

Ferromagnetic Josephson Junctions for Cryogenic Memory

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Abstract— Large-scale computing facilities and data centers are using electrical power at an ever-increasing rate. Current projections suggest that a future exascale computer will require the power output of a typical nuclear power plant [1]—clearly an untenable situation. One approach to addressing this problem is to build a superconducting computer based on single-flux-quantum logic. Designing a high-density memory for such a computer is a major challenge. One approach is to use Josephson junctions containing ferromagnetic (F) materials as the basic memory element for such a memory [2]. The basic device is a Josephson junction containing two ferromagnetic layers whose magnetization directions can be switched between being parallel or antiparallel to each other, just as in a conventional spin valve. If the thicknesses of the ferromagnetic layers are chosen appropriately, those two magnetic states will result in the junction having a ground-state superconducting phase difference of either 0 or π . We have recently demonstrated that such a junction can indeed be controllably switched between the “0” phase state and the “ π ” phase state, from measurements of two junctions in a SQUID geometry [3]. We will report on our continued progress in optimizing this system.

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