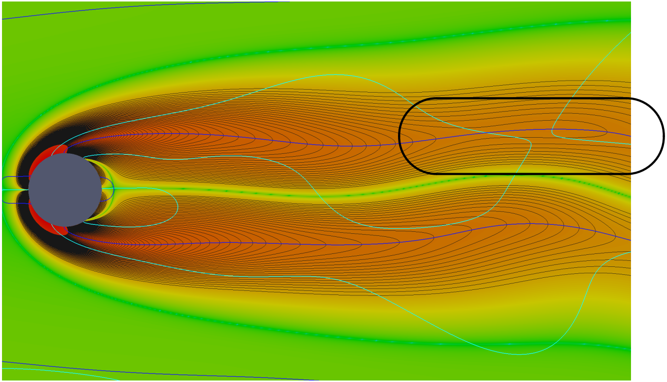

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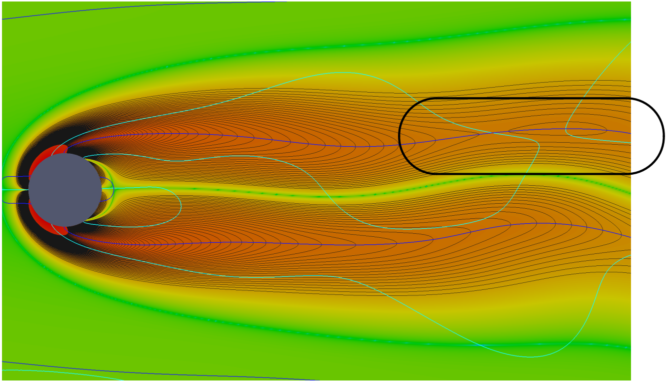

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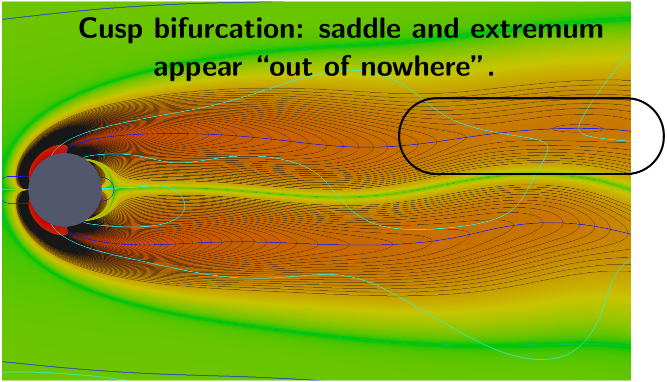

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Location/existence of cusp bifurcation as function of ε

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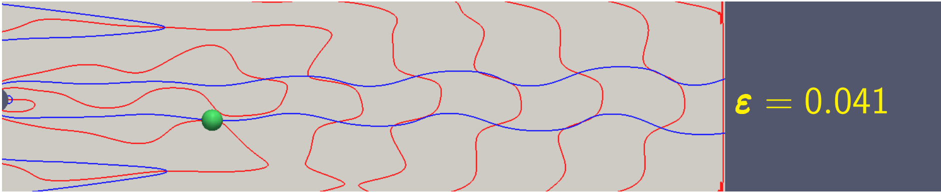

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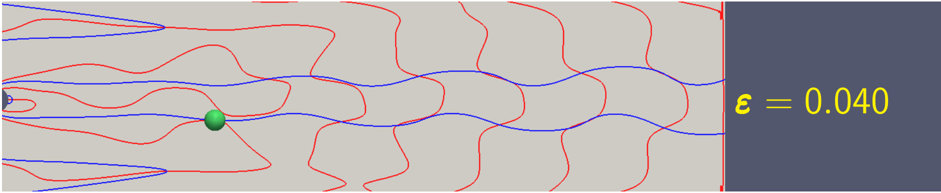

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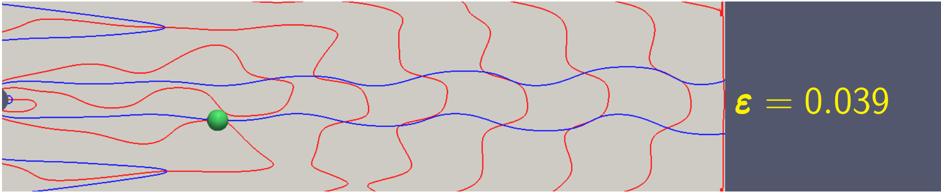

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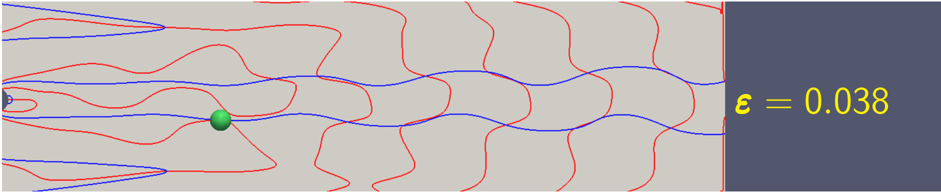

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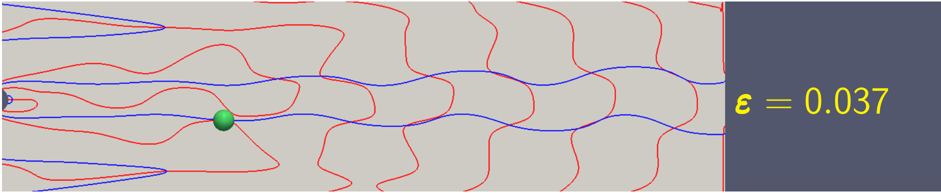

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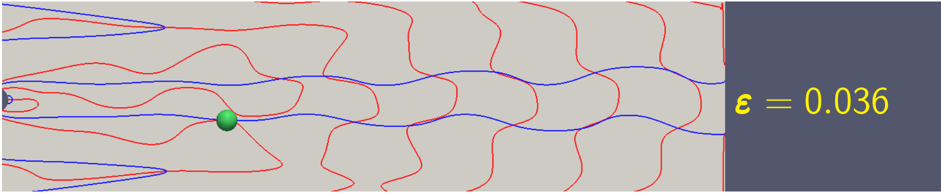

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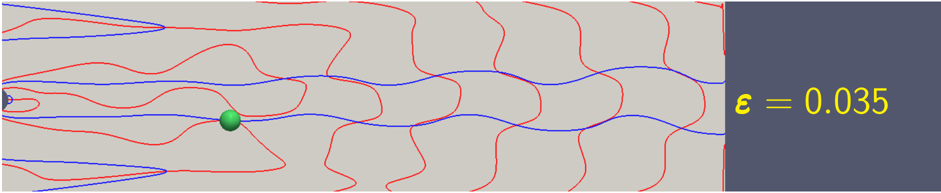

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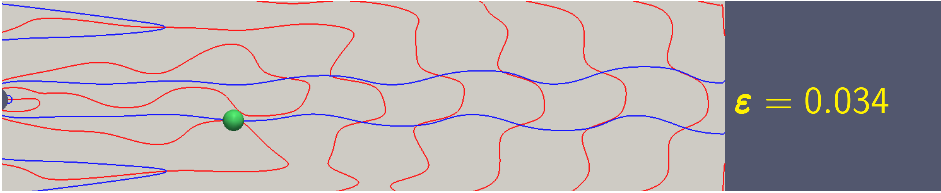

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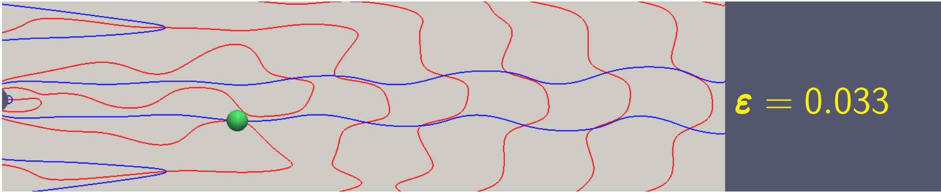

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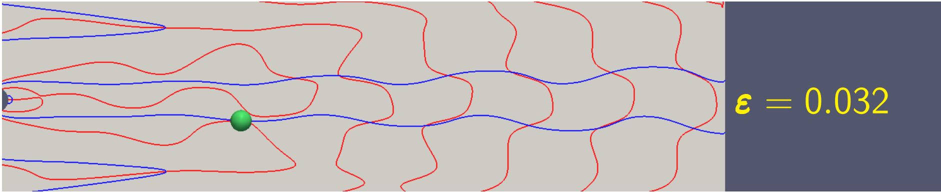

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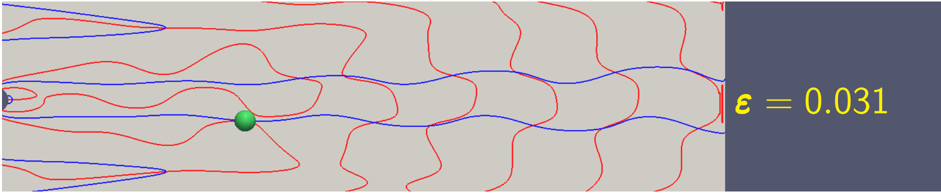

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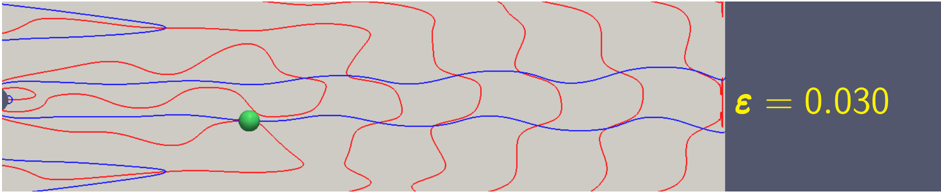

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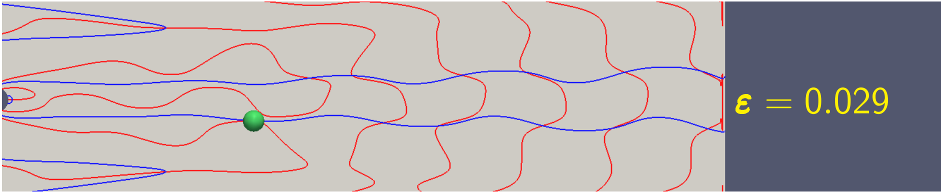

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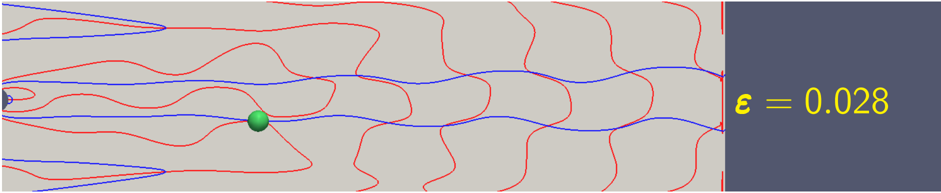

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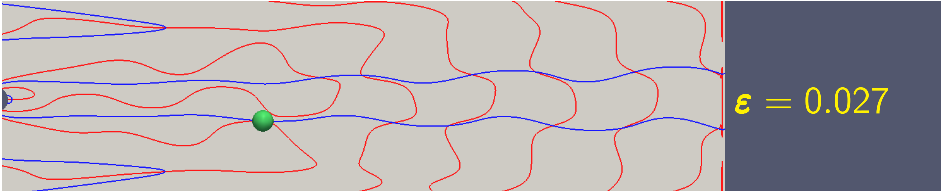

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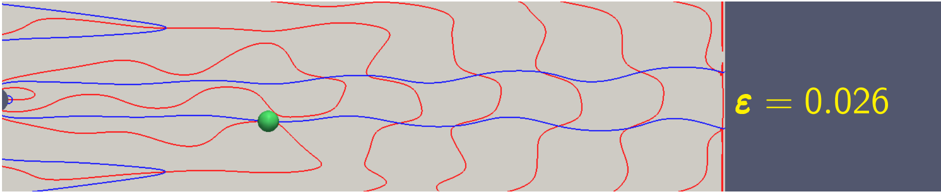
Plot of zero levels of $\partial\omega/\partial x$ (red), $\partial\omega/\partial y$ (blue) at time when vortex is created. Location of bifurcation indicated by green marker.



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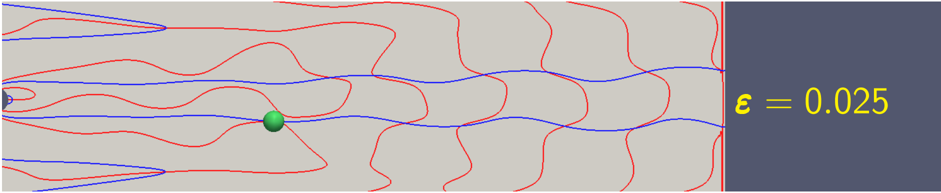

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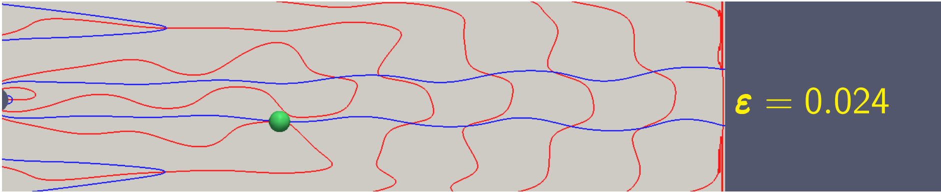

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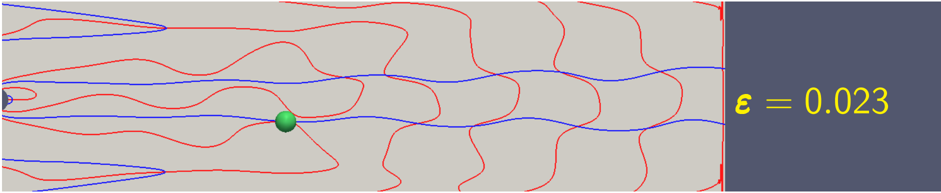

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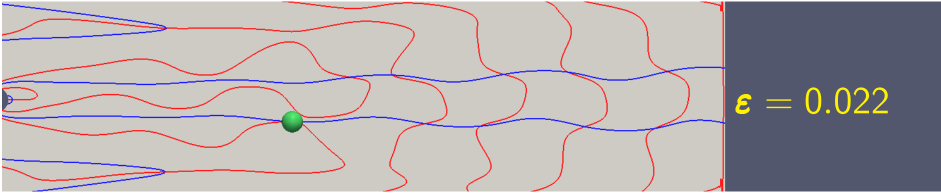

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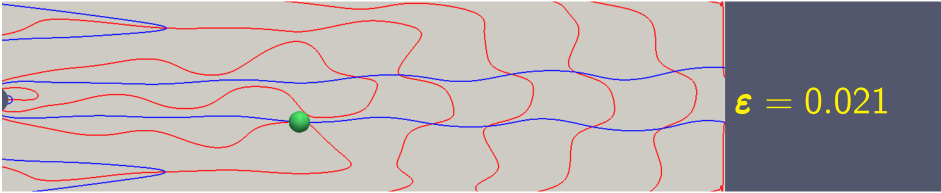

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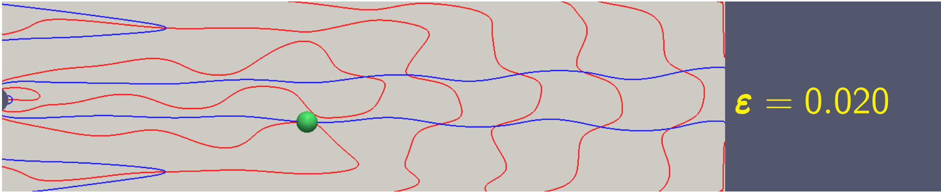

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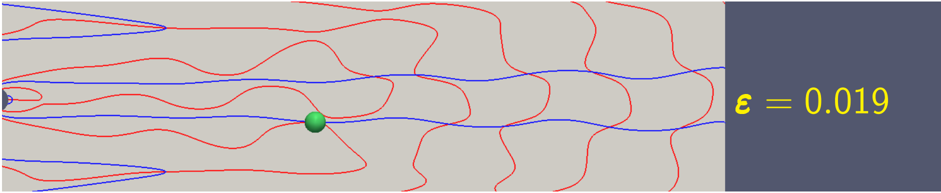

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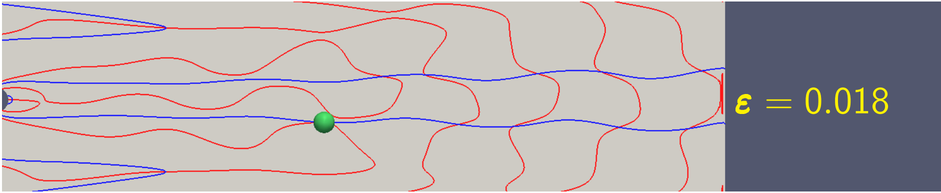

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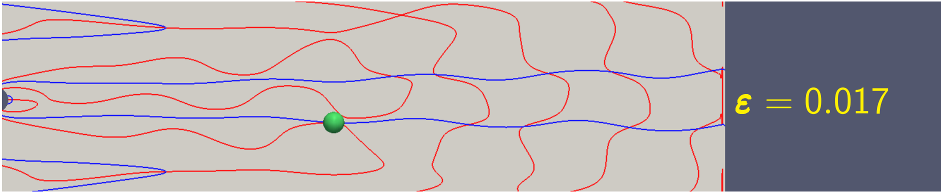

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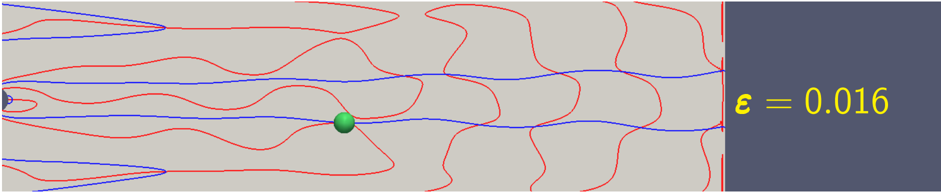

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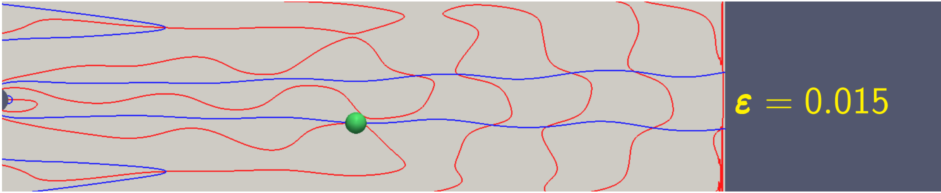

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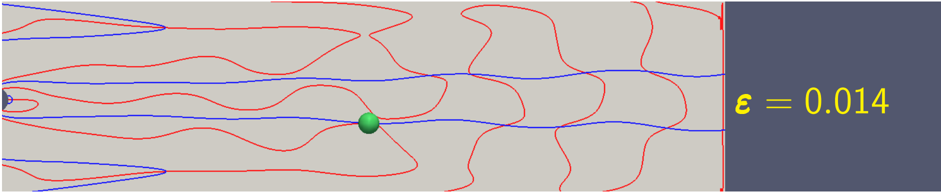

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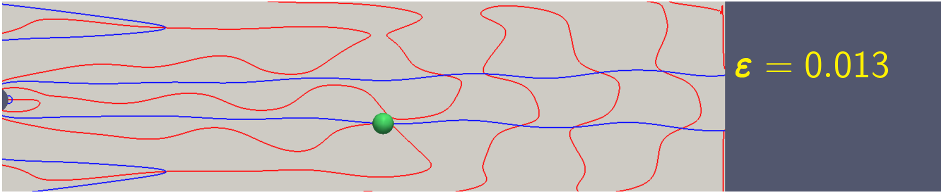

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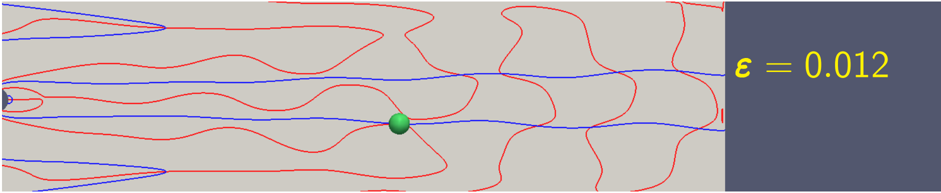
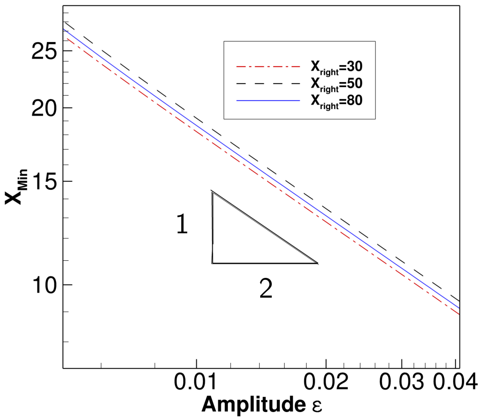


- Cusp doesn't seem to disappear – it just moves downstream as ε is reduced!

Cusp bifurcation “disappears to” infinity as $\varepsilon \to 0$??

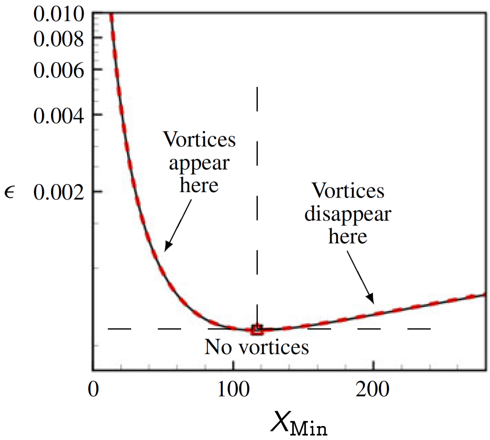
Plot of cusp position, $X_{\mathrm{Min}}(\varepsilon)$:



- **Observation:**

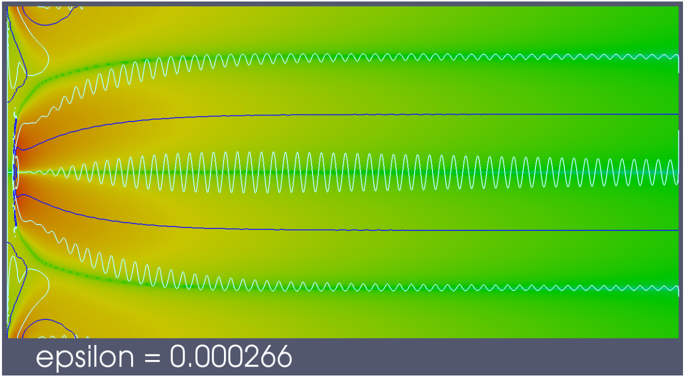
$$X_{\mathrm{Min}} \sim \varepsilon^{-1/2}$$

Well, not quite...



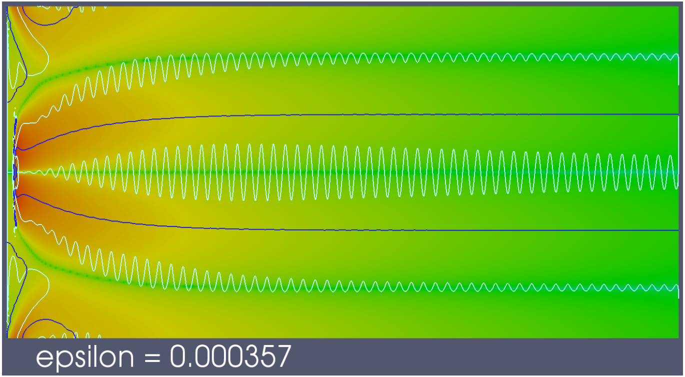
- No vortices are created when $\varepsilon < 0.00057$
- For $\varepsilon = 0.00057$ a vortex is created at $X_{\mathrm{Min}} = 117.1$

So, here's what really happens



- Karman vortex street develops at finite ε.

So, here's what really happens



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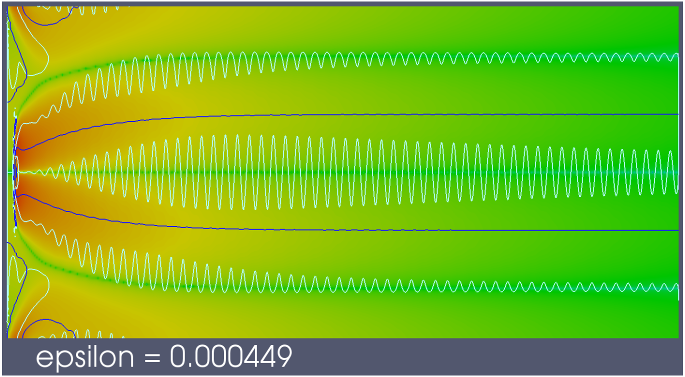

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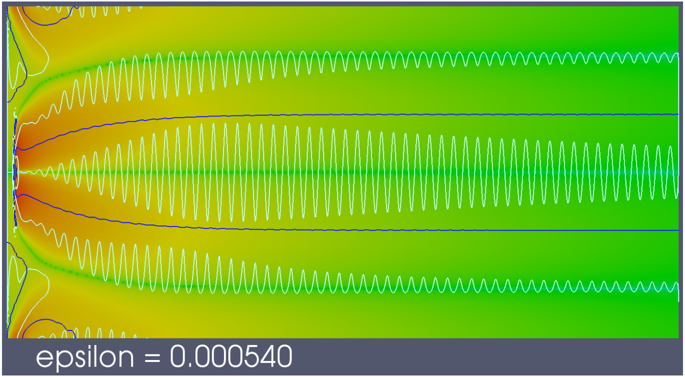

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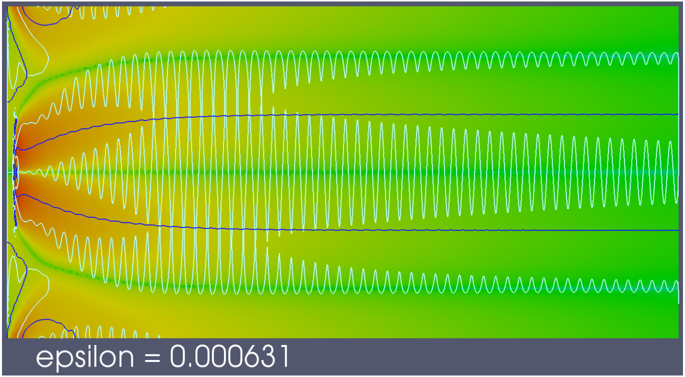
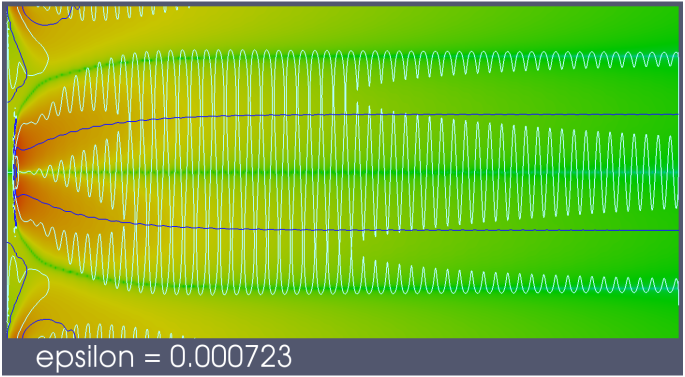


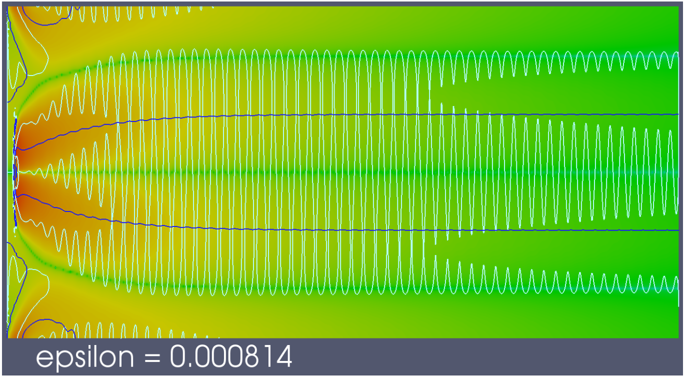
- Karman vortex street develops at finite $0.00054 < \varepsilon < 0.000631$.
- Cusp bifurcation first appears far downstream of cylinder...

So, here's what really happens



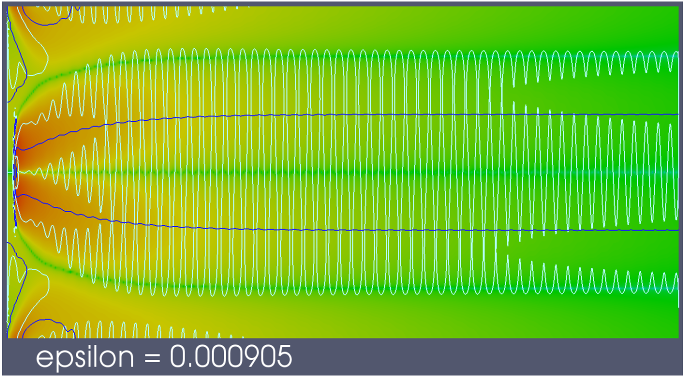
- Karman vortex street develops at finite $0.00054 < \varepsilon < 0.000631$.
- Cusp bifurcation first appears far downstream of cylinder...
- ...and then moves rapidly upstream as ε is increased.

So, here's what really happens



- Karman vortex street develops at finite $0.00054 < \varepsilon < 0.000631$.
- Cusp bifurcation first appears far downstream of cylinder...
- ...and then moves rapidly upstream as ε is increased.
- Karman vortex street persists for finite length and then disappears via a reverse cusp bifurcation when diffusion of vorticity smoothes out the local maxima.

So, here's what really happens



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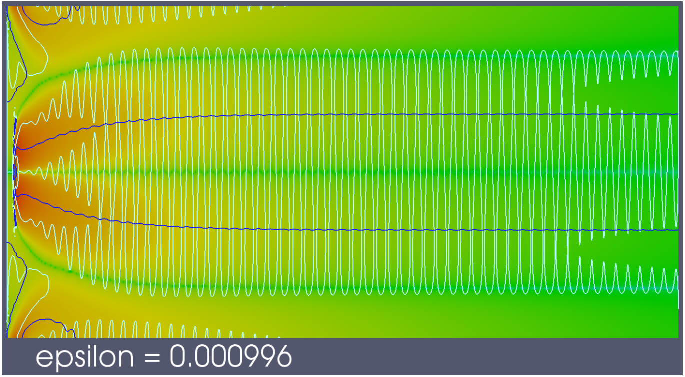

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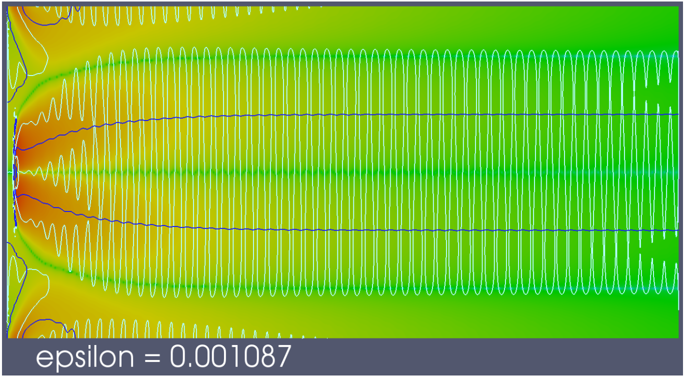

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Overview

Vortex definition # 3:The Q-criterion

The velocity gradient tensor can be decomposed into a symmetric and a skew-symmetric part

$$\nabla \mathbf{v} = \begin{pmatrix} \partial_x u & \partial_y u \\ \partial_x v & \partial_y v \end{pmatrix} = \mathbf{S} + \boldsymbol{\Omega},$$

$$\mathbf{S} = \frac{1}{2}(\nabla \mathbf{v} + \nabla \mathbf{v}^T) = \frac{1}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 2\partial_x u & \partial_x v + \partial_y u \\ \partial_x v + \partial_y u & 2\partial_y v \end{pmatrix},$$

$$\boldsymbol{\Omega} = \frac{1}{2}(\nabla \mathbf{v} - \nabla \mathbf{v}^T) = \frac{1}{2} \begin{pmatrix} 0 & \omega \\ -\omega & 0 \end{pmatrix}.$$

The Q-criterion: A vortex is a region where rotation dominates shear,

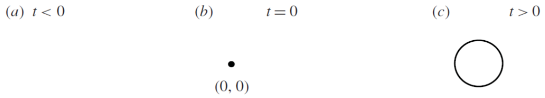
$$Q = ||\boldsymbol{\Omega}||^2 - ||\mathbf{S}||^2 > 0, \qquad ||\mathbf{A}||^2 = \mathrm{tr}(\mathbf{A}\mathbf{A}^T).$$

$$Q = \det(\nabla \mathbf{v}) = \partial_x u \partial_y v - \partial_y u \partial_x v.$$

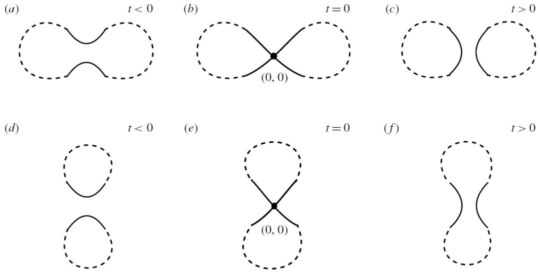
Galilean invariant!

Bifurcation of Q-vortices

Bifurcation occurs at critical points of Q, $\partial_x Q = \partial_y Q = 0$.
If the Hessian of Q is positive or negative definite, and $\partial_t Q \neq 0$, a *punching bifurcation* occurs

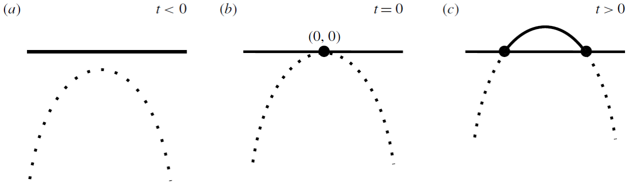


If the Hessian of Q is indefinite, and $\partial_t Q \neq 0$, a *pinching bifurcation* occurs

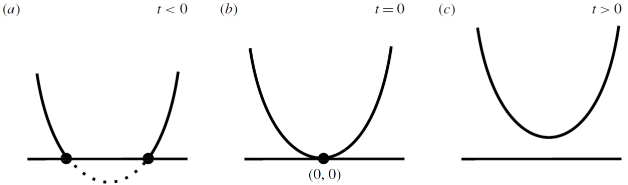


Bifurcation of Q-vortices from a no-slip wall

Wall punching

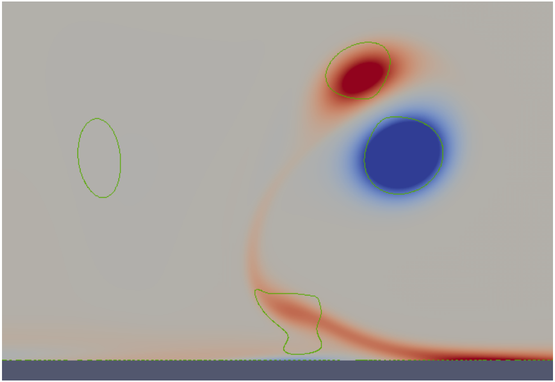


Wall pinching



Q-vortices in boundary layer eruption

Connection between vorticity and Q



There is no simple general connection between critical points of vorticity and Q-vortices. However:

If the flow has rotational symmetry around an extremum of vorticity, there is a Q-vortex around that point.

Overview

Summary

- Local extrema of vorticity are a useful generalization of point vortices for viscous flows
- Equations of motion and a bifurcation theory describing creation and merging of vortices can be derived
- The vortices in the Karman vortex street are created at a Reynolds number slightly higher than the critical value for onset of oscillations, at a distance ≈ 100 diameters downstream
- The Q-criterion identifies a vortex as a region where vorticity dominates shear
- A bifurcation theory for Q-vortices can be derived