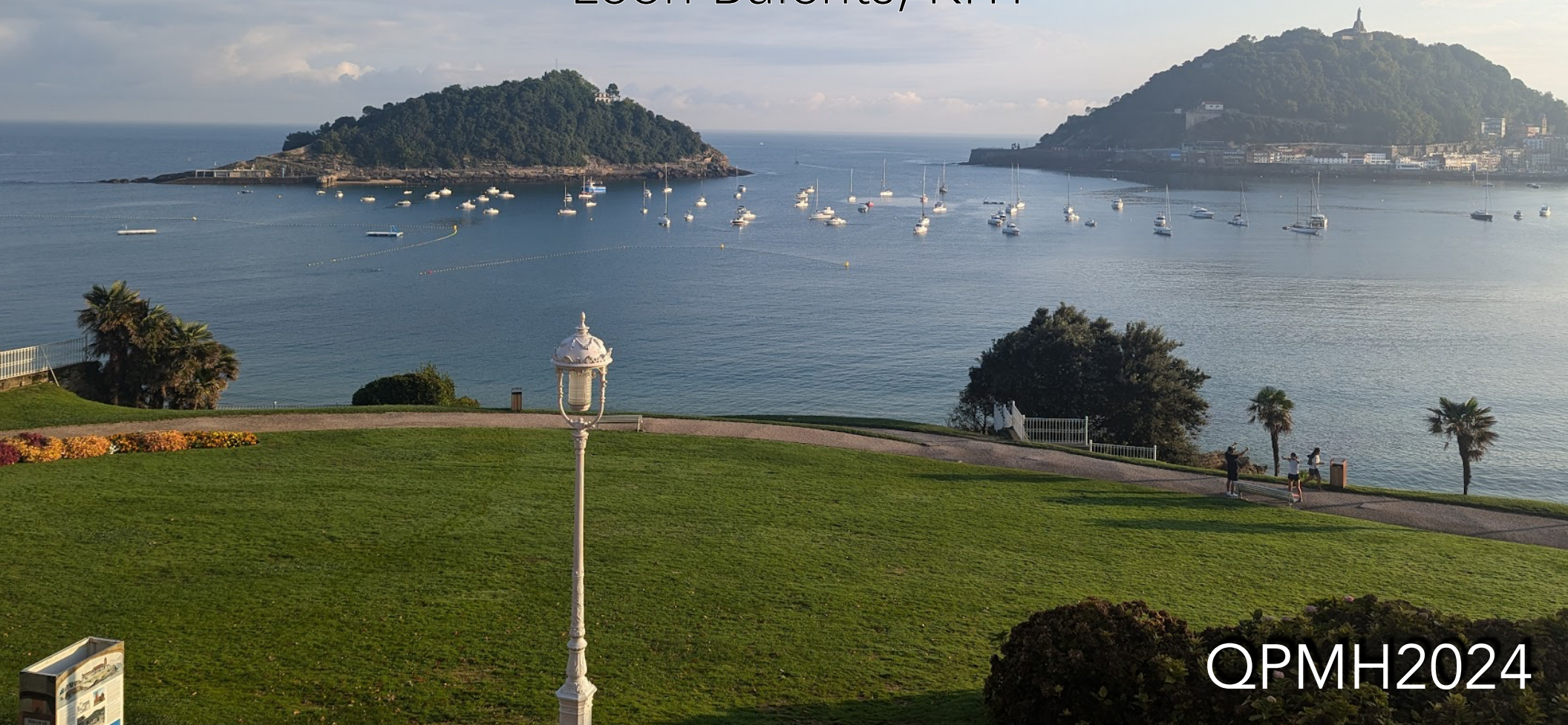


An exciton Mott insulator?

Leon Balents, KITP



QPMH2024

Collaborators

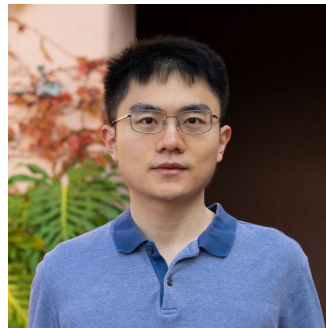


Zhenhao Song
UCSB

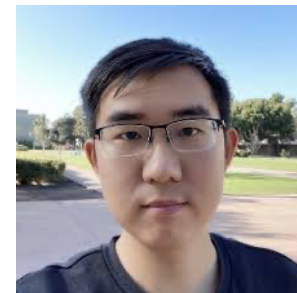


Tessa Cookmeyer
KITP

Thanks for the
discussions



Chenhao Jin
UCSB Physics



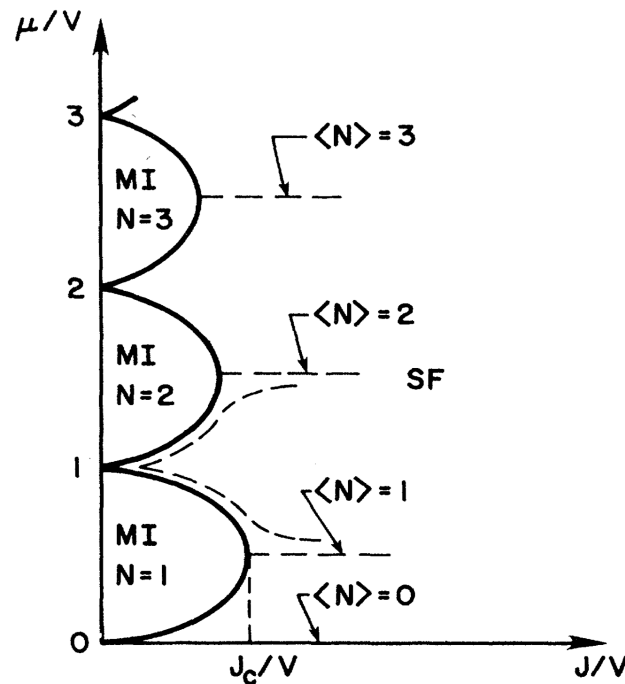
Richen Xiong
UCSB Physics

Bose Mott transition

$$H = -t \sum_{(ij)} b_i^\dagger b_j + U \sum_i n_i(n_i - 1)$$

Mott

$$|\Psi_0\rangle \approx \bigotimes_i |n_i = m\rangle$$

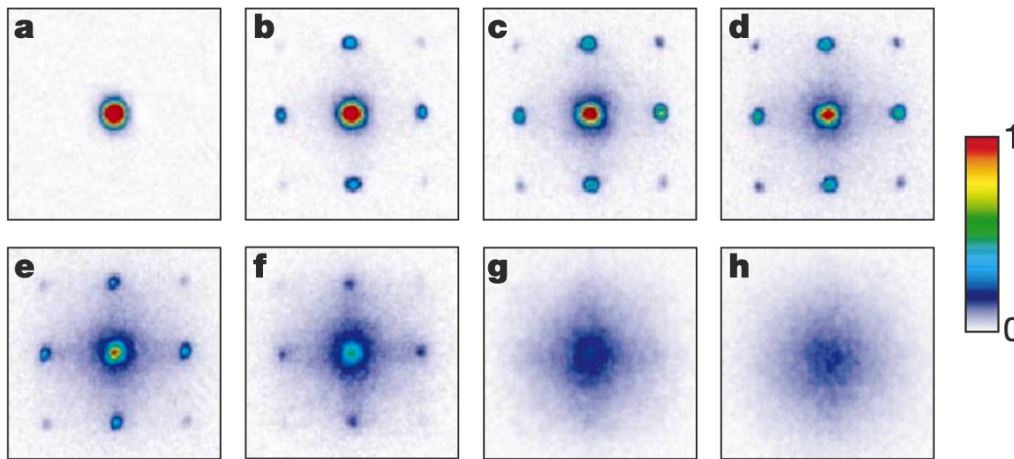
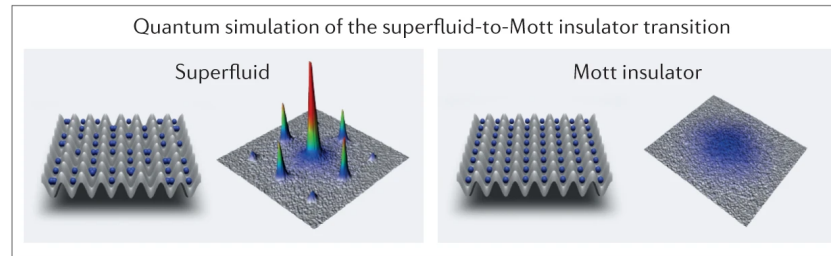


Superfluid/BEC

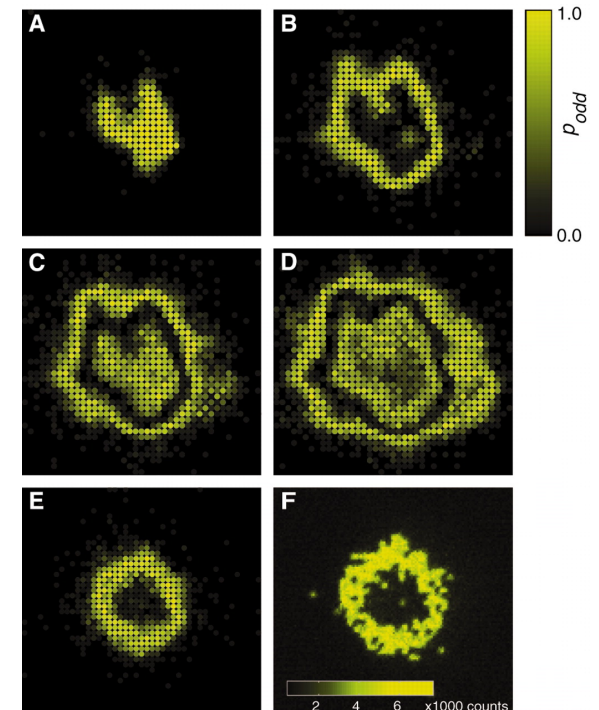
$$|\Psi_0\rangle \approx \left(\sum_i b_i^\dagger \right)^N |0\rangle$$

Fisher et al, 1989

Bose Mott transition

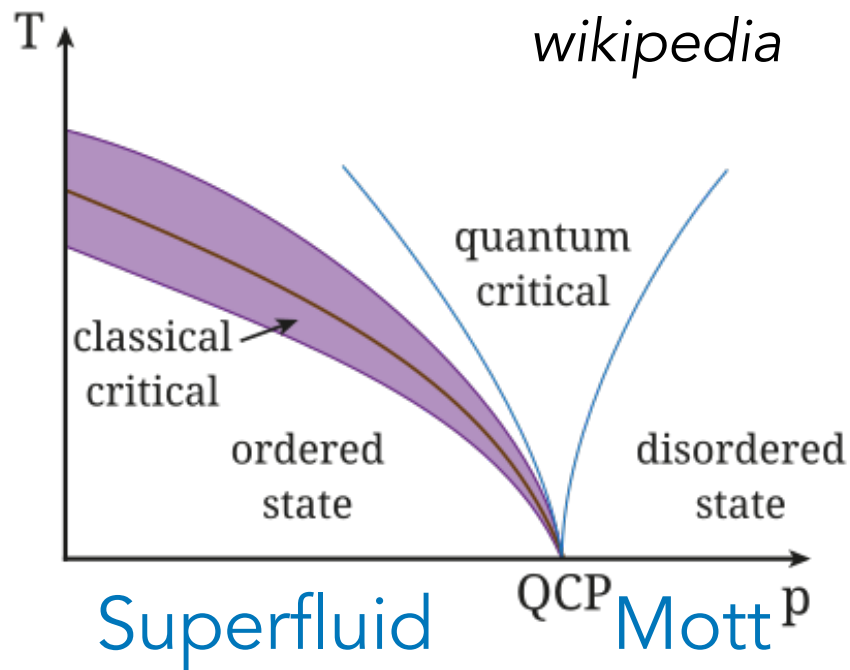


Greiner *et al*, 2002



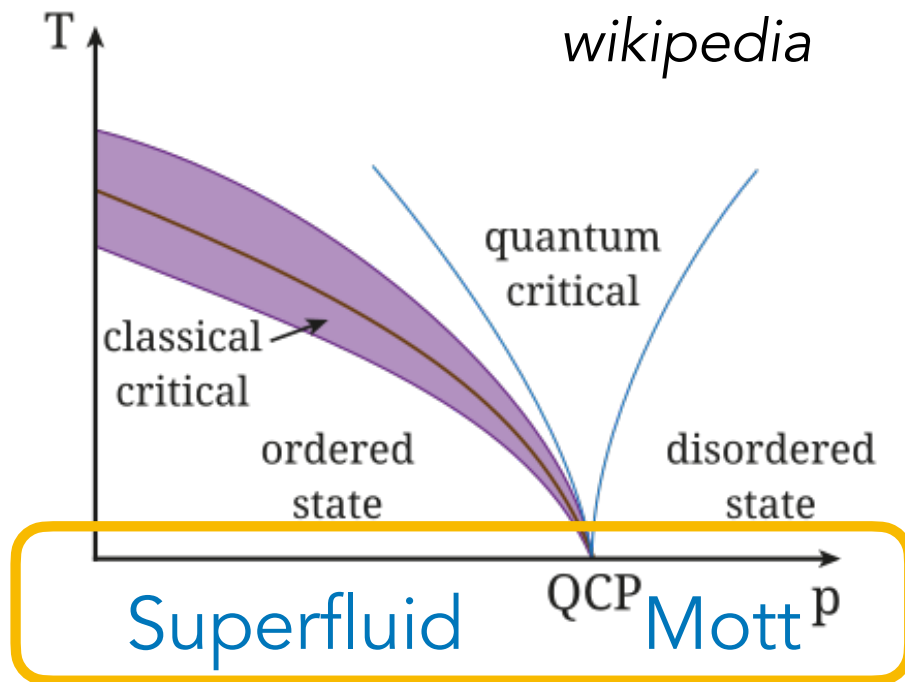
Bakr *et al*, 2010

Quantum phase transition



Scaling
Criticality
Singularities
Universality
All the good stuff

Quantum phase transition

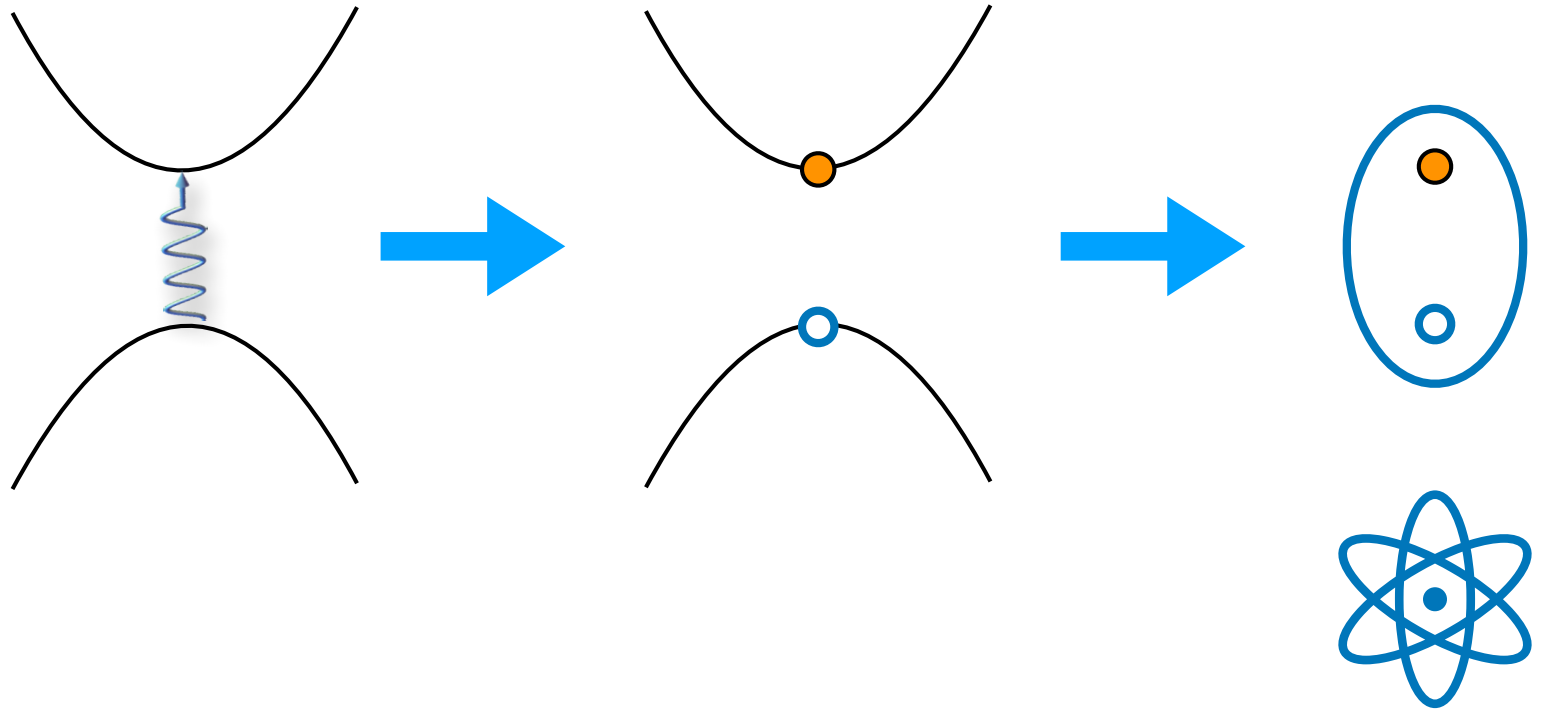


Scaling
Criticality
Singularities
Universality
All the good stuff

@ $T=0$: no entropy
No normal fluid

Excitons

A "composite" boson in electronic systems

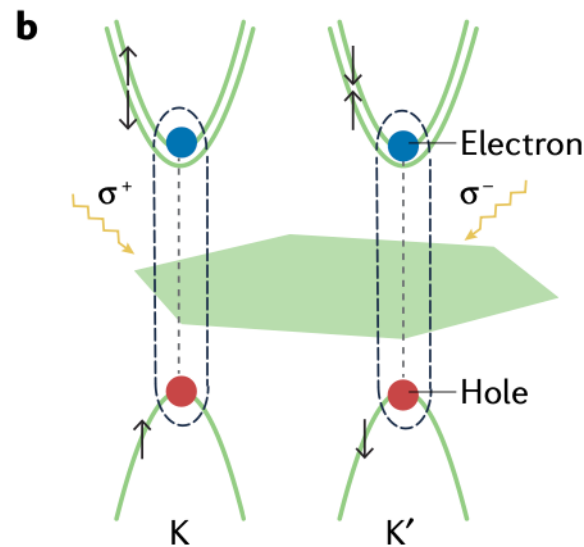


Unlike an atom an exciton is not stable and is only an excitation.

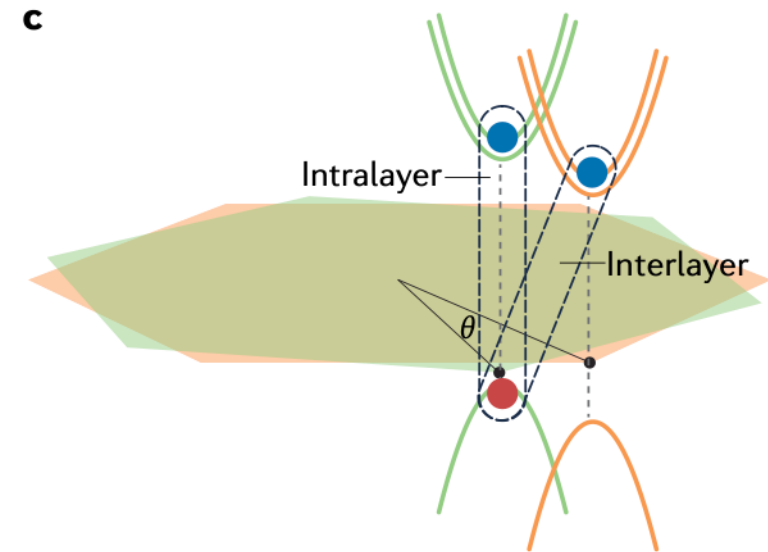
TMD excitons

Electrons have valley and spin QNs

Holes have valley QNs



E. Regan et al, 2022



For certain “type II” band alignments, **inter**-layer excitons have lowest energy

These have long lifetimes and are more sensitive to layer alignment/moiré

Interlayer moiré excitons

WS₂-WSe₂

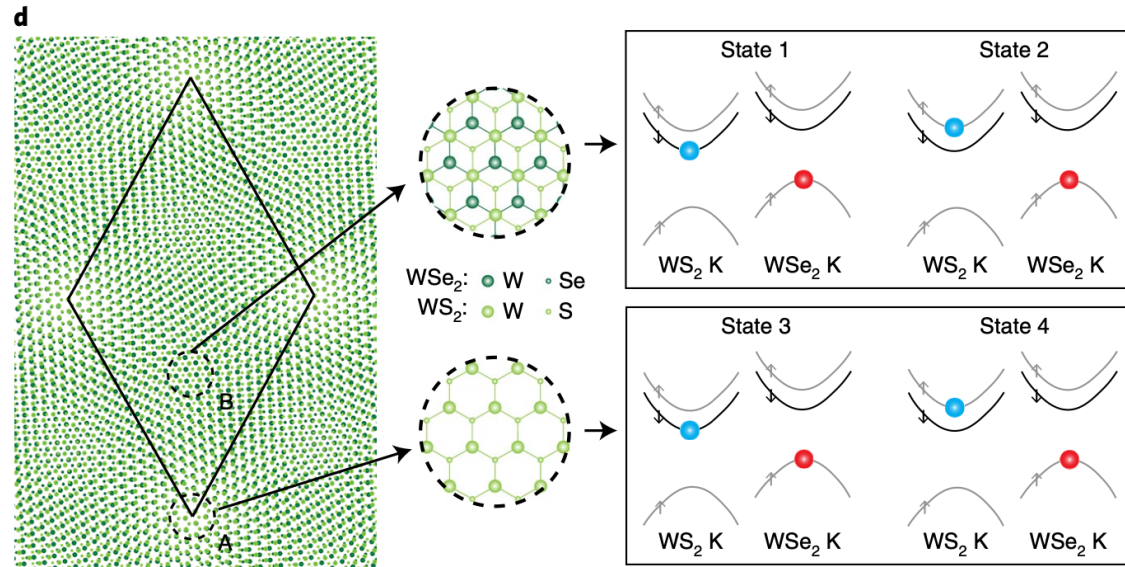
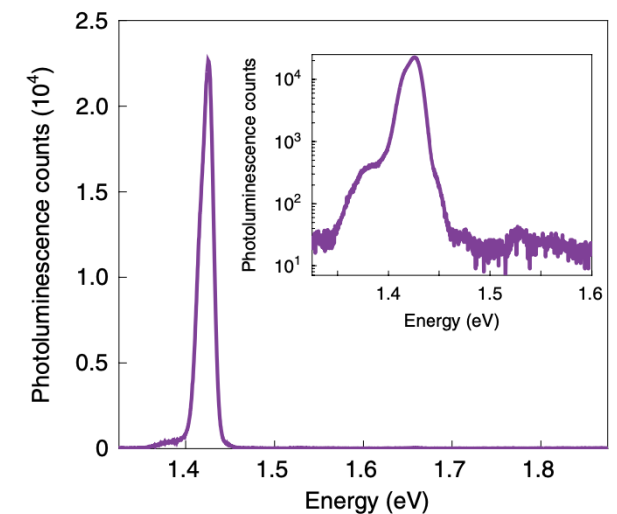


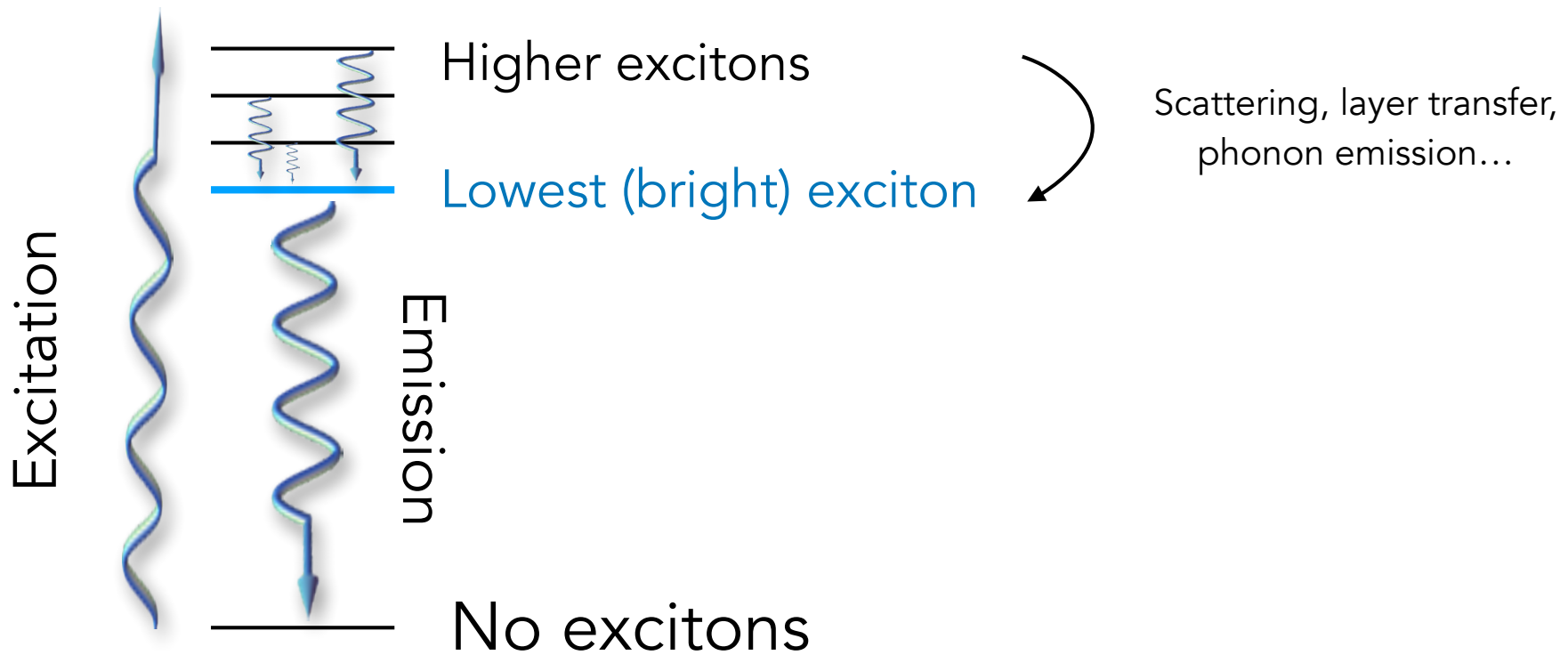
Table 1 | The nature of different interlayer moiré exciton states and the spin, valley and moiré contributions to their optical selection rules

State	Experimental results				Inferred conclusions				
	Energy (eV)	Oscillator strength	Total QAM	Hole valley and spin	Electron valley and spin	Spin QAM	Valley QAM	Moiré QAM	Moiré position
1	1.43	Weak	+1 = -2	K ↑	K ↓	-1	+1	-2	B
2	1.46	Strong	-1	K ↑	K ↑	0	+1	-2	B
3		Not observed	0	K ↑	K ↓	-1	+1	0	A
4	1.51	Strong	+1	K ↑	K ↑	0	+1	0	A
5	1.43	Weak	-1 = +2	K' ↓	K' ↑	1	-1	+2	B
6	1.46	Strong	+1	K' ↓	K' ↓	0	-1	+2	B
7		Not observed	0	K' ↓	K' ↑	1	-1	0	A
8	1.51	Strong	-1	K' ↓	K' ↓	0	-1	0	A



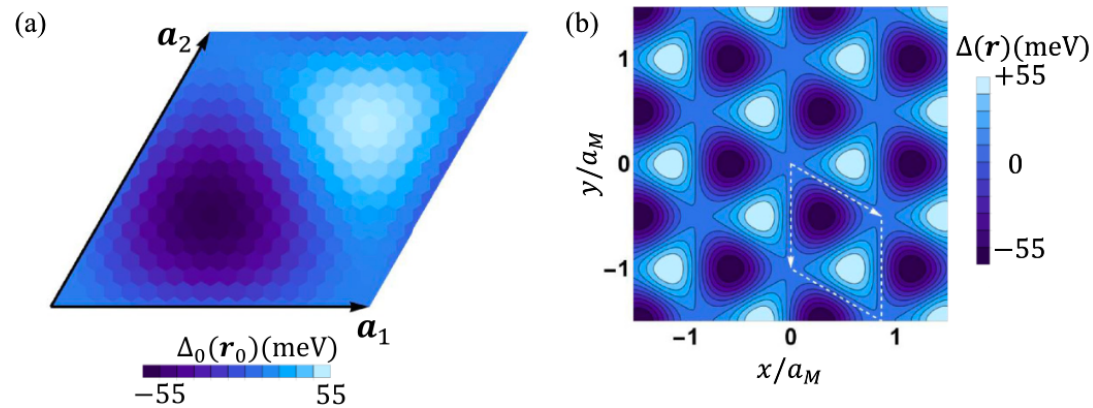
C. Jin et al, 2019

Emission



NOT to scale!

Moiré potential

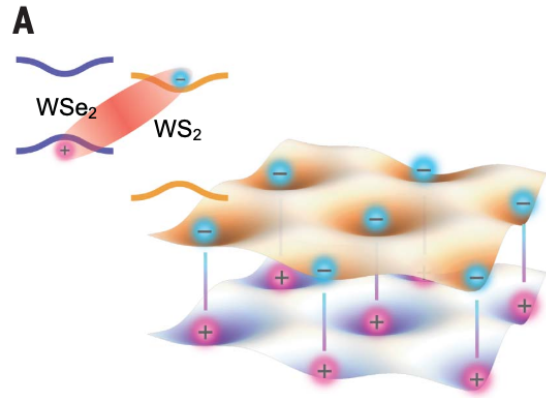


Excitons localize in minima of local band gap

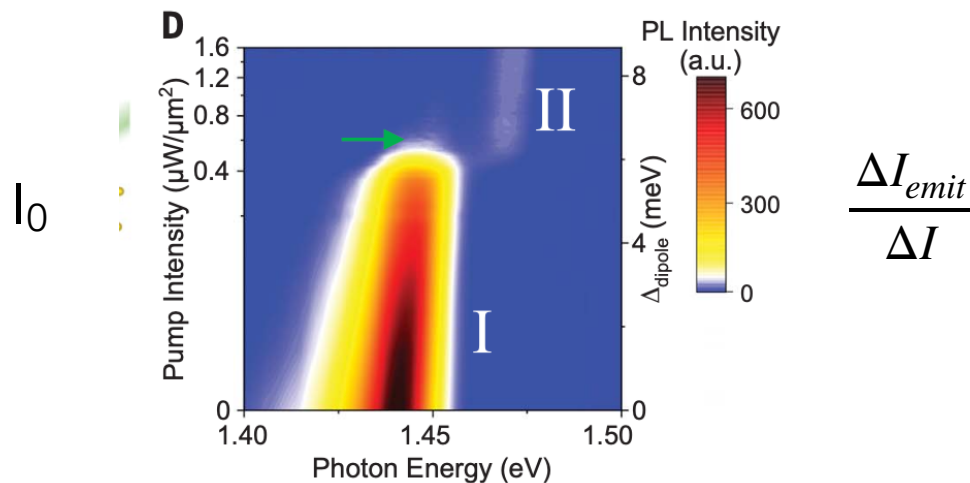
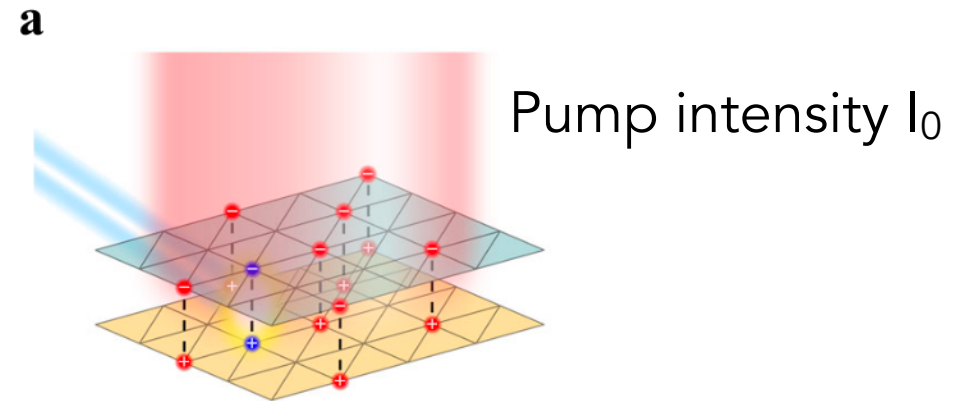
F. Wu *et al*, 2018 (plot is for $\text{WS}_2\text{-Mo}_2$)

Experimentalists can populate excitons in these wells.

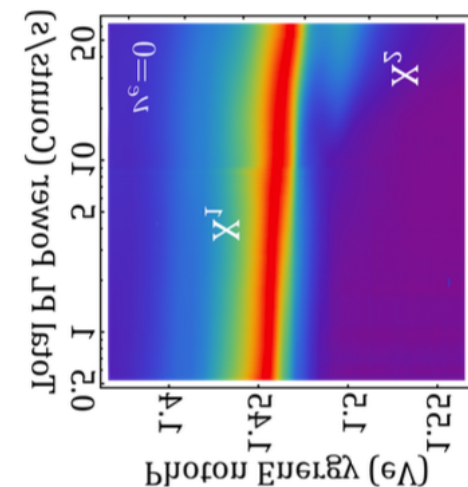
Exciton Mott insulator



Probe
 $\Delta I \cos \omega t$
 (8 Hz)

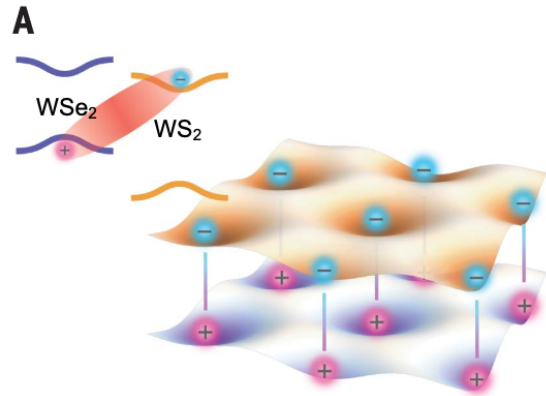


R. Xiong *et al*, 2023

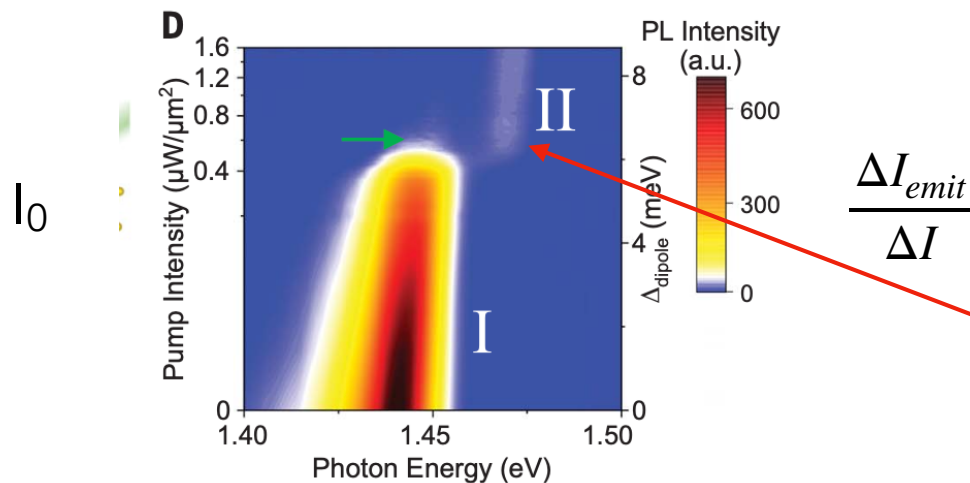
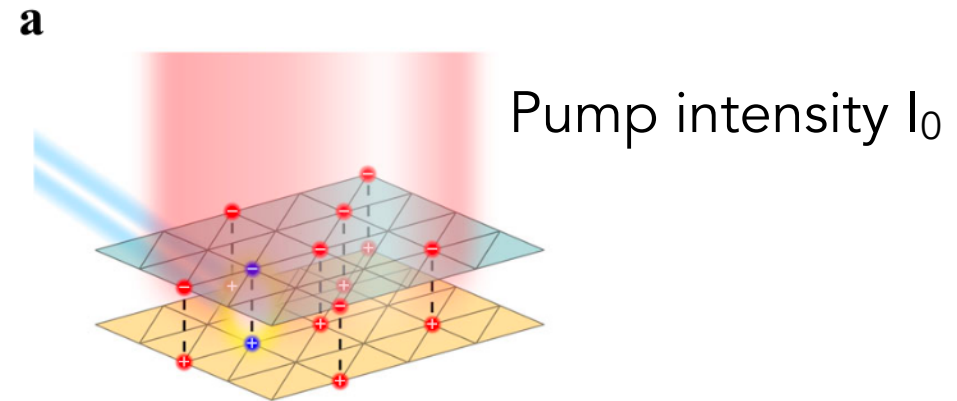


B. Gao *et al*, 2023

Exciton Mott insulator



Probe
 $\Delta I \cos \omega t$
 (8 Hz)

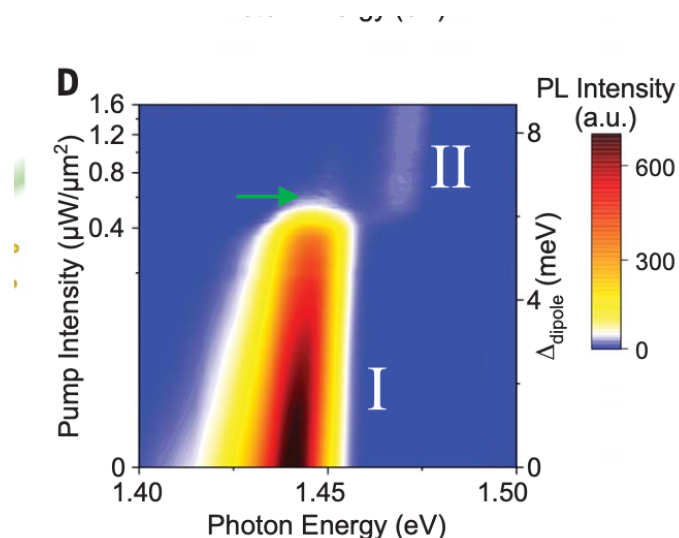


2nd exciton's energy
 increased by $U_{\text{ex-ex}}$

R. Xiong *et al*, 2023

Issues

- Excitons are far from equilibrium
 - under constant illumination
 - not conserved
- Is there a Mott transition under these conditions? What is its nature?



Jump in emission line *seems* abrupt but...

Simple model

- Minimalist excitons: ignore spin, valley

$$H_0 = \mu \sum_i n_i + \sum_i \frac{U}{2} n_i (n_i - 1) - \sum_{i,j} t_{i,j} b_i^\dagger b_j,$$

- Take non-equilibrium seriously: *Lindblad equation*

$$\dot{\rho} = -i[H, \rho] + \sum_k \gamma_k \mathcal{L}(L_k, L_k^\dagger)[\rho]$$

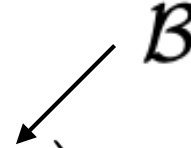


$$\mathcal{L}(A, B)[\rho(t)] = A\rho(t)B - \frac{1}{2}\{BA, \rho(t)\}$$

“Jump operators” encode transitions generated by excitation and decay

Jump operators

- Microscopically, these arise from coupling to photons (+...)

$$H = H_0 + H_I; \quad H_I = \mathcal{R} \left(\sum_i b_i^\dagger \right) + \mathcal{R}^\dagger \left(\sum_i b_i \right)$$


Electromagnetic field has long wavelength $\gg$ moiré period
For simplicity we use just this bath coupling.

- Standard derivation (H.P. Breuer and F. Petruccione, 2002)

gives that jump operators determined by

- Spectral correlator of $\mathcal{R}$

$$[\mathcal{B}_\lambda, H_0] = \omega_\lambda \mathcal{B}_\lambda$$

- Decomposition of $\mathcal{B}$ into eigen-operators of H_0

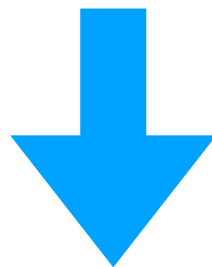
$$\mathcal{B} = \sum_\lambda \mathcal{B}_\lambda$$

Lindblad construction

- Eigen-operators

$$[\mathcal{B}_\lambda, H_0] = \omega_\lambda \mathcal{B}_\lambda$$

In general finding these is hard!
Similar to diagonalizing H_0



Bath generates transitions that conserve total energy of bath and system.

- Lindbladian in interaction picture:

$$\begin{aligned} \dot{\rho}(t) = & \sum_{\lambda, \lambda': \omega_\lambda = \omega_{\lambda'}} \gamma(\omega_\lambda) \mathcal{L} \left(B_\lambda(\omega_\lambda), B_{\lambda'}^\dagger(\omega_{\lambda'}) \right) [\rho(t)] \\ & + \sum_{\lambda, \lambda': \omega_\lambda = \omega_{\lambda'}} I(\omega_\lambda) \mathcal{L} \left(B_\lambda(\omega_\lambda)^\dagger, B_{\lambda'}(\omega_{\lambda'}) \right) [\rho(t)] \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \gamma(\omega) &= \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} ds e^{i\omega s} \langle \mathcal{R}(s) \mathcal{R}^\dagger \rangle \\ I(\omega) &= \int_{-\infty}^{\infty} ds e^{-i\omega s} \langle \mathcal{R}(s)^\dagger \mathcal{R} \rangle \end{aligned}$$

Eigen-operators

- Finding these is hard! $[\mathcal{B}_\lambda, H_0] = \omega_\lambda \mathcal{B}_\lambda$
- A priori we cannot restrict to low energy
- What we do: *all-all hopping model*

$$H_0 = \mu \sum_i n_i + \frac{U}{2} \sum_i n_i(n_i - 1) - \frac{t}{N} \sum_{i,j} b_i^\dagger b_j$$

In equilibrium, this affords a mean-field approximation as $N \rightarrow \text{infinity}$

But we can work for any N using *permutation symmetry*

$$b_i \rightarrow b_{P(i)}$$

Eigen-operators

- We can restrict to states with full permutation symmetry

Basis: $|\vec{n}\rangle = \mathcal{N}_{\vec{n}} \sum_{\sigma \in S_N} \sigma | (n_0, n_1, \dots, n_M) \rangle$ n_0 empty sites, n_1 singly occupied sites, n_2 doubly occupied sites...

There are relatively few states. Can diagonalize H_0 in this basis.

Result: $H_0 |\alpha, N_B\rangle = E_{\alpha, N_B} |\alpha, N_B\rangle$ Numerically except special cases

 Eigenoperators:

$$B_{\alpha, \beta, N_B} = \langle \alpha, N_B - 1 | \mathcal{B} | \beta, N_B \rangle | \alpha, N_B - 1 \rangle \langle \beta, N_B |$$

$$\omega_{\alpha, \beta, N_B} = E_{\beta, N_B} - E_{\alpha, N_B - 1}$$

Lindblad

- Using these states, we find the density matrix takes the form

$$\rho = \sum_{n,\alpha} \rho_{n,\alpha} |\alpha, n\rangle \langle \alpha, n|$$

Diagonal in this basis.

- Then the Lindblad equation becomes

$$\begin{aligned} \dot{\rho}_{an} = & \sum_{\lambda=(\alpha,a,n)} |B_\lambda|^2 (I(\omega_\lambda) \rho_{\alpha,n-1} - \gamma(\omega_\lambda) \rho_{an}) \\ & + \sum_{\lambda=(a,\beta,n+1)} |B_\lambda|^2 (\gamma(\omega_\lambda) \rho_{\beta,n+1} - I(\omega_\lambda) \rho_{an}) \end{aligned}$$

This is just a fancy rate equation for a mixed state.

But we can evaluate it all using just μ, U, t and the functions $\gamma(\omega), I(\omega)$

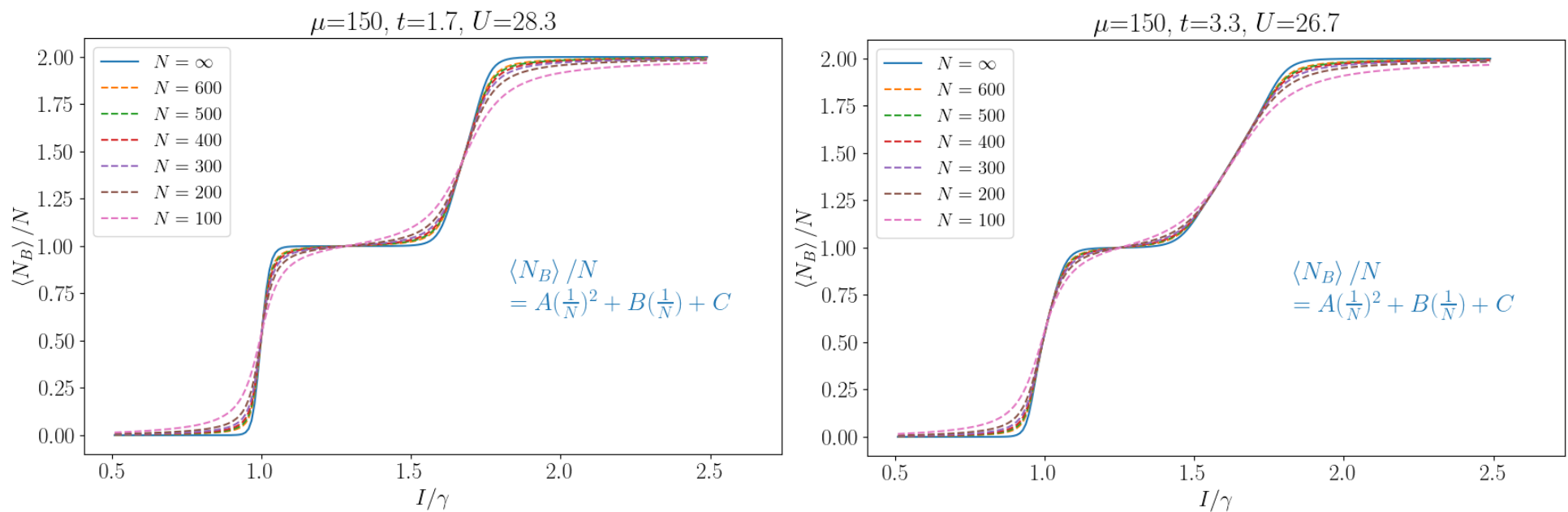
n.b. we assume no coherent pumping (typical for inter-layer excitons)

Results

- We studied several cases:
 - Zero hopping: exactly soluble
 - Hard-core bosons: exactly soluble
 - $n_i=0,1,2$ ($n_{\max}=2$) numerical solution
- In all cases, the solution is a non-thermal mixed state. There are, however, clearly phases.

Density

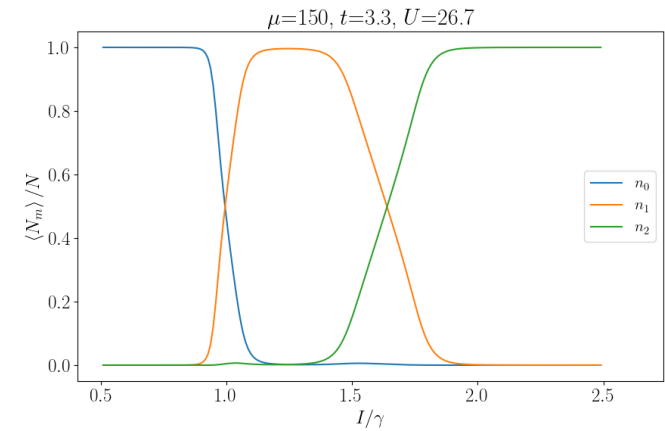
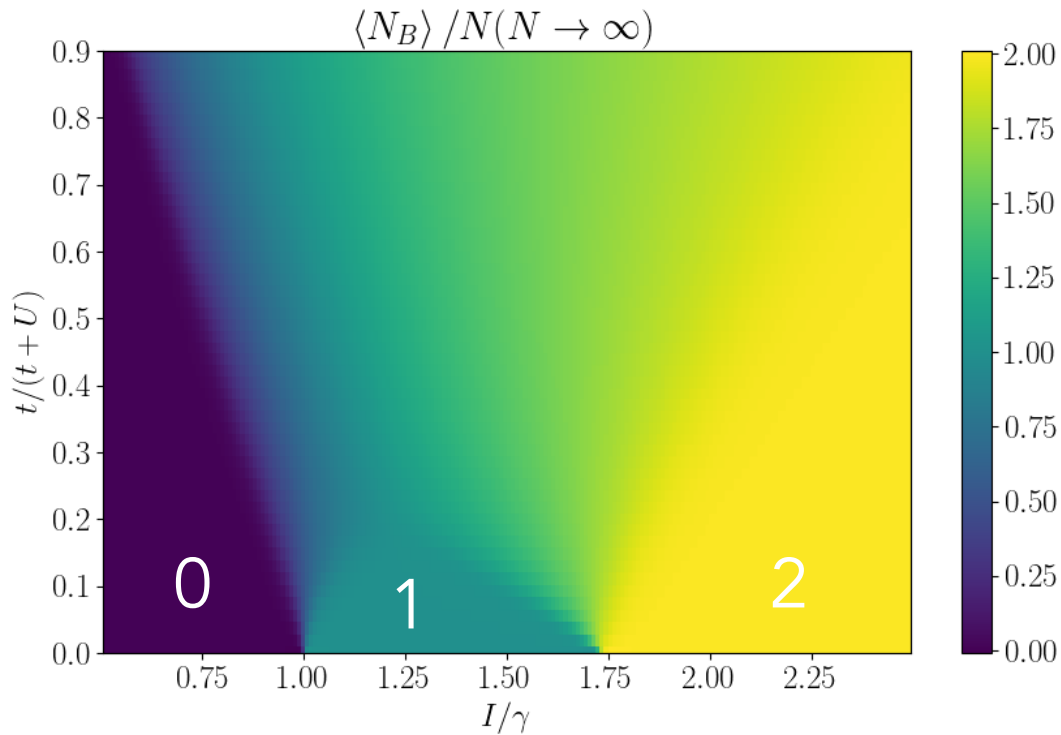
$\langle n_i \rangle$ should be quantized to an integer in a Mott insulator



$$n_{\max}=2$$

Density

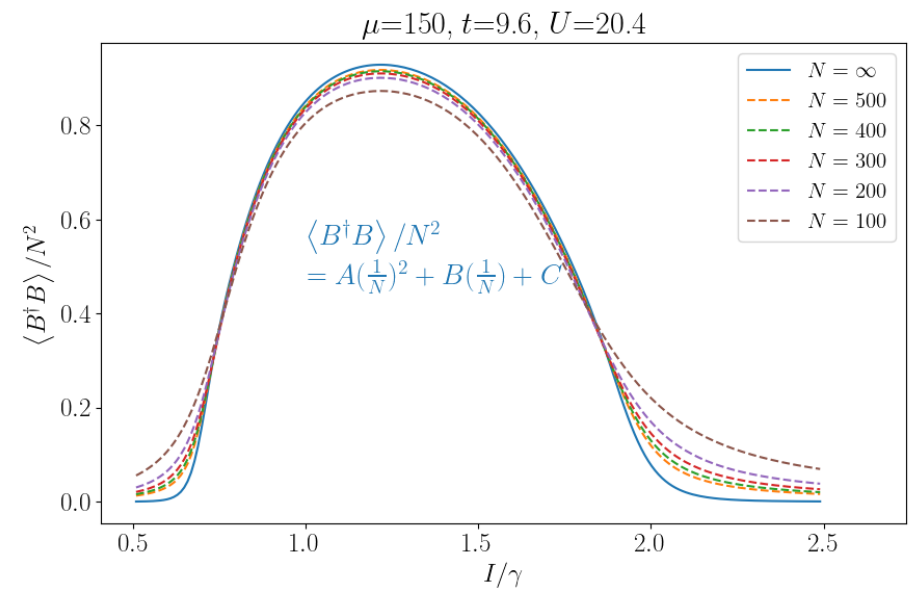
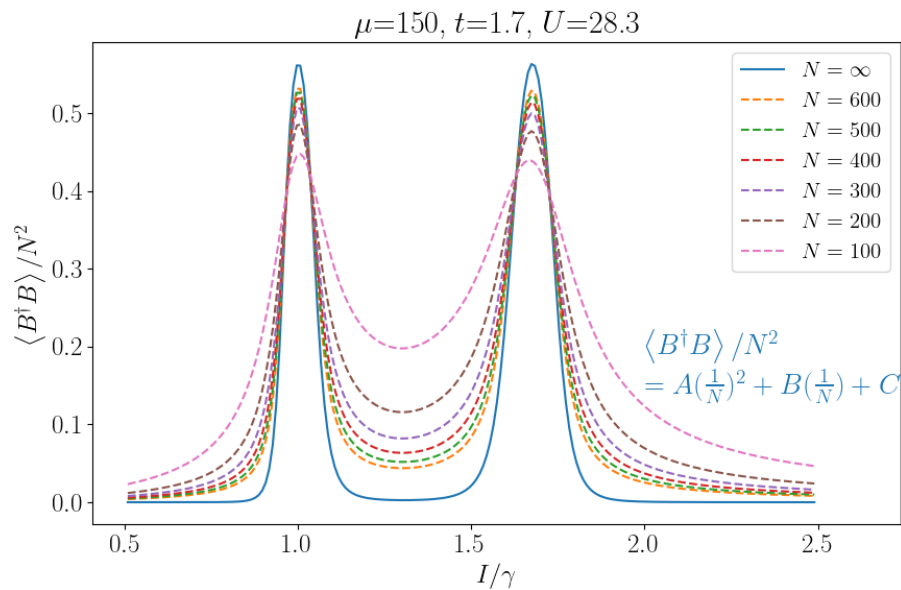
$\langle n_i \rangle$ should be quantized to an integer in a Mott insulator



Condensation

We examine

$$C = \frac{1}{N^2} \sum_{ij} \langle b_i^\dagger b_j \rangle = \frac{1}{N^2} \langle \mathcal{B}^\dagger \mathcal{B} \rangle$$

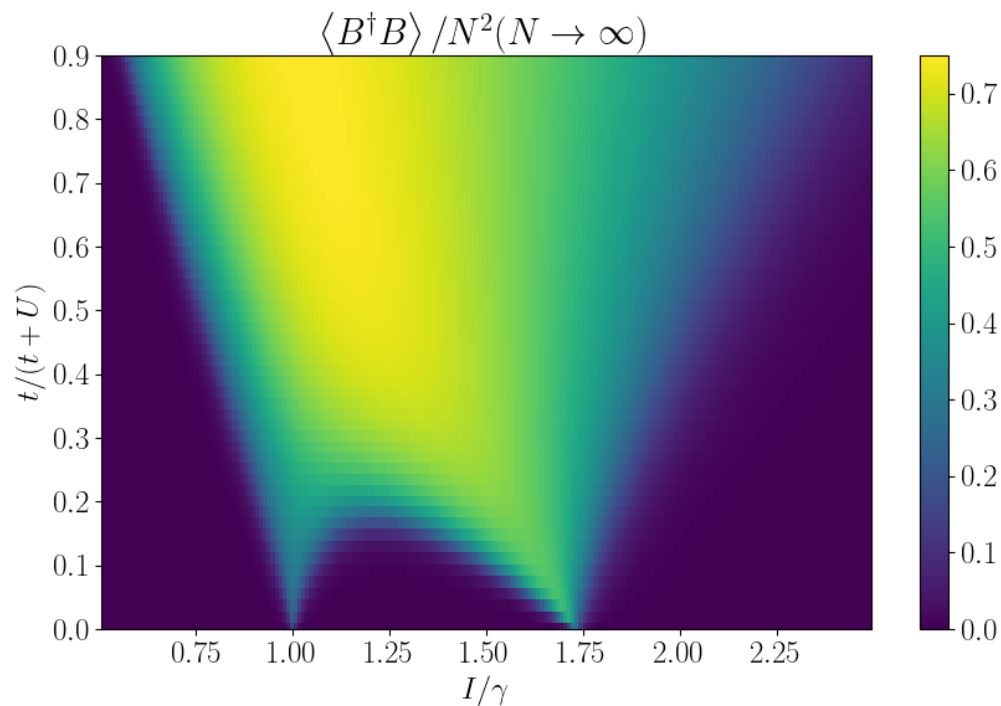


Condensation

We examine

$$C = \frac{1}{N^2} \sum_{ij} \langle b_i^\dagger b_j \rangle = \frac{1}{N^2} \langle \mathcal{B}^\dagger \mathcal{B} \rangle$$

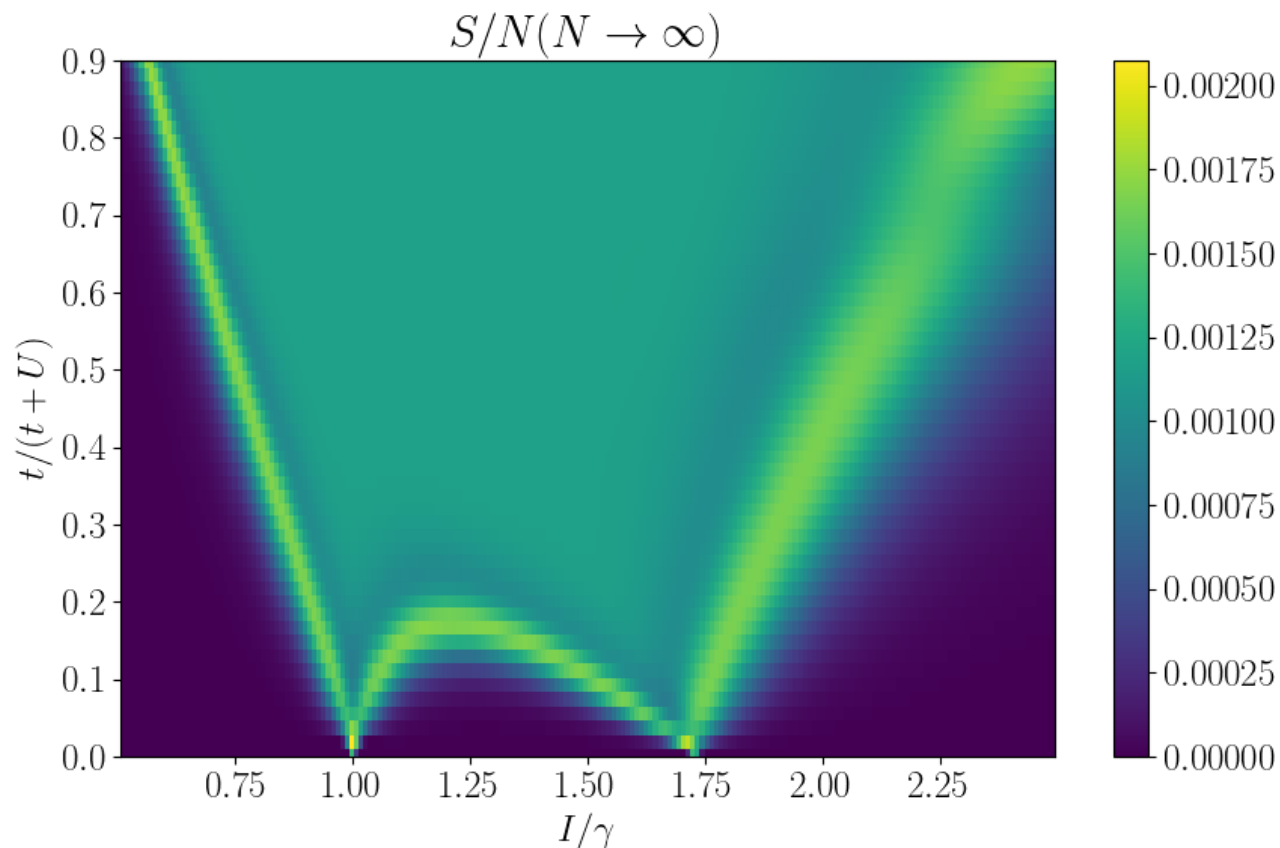
$n_{\max}=2$



Clearly 3 “Mott”
lobes are visible

Entropy

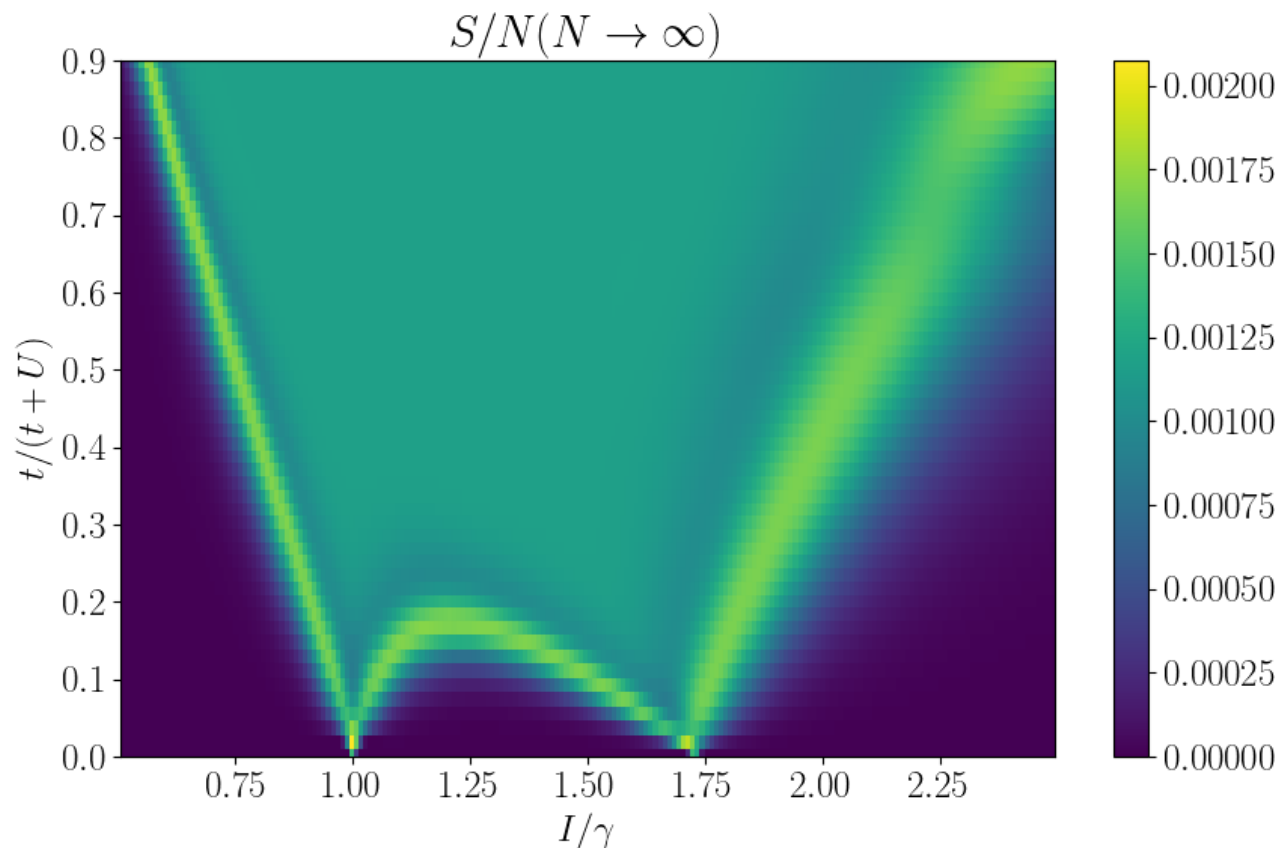
The entropy per particle is a sensitive estimator of the transitions



(Sorry lower
data quality)

Entropy

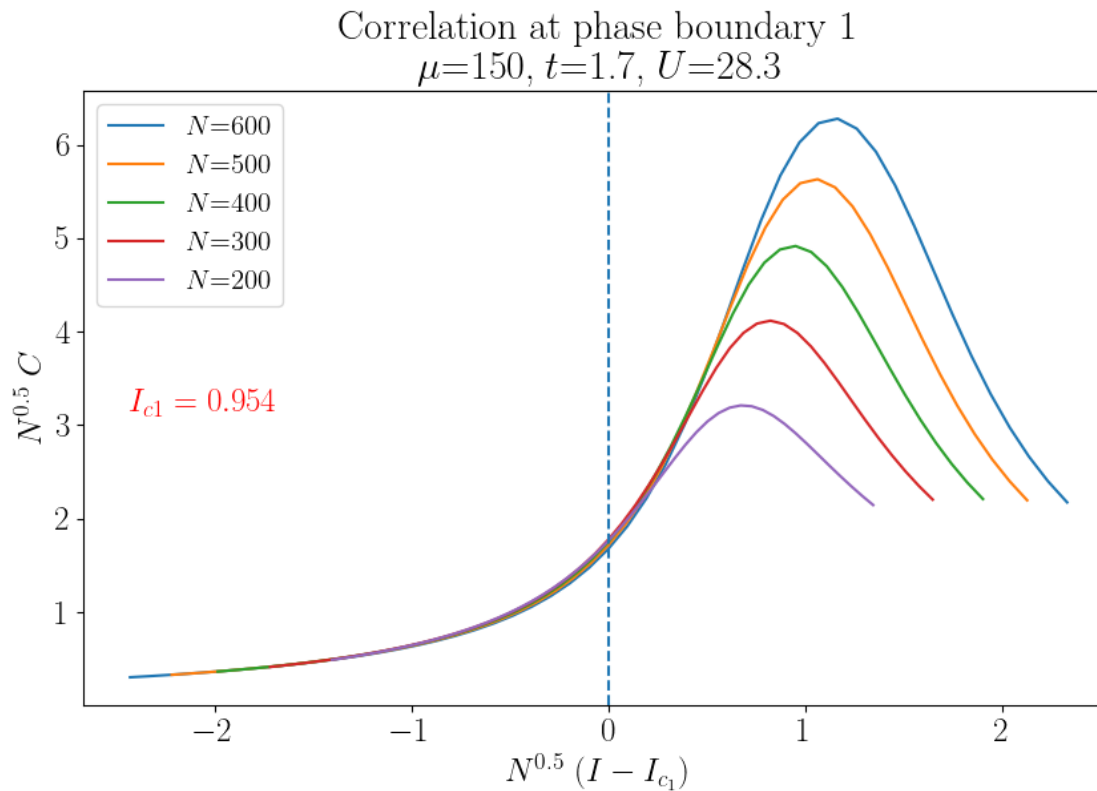
The entropy per particle is a sensitive estimator of the transitions



(Sorry lower
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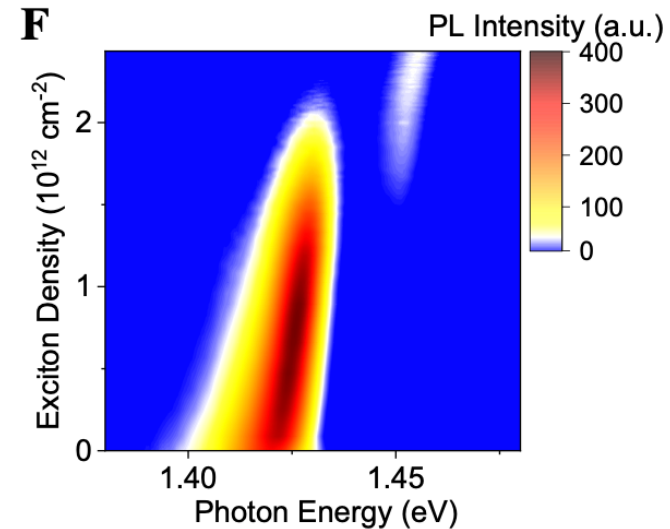
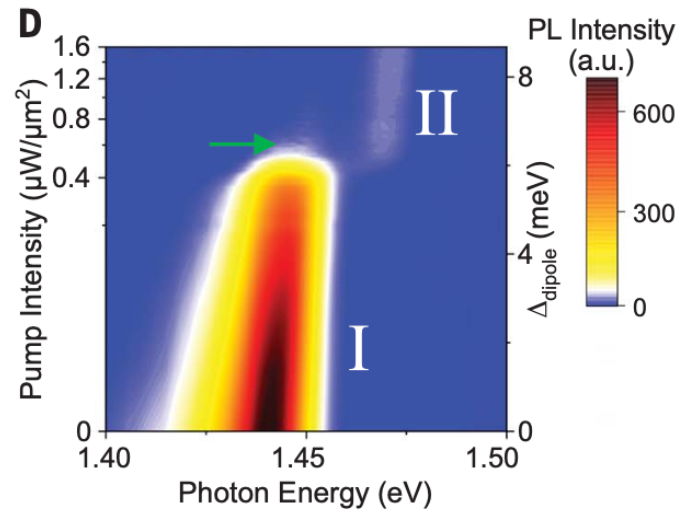
Non-zero entropy
arifies this is *not*
e usual Bose-Mott
transition

Critical properties

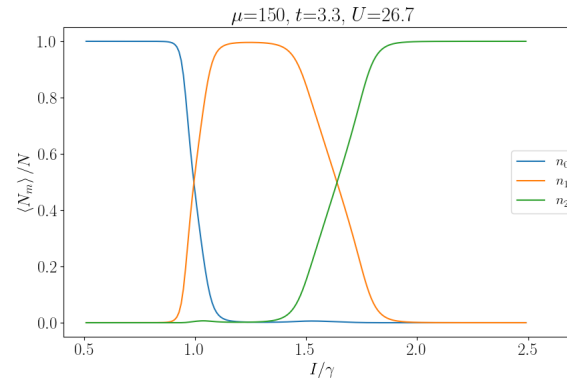


Mean-like exponents appear in finite-size scaling.

Back to experiments



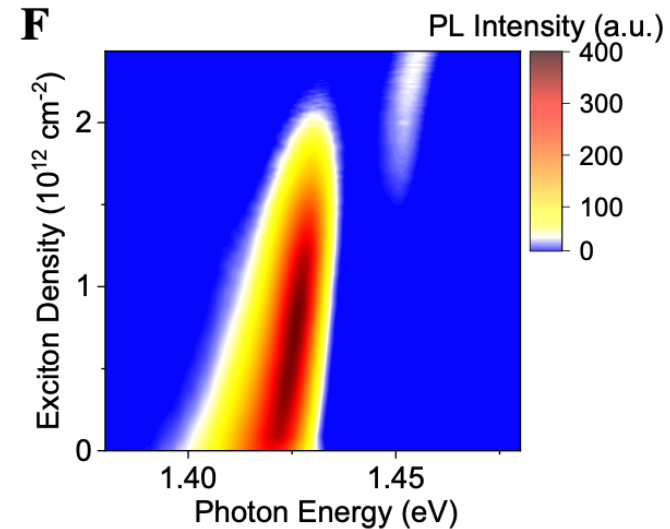
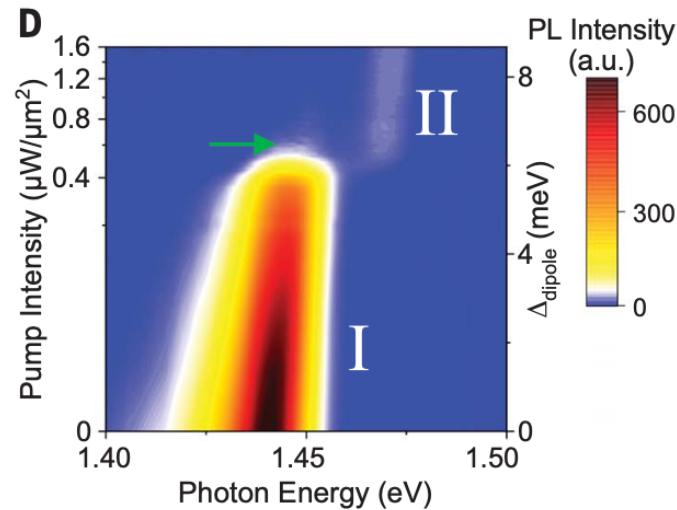
Compare this with



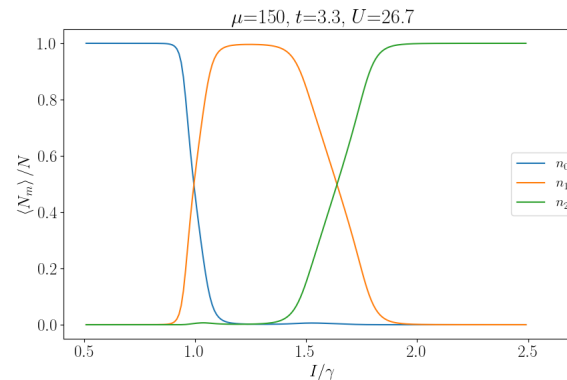
?

Naively $\text{PL}_I \sim n_1$, $\text{PL}_{II} \sim n_2$

Back to experiments



Compare this with



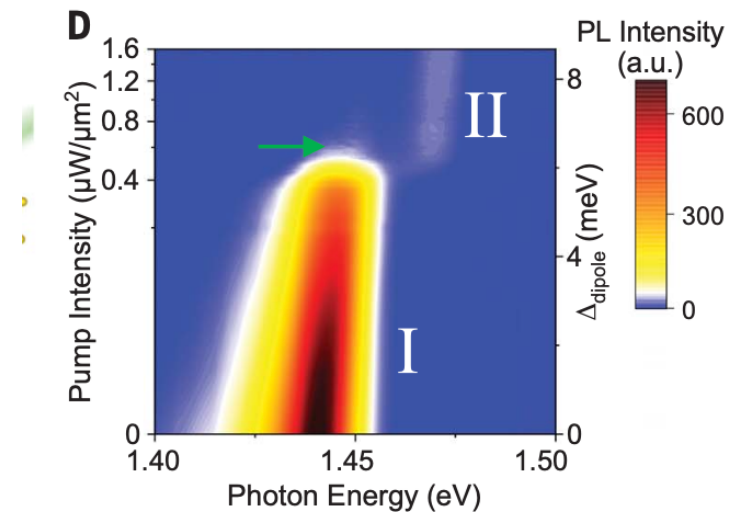
?

Naively $\text{PL}_I \sim n_1$, $\text{PL}_{II} \sim n_2$

n.b. Pump intensity is probably a different variable than our I_0 , which is the exciton creation rate in our effective model. Can perhaps compare better versus density.

Back to experiments

What does this theory really show us for these experiments?



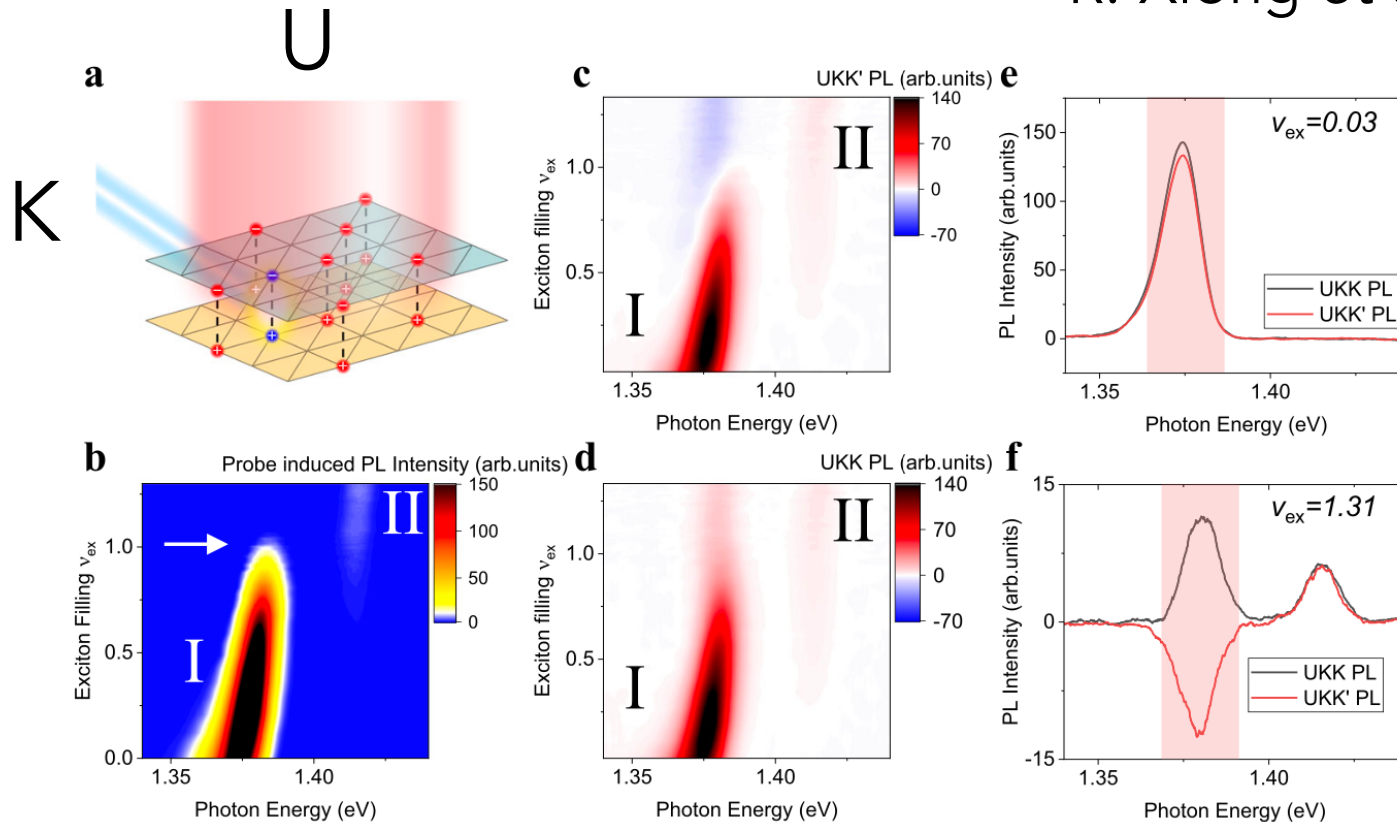
- Establishes that stable Bose Mott state can exist under illumination
- Any more detailed connection needs either more experiments or more developed theory
- To be honest, these experiments give no direct evidence for any exciton hopping $t b_i^\dagger b_j$ whatsoever

Interesting issues

- Roles of local versus global dissipation, tunneling
- Gating/doping with free electrons/holes.
- Valley degree of freedom of excitons

Valley physics

R. Xiong *et al*, 2024.



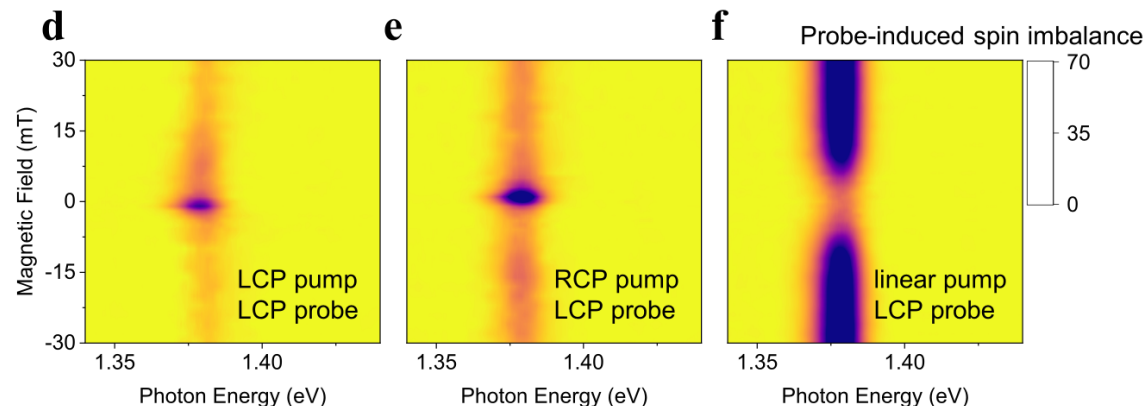
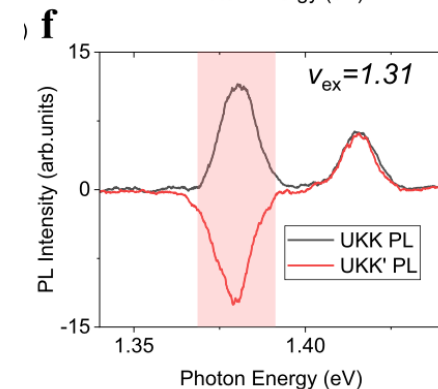
Polarized experiments detect response that is very sensitive to exciton density.

Valley Ferromagnetism?

R. Xiong *et al*, 2024.

Excitons in two-dimensional (2D) semiconductors have offered an attractive platform for optoelectronic and valleytronic devices. Further realizations of correlated phases of excitons promise device concepts not possible in the single particle picture. Here we report tunable exciton “spin” orders in WSe₂/WS₂ moiré superlattices. We find evidence of an in-plane (xy) order of exciton “spin”—here, valley pseudospin—around exciton filling $\nu_{\text{ex}} = 1$, which strongly suppresses the out-of-plane “spin” polarization. Upon increasing ν_{ex} or applying a small magnetic field of ~10 mT, it transitions into an out-of-plane ferromagnetic (FM-z) spin order that spontaneously enhances the “spin” polarization, i.e., the circular helicity of emission light is higher than the excitation. The phase diagram is qualitatively captured by a spin-1/2 Bose–Hubbard model and is distinct from the fermion case. Our study paves the way for engineering exotic phases of matter from correlated spinor bosons, opening the door to a host of unconventional quantum devices.

$$H = \sum_{\langle i,j \rangle, \alpha} -tb_{i,\alpha}^\dagger b_{j,\alpha} + h.c. + \sum_{i,\alpha} U(n_{i,\alpha} - 1/2)^2 + \sum_i V n_{i,1} n_{i,2}$$



Note field scale!

Thanks

